



# MAYOR'S CABINET FOR YOUNG CHILDREN

## *Co-Chairs*

Luke Bronin, Mayor  
Leslie Torres-Rodriguez, Superintendent

## *Staff Liaisons*

Kimberly Oliver, Director  
Nancy Ortiz, Interim Liaison

**September 11, 2020 at 3:00 pm**  
**Virtual Zoom Meeting**

Meeting ID: 965 9504 2078  
Passcode: 781784

Join Zoom:  
<https://zoom.us/j/96595042078?pwd=OTRzM0I5REJsL1I5eXlGbUp4TUNSZz09>

To call-in only:  
1 (646) 876-9923

## **REGULAR MEETING**

### **Meeting Objectives:**

- Receive updates
- Approve School Readiness grant awards, waiver for variance in hours of service, site change for Catholic Charities, and change to the bylaws
- Gain a clear understanding of the kindergarten-eligible and Hartford resident 50/50 policies
- Discuss re-opening plans with Hartford's School Readiness provider network

### **Meeting Materials:**

- Minutes from August 22 and November 12, 2019
- Staff report
- OEC FY21 School Readiness Sept-June funding plan presentation
- Meeting presentation

### **AGENDA:**

- 1. Call to Order**
- 2. Roll Call**
- 3. Approval of minutes for August 22 and November 12, 2019**
- 4. Administrative Updates**
  - 4.1. Co-Chair Reports
  - 4.2. Staff Report (Written report provided in lieu of verbal report out.)
- 5. Business Agenda**
  - 5.1. Recommended Action: Approve staff's recommendation to award slots to early learning providers for a total of \$9,009,362
  - 5.2. Recommended Action: Approve the waiver for variance in hours of service such that programs have the option to operate for a reduced number of hours per day for each space type
  - 5.3. Recommended Action: Approve Catholic Charities' change in program site location from the Therapeutic Learning Center to St. Cyril and Methodius
  - 5.4. Recommended Action: Approve a change in the Bylaws of the Mayor's Cabinet for Young Children such that there is an addition to the section titled "Decision Making" that states the co-chairs are able to approve a resolution or action with the purpose of sustaining the operations of the Cabinet, partner providers, or programs to support the children and families of Hartford on behalf of the Cabinet during times of emergency as declared by the Governor of the State of Connecticut
  - 5.5. Review: Kindergarten-eligible children policy
  - 5.6. Review: Hartford resident 50/50 policy
  - 5.7. Discussion: Re-opening plans of Hartford's School Readiness providers
- 6. Adjournment**

**Mayor's Cabinet for Young Children  
Regular Meeting on August 22, 2019  
MEETING MINUTES – DRAFT FOR APPROVAL**

**1 Call to order**

A meeting of the Mayor's Cabinet for Young Children was held on August 22, 2019 at Hartford City Hall, Room 100. The meeting was called to order at 12:30 p.m.

**2 Roll Call**

**2.1 Attendees**

Luke Bronin, Mayor and Co-Chair; Leslie Torres-Rodriguez, Superintendent and Co-Chair; Liany Arroyo, Director of Health & Human Services; Paul Dworkin, Executive Vice President, Office of Community Child Health, CCMC; Kimberly Oliver, Director of Department of Families, Children, Youth and Recreation and Staff; Paula Gilberto, United Way of Central & Northeastern CT; Richard Sussman, Director of Early Childhood Investments/HFPG; Jane Crowell, Assistant Director of Department of Families, Children, Youth and Recreation and Staff; Thea Montanez, Chief of Staff; Marie Jarry, Director of Public Services, Hartford Public Library; Barbara Jo Warner, Director, Capitol Child Development Center

**2.2 Members Not in Attendance**

Leslie Carrillo, McKinney-Vento Liaison; Minal Kulkarni, Parent

**3 Approval of Minutes**

Motion by Paul Dworkin, second by Paula Gilberto

All voted in favor. No one opposed. No one abstained. Motion passed.

