



Southeast Vermont Building Bright Futures

Chad Simmons, Regional Coordinator
802.451.9345 | csimmons@buildingbrightfutures.org

Southeast VT BBF Regional Council Notes June 8, 2016, 4-6 PM; Winston Prouty

Attendees (apologies for misspellings): Sadie Fischesser (note taker), Chad Simmons, Sue Graff, Britta Reida, Vicky Senni, Rod Francis, Matt Levin, Jim, Cindy Twombly, Sharon Davis, Janice Stockman, Dianne Clouet, Sandy Stark

Please see a list of acronyms and abbreviations at the end of the document.

Welcome and introductions

People introduced themselves and Chad introduced BBF statewide and our council.

Early Childhood Policy (with Matt Levin from the Early Childhood Alliance)

They are a coalition with a legislative agenda and provide support and advocacy around the state. The Coalition includes individuals and organizations. Each fall, they develop a legislative agenda that the EC community creates and works together on; it is not a prioritization of needs in the state. Throughout the year, they provide support for people to advocate with the legislature and in communities for young children and families. Matt shared a Legislative Summary for the 2016 Session. For each issue, there is a lead agency that is the point for each issue that can dig into the details. Overall, it was a difficult legislative session in terms of the limited resources.

- For CCFAP, they increased the funding by \$1 Million. Level funding would have likely resulted in cuts because the program is designed to grow. As providers get more STARS, their CCFAP reimbursement goes up, so the costs grow. The funding is also based on old FPL rates and market rates. The money will increase the market rates. There will also be a report to the Legislature in the middle of the year about the fiscal pressures. The lead organizations were VAEYC, VACCRA, VCCPA and LGK.
- The Paid Sick Days bill passed the legislature early in the session. It happened to be EC Day at the Legislature, which was a nice coincidence.
- The VT Affordable Housing Coalition was the lead on Affording Housing and Reducing Homelessness. This was the first year the Alliance was part of discussions about housing and homelessness. We have a lot to learn to make that discussion even more meaningful in the future.
- In terms of the FY 17 budget, there were additions to the child protection staff in AHS and in the Judiciary. In Brattleboro, we will be hiring new staff in DCF FSD, including a substance abuse screener and counselor who will be right in the DCF FSD office for families to access.



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- Equal access to Special Ed Services is not a legislative issue. Once a child is screened and is in need of Special Ed services, it can be difficult for a child to access those services if they are going to an Early Learning center or provider out of the SU. There was not a resolution, but the conversation has started.
- VT Afterschool and summer learning were very successful in having conversations with legislators, but there was no additional funding allocated. This will likely be at the top of the list next year. People understand the importance of these programs for working families.
- Another non-legislative issue was the Building Bright Spaces for Bright Futures Fund. That fund provides loans for capital improvement to ELCs. It needs to be revitalized.
- Although investing in IT and integrated eligibility is not very glamorous, it is very important. AHS and other partners have updated systems. Right now, there is a 90% match from the Federal government. It is now broken into two phases that will move us to integrated eligibility.

There were some smaller issues, for example, revising the mandatory reporter language. The new language is now confusing for reporters. It will be revisited by the Child Protection Oversight Committee. The Dental Therapist designation passed. The Dr. Dynasaur expansion analysis is in process.

On an anecdotal note, Matt said he felt like people were really connecting with each other and with legislators. The stage is well set for next session.

In the next legislative session, there are about 20 issues on their radar. Not all of them are public yet.

- Funding needs: CIS, Autism, PCCs, CCFAP, all of the RTT-ELC initiatives, IT, Farm to School
- Dr. Dynasaur 2.0
- Public Pre-K funding
- Mandatory Reporter Language
- New CC regulations

The most important thing is how individual people or organizations can engage. It is almost impossible for an issue to come from the regional level to get through into legislation (example of success: Gilfeather Turnip). We need to figure out how to have local communities be the start of the cycle and circle the state. To be successful, it has to be an issue statewide. That is why there is an application process for putting issues on the legislative agenda. Almost always, the lead organization is a statewide entity. The Alliance does not want to impose ideas that are not relevant to local communities.



