

**Sussex Early Childhood Council (SECC) - Monthly Council Meeting  
in partnership, with  
Sussex County Health Coalition (SCHC)**



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## Meeting Minutes -March 27, 2018

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Easter Seals, 1<sup>st</sup> Floor Conference Room  
Georgetown, DE 19947  
10:00 am to 11:30 am

***SECC MISSION:** The mission of the Sussex Early Childhood Council is to promote the highest quality comprehensive early childhood system for Sussex's young children and their families by Providing Leadership and advocacy through collaboration among families, communities, providers and schools.*

***ELAT MISSION:** The Early Learning Collaboration identifies issues and needs of young children in the community and collaborates with our partners to provide them the support through training, education, and resources.*

**Welcome & Introductions:** Christine Hoeflich-Olley, called the meeting to order.

Motion to approve minutes made by Melissa Walter motioned was seconded by Toni Dickerson, minutes were approved as presented.

**Attendees:** Nicole Mumford, Gina Ling, Andrea Prettyman, Pam Van Sant, Christine Hoeflich-Olley, Donna Snyder White, Toni Dickerson, Mary Moor, Daphne Evans, Janet Hickman, Anne Atkinson, Tom Atkinson, Karen Schreiber, Melissa Walter, Christine Stoops, Stephanie Wagner, Sandra Baker, Casey Christophel, Schlonn Hawkins, Michelle Taylor, Yomarie Colon, Jere Hutson, Amanda Millman, Lindsay Cannon, Dr. Susan Bunting, Kim Krzanowski, Peggy Geisler, Cheryl Doucette, Lisa Coldiron, Nancy Burris

**Action Items:**

**SCHC will invite legislatures to attend future meetings.**

**Kim Krzanowski will have a staff member attend future committee meetings.**

**Kim Krzanowski will share CCSO document with SCHC to distribute.**

Christine Olley read a brief bio for Dr. Bunting, Secretary of Education and Kim Krzanowski, Department of Education

Guest Speakers: Dr. Susan Bunting, Bio Read by Christine.

Phone: Email:

Dr. Bunting thanked the group for prepping kids for kindergarten, what happens in your classroom makes a big difference in K-12 success. Thanked the group for what they do for our students. Committee members know what is expected for kindergarten preparation. Dr. Bunting would like to visit more classrooms and visit more child care centers. Secretary of Education thanked the group for all of the work this committee has been doing. Dr. Bunting enjoys coming with Kim to see early child learning educators and visiting the Classroom. This group is a true Advocate.

Kimberly Krzanowski, Department of Education

Phone: Email: Kimberly.Krzanowski@doe.k12.de.us

Budget came up, no change in recommended budget for early learning 3.8 million still the same. Early Learning is in a good space this year, nothing is guaranteed. Funds will go for growth of new Programs and STARS, on top of funding for regular programs. Kim feels better about this year, then last year. More prepared, more communication between

departments. Governor supports early learning. Last year, State was 400 million in the hole, now 100 million on the good side. Budget is promising. June 30<sup>th</sup> budget signing. Projected figures will stay.

- STARS program will be looked at to see how it can be redesigned to be more engaging. Ongoing project at least two years. The current standards in place, don't allow us to see the positive gain from high quality education. Review will start at the bottom and build up. Maybe not have 5 levels, maybe only 3 levels. Focus on standards that have the highest return on investment.
- *Stakeholder Experience Sessions* opportunity to share your concerns on a higher level. Sessions will be April-May, evening, throughout the state. Honest feed is being solicited, just for this group to provide feedback. Meetings will be facilitated by an outside group, no one from Kim's office will be meeting the group, raw feedback requested, "don't hold back". 13 Sessions, West Education is the facilitator. Separate sessions: early childhood teacher, administrators, teachers. One session will be in Dover, for outside stakeholders, doctor offices, United Way, nonprofits.

Last year Dr. Bunting was not able to answer the question who speaks for us (Early Childhood Learning Educators), Kim is now that voice and she is our biggest advocate of this group. Kim speaks for this group, that's her job. Encouraged the group to share concerns, positive feedback so she can help make changes.

Road block identified: too many separate agencies (DOE, DHSS, Children's dept., also in 11 departments within the top three and departments all touch early learning education). The state needs to coordinate agency & department efforts. Policy and procedures are not clear. Working on getting MOU's signed to help with consistency of information. This effort has Sec of Education endorsement. MOU's that do exist, need to be updated. Need clear guidelines. Make it easier to work with STARS. Currently licensing structure is not build on our current school districts. Indian River is now going through process. School districts want to become licensed need clear direction to do this. Shared information. If you want to get licensed, where to go? How to work the purchase of care process? If you have issues to be addressed, please contact Kim, share Kim's Email with the group. MOU's will provide guidelines for state agencies. Things need to be documented so process does not get lost between agencies. Licensing will say one thing, STARS will say something else. Working to bring Stars and State Agencies on the same page.

Update on Dept of Education open positions, team was down to bare bones. Office of Early Learning lots of work going on, everything is a priority. If you think something has fallen through the cracks, please let us know. Dr. Bunting wants to have DOE as a support agency. Reach out to Kim directly. Quality admission position will begin interviewing, this position will oversee STARS program. Tier reimbursement will be looked as well, fix payment issue, how can tier reimbursement be used? Work into STARS overhaul. What has been your experience in receiving tier reimbursement? Provide your feedback.