**4 Administrative Updates**

**4.1 Staff Report**

**4.1.1 New initiatives**

*FirstSchool* is a nationally recognized school reform framework designed to promote the educational alignment between preschool and the early elementary grades based on research and data driven practices. Hartford's FY20 FirstSchool Initiative will be rolled out in the next few months by a team of approved City and Hartford Public Schools (HPS) classroom observers certified by FirstSchool to measure the experiences children are exposed to in their classrooms. HPS will observe PreK-3 grade classrooms and the City will assess community-based school readiness classrooms. Educators will receive FirstSchool data profiles representing classroom settings, curriculum content, student approaches to learning and approaches to teaching essential to building strong early learning environments where children find themselves smart, capable and confident. Often settings change drastically between grades causing some children to struggle with such challenging transitions and unrealistic expectations. FirstSchool supports educators to facilitate gradual releases of control to help children become more independent and confident in their learning. Superintendent Torres-Rodriguez added that this initiative provides a seamless transition and foundation to the major actions in the HPS Strategic Plan's Guided Reading approach. Cabinet members will be presented with aggregated data profiles in the late Fall.

*Bloomberg Philanthropies/What Works Cities* has awarded the City of Hartford a three-year grant to replicate Providence Talks, an early literacy program for young children, families and educators. A national press release will be issued by Bloomberg Philanthropies within the next month followed by Hartford's local press release announcing Hartford Talks. Bloomberg and LENA representatives have been invited to a subsequent release in October to present to Cabinet, Council, providers and other key

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stakeholders in the City. Hartford Talks highlights LENA Grow a professional development model that targets teachers and children enrolled in their classrooms with a pilot being implemented at Women's League Child Development Center and King's Chapel Early Care & Education Center. LENA Home (The Village's Words Count program) focuses on home-visitors and families of young Hartford children. LENA Start, a model that supports parents and children in parent groups, has garnered possible interest from the Library, recreation playgrounds and Family Centers. Over the three-year period, the City will receive over \$600,000 between the LENA technology devices as well as the supports needed to administer the program. Hartford Talks aims to reach about 800 children and has enough LENA recorders and vests to enable expansion.

*Harvard's Lectio Institute*, a training workshop on an early literacy framework was convened last year with over 50 attendees from a wide-range of agencies supporting early literacy. The four original funding partners- the City, United Way, Fund for Greater Hartford and Hartford Foundation for Public Giving continue to voice support in bringing Lectio back to Hartford to re-engage stakeholders in expanded literacy landscape mapping and to coordinate efforts to achieve expected outcomes related to Campaign for Grade Level Reading. Updates will be provided to members in upcoming meetings.

*Member resignation:* Kim Oliver informed members that Kimberly Mansfield has a new employment position and her employer sees it as a conflict of interest to continue being a member of the Cabinet, therefore Kimberly has submitted her resignation from the Mayor's Cabinet. Per By-laws resignation is effective immediately.

*Community Renewal Team (CRT) Grace Street facility:* An update on the transition of Community Renewal Team (CRT) Grace Street facility closure was provided to members. There have been multiple communications between the City and CRT and funds were secured for the transition through July and August. Of the approximate 69 children receiving services, 30 are transitioning to kindergarten and will therefore not need school readiness services in September. CRT held two informational sessions for parents and City staff provided families with a list of other available school readiness programs throughout the City. At the second session, Mayor Bronin and Chief of Staff Thea Montanez, Superintendent Torres-Rodriguez, and Office of Early Childhood (OEC) Commissioner Bye attended to assure families that there were many other programs with vacancies and that their fees would not increase. There will be a follow up with parents to ensure children have been placed.

#### 4.2 Co-Chair Reports

Mayor Bronin reported that it is important for the Cabinet to stand by its decision and focus on an effective transition for the Grace Street families and children. He reminded members of their obligation to reflect on where we can do things better. Therefore, Mayor Bronin reported that he had requested the OEC to review the City's procurement process. In response, the OEC stated that Hartford fulfilled its responsibility in adhering to OEC directives and requirements. Nevertheless, Mayor Bronin is requesting a deeper review as Hartford moves this initiative forward.

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**5 Business Agenda/Action Items**

5.1. Recommendation to create a taskforce of the Mayor's Cabinet to focus on the RFP process and the Rubric by which organizations are scored including requests for an independent review of the Rubric, increase parent participation on the Cabinet and instituting a more formalized process with regard to notifications.

Superintendent Torres-Rodriguez, Barbara Jo Warner from Capitol Child Development Center and Marie Jarry from the Hartford Public Library volunteered to sit on the Taskforce.