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What we can do is build a network of support for local issues on a statewide level and then reach out to statewide organizations. The Alliance will help communities bridge to those statewide organizations with influence. Matt encouraged people/organizations to contact him or Kelly Ault first to figure out how to proceed; once there is a little bit of research, they can help lead us to an appropriate statewide organization. Even though BBF is not an advocacy organization, some of the issues that come up at BBF are the kind that we can forward to the Alliance through Chad.

For more information about the Alliance, see:

<http://www.vermontearlychildhoodalliance.org>. There is a [4-page version](#) of the 2-page handout at the website. [VT Digger](#) has summaries for other issues and areas.

Summer Family Activities & Participation

We talked about three areas: 1) Summer family events and activities, 2) Family participation, and 3) Inclusion of all families.

Activity/Event	Who/Contact
<p>Organized small group conversations called Pods These are guided conversations with questions developed around the Strengthening Families framework by members of the meetings. Sometimes they happen at people's homes, which can be transformative. One meets at KidsPlayce. There have been 6-7 people at the Pods. The act of meeting is building relationships beyond the "work" of the PC. They intentionally try to get a mix of parents with children at Green St. Some are open, others are by invitation. We talked about how to get representation from the whole community around Green St. How can we use PC as a model for the larger community? How can there be contributions beyond the PC funding? One of the intentions of the PCs is to model how we engage with families in the state. How can we facilitate growth outside the PC setting?</p>	<p>Green St. Promise Community (Emilie Kornheiser, Emilie.kornheiser@vermont.gov)</p>
<p>Regular meetings with food and child care at different times. Longer meeting always 2nd Thursday of the month Next meeting: Thursday, 6/9, 5:15 at the Root Social Justice Center</p>	<p>Green St. Promise Community (Emilie Kornheiser, Emilie.kornheiser@vermont.gov)</p>



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There are usually 6-8 people involved who are representing organizations.	
Drop-in conversations at the Restless Rooster, Fridays, 10am.	Green St. Promise Community (Emilie Kornheiser, Emilie.kornheiser@vermont.gov)
Looking at the data that we have and if it reflects the community and experience of families in that community	Green St. Promise Community (Emilie Kornheiser, Emilie.kornheiser@vermont.gov)
Community Café with parents during free lunch at Brooks Memorial Library, date to be determined	Green St. Promise Community (Emilie Kornheiser, Emilie.kornheiser@vermont.gov)
Summer meals for kids and teens They want to increase access and decrease stigma for kids in our region. Each site is different in terms of the timing and volunteer needs. Parents can usually eat at the sites, but they might have to pay—it depends on the site. The programs work best when they are embedded in other activities, so it is a good reason to advocate for summer enrichment activities.	Many organizations; information available from Sue Graff at UWWC/Hunger Council (sue@unitedwaywindham.org), VT 2-1-1, Text “food” to 877-877, Vermont 2-1-1 app
Playgroups. Some may still take place over the summer, but most break until fall. Contact Early Education Services (EES) for details.	EES. Sandy Stark. sstark@wsesu.org
Young Moms group	Youth Services & EES. Christine Linn, Christine.Linn@youthservicesinc.org
Story hours	Libraries throughout county
Multiple initiatives based largely at the State office building at 232 Main St.: WIC program (rated friendliness in the state) Immunization Lyme’s Disease Disaster Preparedness Farm to Family coupons	VDH Some outreach to outlying areas, but difficult

Approaches and ideas:

- [Strengthening Families](#)
 - People create their own questions
 - Harvest (share out)
- [Community Cafes](#)



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- Using existing/embedded programs
 - We need more after school programs, where we can braid funding (21C, CCFAP, etc.); we could reach out to [After School, Inc.](#)
 - Playgroups
 - WIC visits, educational opportunities and outreach
- Support peer-based approaches
- Surveys (through schools)
- Having parents/caregivers volunteers
- Check in with community service agencies, especially to provide people power to start initiatives
- Integrate learning opportunities, just by being part of the activity
- List in community calendars like [Windham County Parent Resource Calendar](#), [The Commons](#)
- Online learning
- After school support, advocacy and planning. Contact Holly Morehouse at [Vermont After School Inc.](#) at: hollymorehouse@vermontafterschool.org

Council Business: Announcements and updates

LGK

With BBF, VDH and other partners, LGK has released new data about child care affordability and availability in VT, [Stalled at the Start](#). The report has gotten a lot of press in the state and it is generating a lot of momentum. Vicky is in the process of scheduling a meeting in Brattleboro to present the information and their polling research about people's perceptions of the importance of EC.