Infant toddler credentials 1/2 million grant from Kellogg. RFI has gone out to DE partners. Eligible partner should apply, tell us what you are going to with funds? RFI would cover CEU credit for infant/toddler teachers towards further/higher education. More credits towards a degree, possible funding for scholarships. Dealing with 2 year-olds is different than dealing with 5 year-olds. Kim is excited about the Infant/Toddler course work. Looking at credentials in general not just infant/toddler.

Kim & others, "traveling road show, community conversations". Come out and talk about anything related to these programs. Opportunity to speak to Belvie, Bette Gayle, Kim, others. Forge stronger relationships. First prep call tomorrow. Informal conversation. Meetings will be at night, up and down the state, come out and talk to group, share concerns positive or challenging. April-May-June. Lots of opportunities to share concerns.

Any questions:

Q: DE state has lots of hands in the pot, will there be less in the next 12 months? Issues are now being talked about moving to signed MOU's. There may be some reorganization down the road. Nothing definite at this time. Dr. Bunting stated there are good people that are trying to make this better. Climate is better. Working together in Governor's cabinet. Budget money will go to DHSS. Coordination team is very important. DE is getting million of dollars. Huge win for Early Childhood Educators. Early learning educations will benefit from the money. Hopeful conversations will continue, to do something different.

Committee applauded Kim and Dr. Bunting for the work they have done and promise to do.

Q: Where is the current data on where kids are currently fitting? How many are inside the system and how many kids are outside the system? Where is our base line? Let's talk about the kids that are outside the system, not in STARS program. We need to start focusing on these kids. Kids are not prepared to start kindergarten. When are we going to deal with big elephant in the room? Dr. Bunting says they don't know what they don't know. They don't know about these kids. Is data being tracked? How do we engage with the parents to bring the kids to the programs? How to get the children ready? STARS program does not ask for demographic data. Peggy: we have most of the data, but not drilling down enough. We know where high needs kids live by zip code. Parents aren't working, can't afford a high-level child education. We can't address the problem if we don't understand the problem. Kids still not prepared after attending center. Disconnect with the information between schools and early learning centers. Duplicate the programs that are working. What worked, can it be duplicated?

Dr. Bunting: we are working on MOU's to share the data, in progress to help higher needs kids. Kim is hoping to put together a group, Kim, why wouldn't we need have these conversations? Bring everyone together. Why a cloak of secrecy, why is there a disconnect? Schools and early learning providers need to come to the same table. Kim, said there is no cost in having conversations. Readiness teams are the key to the success. Schools can tell easily which kids went to day care, who didn't. Parents are struggling. Campaign this year is Kindergarten readiness and preparation – helping parents know who to call and how to prepare child for kindergarten. Literature is in Walmart, grocery stores. Focus on early learning tools. Re-ignite the campaign kindergarten readiness. Huge pocket of nonreaders coming into kindergarten. Can't get Purchase of Care (POC), unless you have a job. Families that make money are just above the POC guidelines, 30 days to turn in your paperwork, strict guidelines. Agencies need to stop make it harder for families that are already fighting to survive. Agencies already know the families, anyone that is receiving benefits from the state, will show up for money appointments. Reach out to the families at these appointments. Home visits should be mandatory. Parents as Teachers (PAT's) has the capacity to see kids age 3-5. Previously every child that was enrolled was given a delta number, ability to track child's progress through level 12. This program may need to brought back? Ability to track continuous progress. Can we bring POC to the school? Community partner support unit, access or they can come to you? Not bi-lingual. Michelle, if kids are getting state benefits, leverage on DHSS side to make sure kids are ready. DHSS can be a bigger partner on the frontend. Everything is attached to the money. Parents will keep money/benefits appointments.

SECC-ELAT committee meets every month. We only have a full house if we have wonderful guest speakers like today. SCHC can pull in strategic partners to assist each other. Because SCHC committee discussions, change is happening, forward progress. Peggy appreciates the high-level time committee from Dr. Bunting and Kim. Need to keep information flowing back and forth.

Can you send a staff person to this monthly committee? Kim, said yes absolutely we can have a staff member attend on a regular basis. Share the issues, whether at this table or not. Legislative Hall determines what happens in the state. Most legislatures don't have insight into the pre-school piece. Invite a legislature to your early learning centers, show them everything that takes place. Lots of legislatures will be willing to come in and visit your center. Educate your legislature on early learning centers.

Previous meeting, who do we need to work with. SCHC to invite legislatures to attend this meeting, centers. Not the first time DE has had ample funding. Learn from past lessons, when money was available. Data will help inform. If we didn't have the money, what would be the priority? Funding will come and go, people will come and go. MOU's will help with the continuity.

Christine, thanked Kim and Dr. Bunting and all of the group for attending. Kim promised representation.

Today's agenda items that were not covered will be moved to next month's meeting.

Partner Updates:

Cheryl asked the committee to please share any materials, for new mom bags, please provide to SCHC. Estimated 950 bags per year, 50% English, 40% Spanish, 10 other.

AfterSchool Professionals Appreciation Week April 23-27, 2018

April 27<sup>th</sup>, Building Bridges Conference, Dover Downs.

Renew funding, excellent opportunity for collaboration, Dr. Bunting. This group has a voice.

ESSA plan, fully engaged. CCSSO, birth to third grade frame work, 17 pages, easy read. How you can imbed early learning. Look at Title one funding different. Kim to share with SCHC so we can send out. How states have to use the ETTA plan.

Tom announced a local Principal wants to work with his teachers. Peggy will assist Tom with the program.

Meeting Adjourned: Next SECC-ELAT Meeting will be April 24, 10:00 am.