5.2. Develop a meeting schedule:

September/October: Retreat  
November/December: Regular meeting  
2020: Quarterly meetings

**6 Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 1:31 p.m.

**Mayor's Cabinet for Young Children  
Regular Meeting on November 12<sup>th</sup>, 2019  
MEETING MINUTES – DRAFT FOR APPROVAL**

**1 Call to order**

A meeting of the Mayor's Cabinet for Young Children was held on November 12, 2019 at Hartford City Hall, Room 100. The meeting was called to order at 1:00 p.m.

**2 Roll Call**

**2.1 Attendees**

Luke Bronin, Mayor and Co-Chair; Leslie Torres-Rodriguez, Superintendent and Co-Chair; Liany Arroyo, Director of Health & Human Services; Paul Dworkin, Executive Vice President, Office of Community Child Health, CCMC; Kimberly Oliver, Director of Department of Families, Children, Youth and Recreation and Staff; Richard Sussman, Director of Early Childhood Investments/HFPG; Jane Crowell, Assistant Director of Department of Families, Children, Youth and Recreation and Staff; Marie Jarry, Director of Public Services, Hartford Public Library

**2.2 Members Not in Attendance**

Leslie Carrillo, McKinney-Vento Liaison; Minal Kulkarni, Parent: Paula Gilberto, United Way of Central & Northeastern CT; Barbara Jo Warner, Director, Capitol Child Development Center

**3 Approval of Minutes**

In spite of the quorum, the actions of approving the minutes and support of Bill SB-930 were postponed until next meeting

**4 Administrative Updates**

**4.1 Staff Report**

**4.1.1 New initiatives**

*FirstSchool* collects data on experiences that children have in the classrooms. Hartford is halfway through in terms of collecting data on School Readiness Pre-school classrooms. *FirstSchool* looks at different data sets in terms of what children are exposed to in the classrooms such as activity settings which elaborates where the students spend most of their time in the classroom (data handout was shared and discussed). Choice time is important in order to promote independence and confidence in young children which truly represents children, developing a work plan and deciding what they want to work on within classroom environment with teacher's support. As per the data, 53.6% of the total time was dedicated for choice time. It has been observed on national level that when children leave preschool and enters the Kindergarten, choice time disappears which impacts the confidence and success rate of the students. Providers are also focusing on small group literacy activities in classrooms as well as whole group instruction, also known as circle time is considered very important. However, teachers are trying to trim down on transition time (lunch break, bathroom time etc.) for more instructional time. Classroom observations are done during the peak instructional time and has been trimmed down to two (2) hour observations in the morning sessions. When observers go into the classrooms, they use a device and they check off as they observe for four (4) randomly assigned children per classroom. Teachers use these data sets and their own data to identify which area they should focus on and develop a work plan with the help of instructional coach. At the end of the year this data is compiled again to demonstrate progress. EDUSNAP, a classroom observation feedback report was shared and analyzed with the members. Jane mentioned, once the data collection is completed, the researcher will come from North Carolina to give in depth presentation.

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*Grace Street Facility* closure had impacted some of the families attending School Readiness Classrooms. DFCYR team looked into those impacted families and cross referenced that with our more up to date report of School Readiness to get more sense of those families were taken care of and they were enrolled in another site with CRT or with another provider. Majority of families were enrolled with CRT or different provider. Some of the families were not enrolled and we reached out to each of the families via phone and we sent out the parent packets to those who we couldn't get in touch with.

*Harvard's Lectio Institute* convened almost a year ago. However, we got little distracted with our Bloomberg Initiative which focusing on LENA Grow and LENA Home but *Lectio* is of high interest to our partners around the Village's work around 3<sup>rd</sup> grade reading scores and campaign for grade level reading and the Superintendent's around improving those scores. *Lectio* is a framework, not a curriculum but rather it gives us the framework in mapping out what resources we have in Hartford that are focused on Early Literacy and once that mapping is complete, it informs funders and other key stakeholders of the kind of resources we might want to ramp up or for those who want to position in a different way to make sure that we are getting the outcomes that we expect with regard to changing those literacy outcomes. *Lectio* is interested in coming back to build on what they have already started. Recently, United Way sent out a survey which identified the critical importance of coaching support for teaching practices that strengthens the literacy skills. Coaching support in the classrooms is a costly practice and the State money can only support the staff very thinly. It was also noticed that programs were becoming more dependent on coaches. HPS has seen the similar issue at schools. In coach's absence how does the instructional leader continue to develop the instructional capacity of the teacher is the challenge.

