



June 5, 2024 Council Meeting Notes

Members Present	9/6/23	10/4/23	11/1/23	12/20/23	2/7/24	3/6/24	4/3/24	4/24/24 (Special SR Vote)	5/1/24	6/5/24
Allyx Schiavone	•	0	0	•	•	•	0	0	•	•
Averi Pakulis	0	0	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Billy Johnson	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Carmelita Valencia-Daye	•	•	0	•	0	•	•	0	•	•
Daniel Diaz	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Elisabeth Teller	0	0	0	•	•	•	•	0	0	•
Eliza Halsey	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Galit Sharma	0	0	0	0	0	•	0	0	0	0
Jennifer Heath	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	0
Jerry Haruna	•	0	0	•	0	0	•	0	•	•
Jess Bialecki	•	•	•	0	X	X	X	X	X	X
Karen Dubois-Walton	•	•	0	•	•	•	0	•	•	•
Kiomy Sotillo	•	•	0	•	•	•	•	0	•	0
Leeora Netter	0	•	•	0	•	•	0	•	•	•
Lynn Wiener	0	•	•	•	•	X	X	X	X	X
Mary Derwin	•	•	0	•	•	•	•	0	•	0
Robin Moore-Evans	•	0	•	•	•	0	•	•	0	•
Sadie Witherspoon	0	0	•	•	0	•	•	0	0	•
Soma Mitra	0	•	0	•	•	•	0	•	•	•
Steven Cousin	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Susan Taddei	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	0	•	0
Tamesha Robinson	•	•	•	•	•	•	0	•	•	•
Vanessa Diaz-Valencia	•	•	0	•	•	•	•	0	•	0
<i>Percent in attendance:</i>	57%	57%	43%	74%	67%	76%	57%	38%	67%	57%

PRESENT	ABSENT	NO LONGER ACTIVE
•	0	X

Staff: Claire Kaiser, Kerry Oberg

Guests: Shelly Hicks, Katie McGinnis, Shubhra Gupta, Charlie Malone

Welcome & Call to Order

Tammy shared that Jennifer was not going to be at the meeting today. She called the meeting to order at 3:06pm

Announcements

Tammy opened the floor for announcements from anyone.

Claire announced that we'll be using a new attendance sheet to capture who is present at meetings. The attendance sheet is linked here: <https://forms.gle/VCvPRwUc78RqGA1y6> and on the agenda. Members only need to write their names but other attendees are encouraged to include their contact information.

Soma shared that [Summer Reading](#) packets are available and that the program is a great resource for families. She will share the packets with Claire who will send them out to the council. She encouraged the group to share the information and invite families in their community to get involved.

Eliza shared about the [Baby Bonds](#) program which the city is actively promoting.

- All children with HUSKY born after July 1, 2023 automatically have an account set up. Eliza will follow-up with more program details about eligibility.
- Accounts are created automatically at the state level for eligible children.
- Children will access their funds at age 18 for various uses including education and home ownership.
- The city's role is to ensure information is available and staff are knowledgeable about the program but the state handles broad engagement and notification to eligible families. There are ongoing touchpoints but it is important for families to be aware and not forget about this.

Eliza will follow up with Claire to share more information and possibly set up a community meeting to share about the program.

ACTION ITEMS:

- Soma will send Claire details about Summer Learning
- Eliza will send Claire details about Baby Bonds. A community meeting may be scheduled.

School Readiness Liaison Report

Kerry reported that we are still waiting for FY25 contracts which are expected next week.

There may be some potential building issues for one of our SR programs which may necessitate a reallocation of spaces and a possible email vote. The hope is that we will be able to find a space for that program rather than reallocate. Also hoping to resolve this before contracts are signed. Allyx asked how we were determining those spots and Kerry shared that we would look back at requests that were made that we were unable to support.