They will also be doing voter registration and education this summer/fall. A lot of people who care about kids and EC are not voting. They will be talking about that at the action team meeting; we may want to look at VT Adult Learning as a partner. She has been training volunteers, but if anyone is going to an event and wants to take LGK materials this summer, let her know.

LGK is hearing a lot about the new regulations, STARs and professional development from providers; they will be having some conversations across the state to talk about the costs of the new regulations.

WCCA

On June 18 is the Magical March at the Retreat. It is a family and fundraising event. It is 10-12.30.



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Funding

The Permanent Fund and the Turrell Fund have a new \$6,000 emergency grant for EC programs. They will also have an innovation grant for up to \$10,000.

Children's Budget Workgroup

We will be starting up a committee for people interested in doing a Children's/EC budget for our region. If people are interested, please contact Sadie (Sadie.Fischesser@vermont.gov) or Chad. It would be based on the [Public Assets Institute/BBF Children's Budget](#) from 2014. The idea is we would know all the funding coming into our community for EC, where it goes, where it comes from. After that is created, there may be some extension projects.

Making it Work in Windham

The event will be November 15 at the Retreat. It is sponsored by LGK, The Retreat, BBF and UWWC. The Chambers and other business groups will also be getting the word out. It is targeted to business owners or Human Resources staff at organizations/businesses.

July celebration

We don't have a "regular" BBF meeting in July. Instead, we will have a celebration on July 13 from 4-6 at the NewBrook Elementary School in Newfane. Look for separate announcement and flyer

Council Business: Budget

We are nearing the end of the FY (ends June 30) and we are on target to spend our money as planned.



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ACRONYMS and ABBREVIATIONS (see also <http://vermontbirthtothree.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/09/glossary-of-terms-1.pdf>)



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AHS—Agency of Human Services
AOE—Agency of Education
ARC—Attachment, regulation and competency
ASQ-SE—Ages and Stages Questionnaire Social Emotional
BBF—Building Bright Futures
C&E—Consultation and Education (CIS)
CACFP—Child Care Financial Assistance Program
CC—child care
CCFAP—Child Care Financial Assistance Program
CCV—Community College of VT
CIS—Children’s Integrated Services
DA—designated agency
DCF CDD—AHS Department for Children and Families Child Development Division
DCF ESD—AHS Department for Children and Families Economic Services Division
DCF FSD—AHS Department for Children and Families Family Services Division
EC—Early childhood
ECC—Early Childhood Council (BBF)
ECFMH—Early Childhood Family Mental Health
EES—Early Education Services
EI—Early Intervention
EL—Early Learning
ELC—Early Learning center
FY—fiscal year
LGK—Let’s Grow Kids
MCLA—Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts
MH—Mental health
NFP—Nurse Family Partnership
PC—Promise Communities (CDD, RTT—ELC)
PCAB—Prevent Child Abuse VT
PCC—Parent Child Center
QRIS—Quality rating and improvement system
RFP—Request for Proposals
RTT-ELC—Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge grant
SA—Substance abuse
SCC—Specialized Child Care
SF—Strengthening Families
STARs—Step Ahead Recognition System
SU—Supervisory Union
TEACH—Teacher Education and Compensation Helps
TS Gold—Teaching Strategies Gold
UWWC—United Way of Windham County
VACCRA—VT Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies
VAEYC—VT Association for the Education of Young Children

Southeast Vermont Building Bright Futures includes these towns: Athens, Brattleboro, Brookline, Dover, Dummerston, Guilford, Halifax, Jamaica, Marlboro, Newfane, Putney, Somerset, Stratton, Townshend, Vernon, Wardsboro, Westminster, Whitingham and Wilmington



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VB5—VT Birth to Five
VCCIC—VT Child Care Industry & Careers Council
VCCPA—VT Child Care Providers Association
VDH—AHS VT Department of Health
VELS—VT Early Learning Standards
WCCA—Windham Child Care Association
WCSU—Windham Central Supervisory Union
WNESU—Windham Northeast Supervisory Union
WPC—Winston Prouty Center
WSESU—Windham Southeast Supervisory Union

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