*Working Group task force* was to be convened several weeks ago but it has been rescheduled for 11.13.2019. Jane has sent out the power point presentation of the last workshop. Task Force is focusing on a Procurement process as well as the Rubric. In regard to the Procurement practices that we implemented last year, task force recognized that as soon as they vote at the Cabinet meeting, all the providers should be informed and not wait for the OEC approval in order to give them enough time. The task force will also focus on Rubric and the research that supports how the Rubric was developed and implemented. One of the changes we have seen in our programs is that the instructional leaders are now bringing the Rubric in the class and working with staff. It has been reported by the teachers and instructional leaders that change in practice in terms of having a Rubric as a guide that supports growth in teaching practices. Rubric is to help identify skill sets and the performance of the teacher. The Mayor mentioned that process for measuring performance is a major issue. What would be a game plan this year? Would one period be enough to judge a program? Paul Dworkin asked if there is any guidelines or requirements for overall classroom assessment? Jane clarified there is an instrument called "Class" that a lot of researchers use across the country but it is very costly to administer and takes a longer period of time and inter related reliability is also time consuming.

Task Force took over following three tasks:

- Working group will dig into whether or not to recommend there should be an independent review of the Rubric.
- Parent participation on the cabinet; Whether or not to increase the number of parent participation.
- More proactive and formalized process to release notifications for applicants.

*School Readiness Classrooms* enrollment by end of October 2019, there were only three (3) programs which are full at capacity. Others have significant vacancies even though programs are offering various



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incentives for parent to enroll and register their children such as three (3) month free enrollment or reduced fee, enrolling the sibling for free etc. The programs are trying intensive marketing to enroll so they can generate revenue. Lost revenue at the beginning of the year is very hard for the programs to sustain as they still have to pay the staff as that's where the most of the funds are directed. Therefore, the programs are being innovative to recruit families but there are still significant vacancies. We have far more opportunities for Hartford families but fewer people are signing up. Head start, infant and toddler spaces are full as its in highest demand and parents don't have to pay. So, most of the providers are waiting for children to turn at least 2.8 age mark to recruit them. If we give back spaces to the state, then we will be denying slots to those children who will be turning 2.8 during the year, access to the program and this is an ongoing struggle. HHS offered to help spreading awareness to the families of Hartford in terms of informing what programs and options are available in the City. HHS sees approximately 5-6 thousand parents, almost 4 times a year, who are enrolled in WICK program and some of them have multiple kids.

Few takeaways/follow up:

- Larger/broader network meeting
- Coordinate with family childcare providers is important
- Look at numbers of families that work different work shifts and our dependent on family child care providers.
- Look at the number of unused slots and how to convert those into money.

*Bloomberg Philanthropies/What Works Cities* grant presser and retreat took place on October 17<sup>th</sup> at the Hartford Public Library. The Mayor and Superintendent joined by Clarence Wardell from Results for America for Bloomberg Philanthropies' What Works Cities' initiative, Steve Hannon from LENA, and Tonja Rucker from the National League of Cities for a press event to announce the grant award of \$442,000. Superintendent shared that her interest was to know of cross collaborative approaches that they lifted it from other cities as best practices and perhaps we can get a peek at that.

*Providence Talks*: Kim Oliver informed members that she is traveling to Providence for convening of Providence Talks Replication City teams and researchers from EGAP-the Evidence in Government and Policy Network on November 14<sup>th</sup> & 15<sup>th</sup>.

*Bill SB 930*: Kim asked how the group is feeling about this particular bill and voice their opinion. This pilot program for an Early Childhood Business Incubator Model was brought forth in last session. Hartford wasn't included as part of the pilot. Senator Doug McCrory is a co-chair of the education committee and they are very interested to know what is our thinking here. Jane mentioned that this bill started from New Britain as they were experiencing a large number of potential providers who wanted to become licensed family childcare providers but were living in a public building in which the landlord was reluctant to give approval or make any renovations that licensing requires. So they identified a facility in New Britain in which these providers could relocate their business and then there would be professional development looped across all those different providers. They had a large influx of immigrant families coming into the city and they wanted to become productive on workforce and thought becoming the family childcare provider would be an option to them. This is how this bill was born and they reached out to New Haven, Stamford, and Bridgeport to see if they were also interested in. So this will allow them to become licensed in another facility outside of their own home. It would be operated by the entity who would be administrating the facility in partnership with the provider. Kim mentioned that since Hartford is not part of this conversation this could be one of the reasons that state did not get out the committee is because Senator Mccrory doesn't have any reason to prioritize this.