The discussion shifted to a need to solidify a council policy related to the conversion of spots from preschool to infant/toddler. That was echoed by other council members and it was agreed to work on a policy for what to do if spots remain open. It was suggested that we look at Census data to make a data-driven decision though we feel the data will likely reinforce the need for more infant/toddler seats. It was also suggested that we open seats to children from outside New Haven. No decision was made about that suggestion.

The implications of the Early Start bill were brought up and Kerry expressed that she had already reached out to Beth Bye about joining us to discuss those plans. There are also implications for FY 25 starting July 1 even though Early Start won't take effect until FY 26. The request was made to have that information available at our July meeting.

ACTION ITEMS:

- Kerry to request Beth Bye to speak to the council about Early Start implementation.
- Determine what our council policy is for converting School Readiness spaces from preschool to infant/toddler as per community needs.
- Claire will gather data around infant/toddler vs. preschool need in New Haven to reinforce the development of that policy.

Break Out Rooms

Parent Engagement

Facilitated by Claire

Group Members: Elisabeth, Averi, Katie, Jerry, Robin, Soma, Karen, Shubhra, Shelly

Discussion Points:

- **What does Parent Engagement even mean to us as a council?**
 - More tenured members shared that there have been many discussions about Parent Engagement but little has been done or programs begin then funding ends and things do not continue. Some members expressed that they have seen some improvements. This could be an opportunity to rethink what parent engagement means to us.
 - Redefining parent engagement to include **more active parent participation in decision-making**. We want **parents leading the conversation**. This may require revisiting council bylaws to increase parent voting power.
 - Talk with parents about the creation of programs and policies, don't just ask them how things worked for them after the fact (surveys and checklists)
 - Parents could be advocating at the capital, attending meetings, organizing events, talking with other parents and educating them about programs in New Haven.
 - Enhancing parent voices in curriculum development and program shaping.
 - Engaging different parent groups, including immigrant parents, to inform strategy for 2025.
- **Parent Ambassador Role**
 - Claire outlined the two grants that support Parent Ambassadors, LECC and POP
 - Discussed the tiered system for supporting parents and the importance of meeting them where they are.
 - There was discussion to address the vagueness of parent roles and the need to create clear job descriptions. Claire highlighted that [a job description was created](#) for this role and shared with the group.
 - Stressed the importance of training the parents in the role this and making sure they have support. It may be necessary to narrow the scope of the role. We discussed PLTI and parent leadership groups within our programs as a place to find parents for the role.
- **Use of Funds**
 - Parent stipends and a Community Café event was brought up as required per the grant guidelines.
 - The group discussed how to best use flexible funds; ideas for supporting parents with stipends, bus passes, grocery cards, and emergency funds.

ACTION ITEMS:

- Explore opportunities for stipends or other financial support for parents.
- Revisit council bylaws to ensure parents have voting rights and a stronger voice.

Quality Enhancement

Facilitated by Charlie

Group Members: Tammy, Eliza, Carmelita, Allyx, Kerry,

This group had a robust discussion. They divided into these two issues; how do we spend the money we need to spend by June 30 and what are our more long-range goals using this as a platform to think about long-range vision.

Professional development and Enrollment were highlighted as key areas of focus. There was a nuanced discussion about the expansion of enrollment and how to broaden engagement. While we want families to sign up for particular centers, we also want to broaden engagement.

Some specific ideas were shared about how to spend the money and the group came up with 5 basic needs that they would be thinking about going forward.

Debrief and Discussion

Groups returned to the main meeting room at 4:03pm.

Charlie shared out the highlights from the Quality Enhancement group discussion. Jerry and Averi shared out about the Parent Engagement group (see notes above for details). Both groups expressed that they had robust and helpful conversations in their breakout rooms.

ACTION ITEMS:

- Utilizing these discussions, determine plans for spending the \$29,000 prior to June 30
- Continue discussions about these priorities at monthly meetings

Next Steps and Scheduling

Tammy let the attendees know that Claire would reach out about scheduling a July meeting during the second week rather than the usual first. She reinforced that these would be ongoing conversations.

Adjourn

Tammy adjourned the meeting at 4:13pm.