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Jane emphasized that Commissioner Beth Bye has been really clear that she believes that family childcare providers are the way to provide more flexibility to families. Jane pointed Commissioner Bye's notes on the handout that she wants limit one facility on each of the cities and time limited before it is reviewed again and that the operator of facility would pass basic health and safety licensing. Richard Sussman asked, "Would participation in this particular innovation help us begin to address our childcare needs in a new way that going to be more responsible towards the needs of our community?". Jane clarified that rationale initially behind this program is to expand workforce development and increasing capacity by extended work. It is giving parents and providers an option that they otherwise would not because they can't get licensed because of where they live. So by providing another facility, the professional development can be provided to multiple providers in one facility to increase their ability to meet licensing standards. The Superintendent mentioned that currently we are having a challenge to filling spots, why would we create another option that may not be filled. However, if this is a way to innovate around the availability of time and age, then we may have to pursue. The Mayor mentioned that we haven't talked as much about our difficulty around tracking and staffing. He asked, if you are licensed, it doesn't mean that you are licensed to teach in one of our centers, does it? Jane mentioned it is not, but it will help to develop talent for our ELC because currently 43% of our school readiness pre-school classrooms meet the minimum credential standard for classroom. The minimum requirement means that you have to either be certified by the State Department of Education, person with bachelor's degree in any field but 12 credits on early childhood, a person with bachelor's degree in early childhood or bachelor's degree person who went through alternative route to secure that bachelors or you can have a CDA with 12 credits. If the classroom doesn't meet that requirement, those programs has to come with action plan on how they going to recruit a person that meets that credential requirement and we in turn inform the OEC.

Richard Sussman asked Liany if this structure of 4-5 family childcare providers located in one space is a unique opportunity to try out some of new health related delivery? Kim mentioned, on-site childcare is a big deal for our job centers and it is envisioned as a one shop center across the country. Jane mentioned that the Locust Street facility is a huge facility but not easily accessible to families and not in the neighborhood. Liany mentioned that when you look at the Latino children, they are less likely to be in a center based care because of language and other issues and we are saying that being in a center is better quality than being in a family childcare facility which may or may not be the case.

#### 4.2 Co-Chair Reports

Mayor Bronin referred to Jane and mentioned that as a team and as a Mayor and we as a City, we are really lucky to been beneficiary of many many years of outstanding leadership on her job and our team has really made it internationally in this effort and we are in inheritors of that. We are the national level leadership in this area.

Kim mentioned that Jane is nationally recognized and she provides a great leadership role with the wealth of knowledge she has. She travels across the country and coaches' other cities including cities like Denver etc. Jane has been thinking of retiring for a while now and she has decided to do so this year. Her last day of work is November 22<sup>nd</sup>. It is hard for the department as we lean into her expertise with Early Learning programs. Jane mentioned, professionally, it was a hardest decision for her to make since there is so much to be done, however, she said, "time is something you can't buy". She also mentioned how Hartford has been always a part of her family and working with the City was a privilege for her. She thanked all the team for their alliance.



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**5 Business Agenda/Action Items**

5.1. Task Force is focusing on a Procurement process as well as the Rubric.

As mentioned above, Task Force will focus on these tasks:

- Working group will dig into whether or not to recommend there should be an independent review of the Rubric.
- Parent participation on the cabinet; Whether or not to increase the number of parent participation.
- More proactive and formalized process to release notifications for applicants.

5.2. Develop a meeting schedule:

Since the retreat for this year was cancelled due to Providence Talk meeting, new date should be recognized.

2020: Quarterly meetings

**6 Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 2:50 p.m.



# MAYOR'S CABINET FOR YOUNG CHILDREN

## *Co-Chairs*

Luke Bronin, Mayor  
Leslie Torres-Rodriguez, Superintendent

## *Staff Liaisons*

Kimberly Oliver, Director  
Nancy Ortiz, Interim Liaison

## **STAFF REPORT**

1. **School Readiness Liaison.** Jane Crowell was the Assistant Director for Young Children and acted as Hartford's School Readiness Liaison. Since Jane's retirement, the position has remained vacant. Earlier this year, the City of Hartford (DFCYR) began the process of recruiting, which included working with Human Resources on updating the job posting and planning for an interview process that would include the Cabinet's co-chairs. During the interim, Kim Oliver asked Nancy Ortiz, who worked with Jane for more than a decade on the School Readiness grant, to work with her and take on some additional tasks to support the School Readiness grant and the council. After COVID-19 was declared an emergency, the job search was put on hold. Nancy continues in the role of Interim Liaison.
2. **Office of Early Childhood Grants**
  - 2.1. **School Readiness.** OEC released emergency funding for \$1,223,590 for July and August 2020. Hartford's application for September 1, 2020 to June 30, 2021 was submitted for \$9,009,362 for the 10-month period pending approval of the Mayor's Cabinet for Young Children in its role as the local School Readiness Council. OEC made modifications to the payment methodology such that payments will be based on classroom equivalents rather than the number of children enrolled. Also, supplemental funding is available to providers for up to 25% of allocated monthly payment to stabilize operations of programs.
  - 2.2. **School Readiness Quality Enhancement.** OEC has announced the allocations for communities for FY21, but have not yet released the application. Hartford will receive \$112,523 for September 1, 2020 to June 30, 2021.
  - 2.3. **Child Day Care.** The City of Hartford received a letter of intent for \$3,156,268.10 for September 1, 2020 to June 30, 2022.
  - 2.4. **CT CARES for Child Care.** The City of Hartford was awarded \$35,000 grant for Family Child Care Network for July 1 to September 30, 2020. To date, there are 65 family child care providers in the Hartford network. To further provide personalized coaching, professional development, and PPE, we are submitting a grant application to the Hartford Foundation for Public Giving for a matching grant.

**Staff Report – Page 2****3. Task Force**

- 3.1. Procurement and rubric.** The task force was charged with recommendations on: (1) independent review of the rubric, (2) parent participation on the Cabinet, and (3) process to notify School Readiness grant applicants of awards. The task force met prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, and a workshop on the rubric was provided to Cabinet members. Recommendations have not yet been submitted to the Cabinet for approval.

**4. Initiatives**

- 4.1. FirstSchool/EduSnap.** Two-hour EduSnap visits were conducted in 80 School Readiness classrooms in Fall 2019 by two consultants trained to gather data. Expected follow up visits in Spring 2020 were not conducted due to COVID. Aggregate site and agency data provided to program administrators. Also, coaches met with classroom teams to review data, support goal development, and provide overall support to meet goals. In aggregate for the 80 classrooms (citywide) based on two-hour observations, time spent on the top predictors for positive third grade outcomes include small group instruction at 2%, peer collaboration at 17%, oral language development at 24%, vocabulary development at 5%, early math concepts at 20%, scaffolded instruction at 40%, and metacognition at 1%.
- 4.2. Hartford Talks.** As a reminder, Hartford is one of five cities in the country selected to replicate Providence Talks, an early childhood education program that empowers parents and caregivers with tools to support language development at a critical age and help children enter kindergarten classroom ready. The Campaign for Grade-Level Reading, led by United Way of Central and Northeastern Connecticut, acts the advisory group for Hartford Talks. The plan for year 1 was to provide services to 200 children and families through LENA Grow (centers managed by the City of Hartford) and Home (home visits as part of The Village for Families and Children's Words Count). By the close of the year, we had a total of 163 children participate – 93 children in LENA Grow and 70 children in LENA Home. The COVID-19 pandemic disrupted the program in all five cities. Although, in Hartford, we were unable to continue home visits or hold the second cohort in the centers, we continued to support families with literacy bags and providers with coaching and professional development. Also, we saw an increase in each of the LENA developmental metrics – average daily conversational turns, average daily adult word count, and average share of "meaningful" audio environment. Our goal for year 2 is to increase cohesiveness across the LENA models, enhance coaching supports, professional development, and serve 300 children.

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- 4.3. **Lectio.** Phase 2 of Harvard’s Lectio Institute is still on hold. As a reminder, Lectio is not a curriculum; it is a framework that maps out programs and resources for early literacy and informs decision-making of stakeholders to improve literacy outcomes. United Way partnered with the City of Hartford on an application for OEC’s RFP for Strengthening Local Early Childhood Collaboratives to continue to advance the work that was started with Lectio earlier this year, but it was not funded. Currently, DFCYR staff is in talks with Lectio to revisit the phase 2 proposal using the lens of the COVID pandemic to determine how to sustain momentum on our citywide literacy efforts.
- 4.4. **National League of Cities’ Cities Supporting the Early Childhood Workforce Initiative.** In 2018, Hartford continues to participate as one of the project cities along with Albuquerque, Arlington, Jacksonville, Kansas City, Las Vegas, Richmond, Rochester, San Francisco, and Seattle. The network has identified three buckets that municipal leaders may consider as they support the early childhood workforce: (1) local government redefining the early childhood workforce, (2) accurately and boldly defining the child care landscape, and (3) financing and sustaining early learning/childcare as a viable sector.
- 4.5. **Health Enhancement Community (HEC)/North Hartford Triple Aim Collaborative.** This blueprint for collaborations across Connecticut to improve healthy weight and physical fitness, advance child well-being, and strengthen health equity will further Hartford residents’ health and well-being by addressing both clinical need and the social determinants that impact overall health. The North Hartford Triple Aim Collaborative, a place-based collaboration among health-focused leaders, residents, and organizations to improve wellbeing in North Hartford is work together with our partners to advance a set of interrelated policy, system and environment interventions including HEC to increase wellbeing for North Hartford families and create a healthier Hartford. Current focus areas of Hartford HEC are early care and childhood education, family supports, and clinical care.
- 4.6. **Population Change.** This work is supported by the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation and aims to unify multi-sector, place-based efforts and sustain efforts towards population level outcomes as indicated by child wellbeing. Through shared learning and engagement with government and philanthropy, the goal is to build the collective capacity of individuals, organizations, networks, and communities for improved outcomes. More recently, the national cross-site learning community released the first results of the Collective Community Capacity survey and enhanced the survey to assess the relative contribution and reliability of each item to improve the C3 Survey’s Collective Community Capacity Index. This survey and its index can be used as tools to align their actions across sectors and jurisdictions in order to achieve the synergistic, cumulative effect needed to improve outcomes and expedite progress at a population level.



# OEC

**Connecticut Office of Early Childhood**

**FY 21 September to June  
School Readiness Funding Plan  
August 21, 2020**

# RFP Due Dates

- The August 24<sup>th</sup> Due date is being eliminated.
- Applications will be processed in the order received.
- If you've already submitted, updates will be accepted. Liaisons should reach out to discuss the submission of additional information.
- The September 13<sup>th</sup> due date has not changed and is the final date applications will be accepted.
- Apparently there are issues regarding the printint of the RFP after submission. Electronic copies of RFPs will be provided to Liaisons upon approval of applications.



# Today's Topics

- Waivers
- Services and operating schedules by space type
- Funding Rates
- Allocations
- Space and Funding Requests
- Addressing Family Needs
- FY 21 September to June Funding Types
- FY 21 Reporting Grid
- Reimbursements
- Other changes, Alternate Learning Models

# Waiver for variance in hours services

- Waiver will be provided for Councils to submit on behalf of funded programs.
- Programs have the option to operate for a reduced number of hours per day for each space type.
- Programs have added flexibility to:
  - Devote additional time to cleaning and disinfecting of classrooms, equipment, materials, etc.
  - Minimize disruption in services due to staffing shortages.
- Waivers do not allow for programs to operate less than 5 days per week.
- Programs should ensure family needs are taken into consideration when making adjustments to operating schedules.

# FY 21 Space Type Definitions

- **Full Day/Full Year**
  - 41 weeks (September and June)
  - Access to services 6.5 to 10 hours per day
  - Funded for on-site and Hybrid Learning
  - Remote Learning is not supported by this space type
- **School Day/School Year**
  - 177 days of service (September and June)
  - Access to services 3-6 hours per day
  - Funded for on-site and Hybrid Learning
  - Remote Learning is not supported by this space type

# FY 21 Space Type Definitions

- **Part Day/Part Year**
  - 177 days of service (September and June)
  - Access to services 2 – 2.5 hours per day
  - Funded for on-site, Hybrid and Remote models
- **Extended Day/Full Year**
  - 41 weeks (September and June)
  - Used to extend non-SR funded spaces
  - No specific number of hours
  - Funded for on-site only

# FY 21 Funding Rates

- Full Day/Full Year - \$743.66/month
- School Day/School Year - \$600/month
- Part Day/Part Year - \$450/month
- Extended Day/Full Year - \$231/month

# FY 21 Funding Allocations

- An allocation is the amount of funds a program is eligible to earn per month based on Council recommendation and OEC approval.
- Per legislative requirements, community allocations each fiscal year may not exceed the funding for the total number spaces on the OEC space grid on March 30th of the prior fiscal year.
- The term of the FY 21 School Readiness Continuation Funding grant is September 2020 through June 2021.



# FY 21 Funding Allocations

- Adjustments to program allocations for the current grant year have been made for programs in communities eligible to request COVID-19 Emergency Summer Funding for July and August 2020.
- FY 21 School Readiness continuation funding awards shall include monthly funding allocations for September 2020 to June 2021 only.
- Programs/communities are eligible to earn funds **up to** their maximum monthly allocation.

# FY 21 Funding Allocations

- It is the intent of OEC that regardless of utilization, program monthly allocations approved during the FY21 RFP process shall remain constant throughout FY21.
- Space conversions will not impact the amount of the “Max monthly allocation” to allow programs continued flexibility in meeting the changing needs of families.
- In circumstances that necessitate Councils to recommend an increase or decrease in program funding allocations, justification and OEC approval are required.



# FY 21 Funding Allocations

- Although space conversions will not reduce maximum monthly allocations, conversions may result in changes to the “current month allocation.”
- Current month allocations align with the configuration of spaces on the program grid in a given month.
- Current month allocations may fluctuate due to space conversions requested by programs.

# Space and Funding Requests

- Complete space and funding grids based on maximum funding allocations even if not all spaces can be enrolled due to group size limitations.
- On-site and Hybrid Learning models can be requested through Full Day, School Day and Part Day space types.
- Remote Learning can be requested through the Part Day spaces only.
- An updated space and funding grid will be provided to reflect recent changes.
- If a community does not have requests for alternate learning models at this time, the original grid can be submitted with the application.

# Changing Family Needs

- Programs are encouraged to assess family and community needs on an ongoing basis to anticipate changing needs throughout the year.
- Programs may request approval from the Council and OEC to convert space types to meet the changing needs of families.
- Requests must be submitted when converting space types to implement Hybrid or Remote Learning models.

# Changing Family Needs

- Maximum allocations will not be reduced as a result of space conversions to provide programs with maximum flexibility in meeting changing family needs.
- This will allow programs to request to revert spaces back to their original type as needed.
- Space conversions will be approved within program within FY 21 program maximum funding allocations only.



# Reimbursements

- “Utilization” means a child enrolled in a specific space type has received services at least one day during the reporting period.

*“Received services” means the child received care and/or learning experiences delivered through on-site, Hybrid or Remote Learning models.*

# Reimbursements

- Reimbursements will be based on funds earned for spaces utilized in a “Classroom Equivalent funding model.”
- This is NOT the same funding model provided in the COVID-19 Emergency Summer Funding Plan.

# Reimbursements

- The maximum allocations for classroom equivalent funding are based on March 2020 space grids.
- Funding earned under this model shall not exceed the program's monthly maximum funding allocation.

# Reimbursements

- “Classroom” refers to equivalents and not the actual number of classrooms in a program space.
- Funds are earned based on “classroom equivalents” and not individual utilized spaces.
- The number of funded “classroom equivalents” is based on the on the number of children receiving services at least one day during the reporting period for each space type.

# Classroom Equivalents

## Classroom Equivalent – Full Classroom

- Based on 11-20 children
- Funded at the individual rate for each space type based on 20 children

## – Classroom Equivalent – Half Classroom

- Based on 1-10 children
- Funded at the individual rate for each space type based on 10 children

# Advantages of Funding by Classroom Equivalents

- Maximizes allocation regardless of space type.
- Allows for fluctuation of utilized spaces with out impacting reimbursement level for the month as long as minimum levels of utilization are maintained for the classroom equivalent type.
- Allows for conversion of spaces to meet the changing needs of families



# Calculating Classroom Equivalents (CE)

## Example 1

Full (1.0) CE based on 11-20 utilized spaces (funds 20)

Half (.50) CE based on 1-10 utilized spaces (funds 10)

**38 FD (utilized spaces) (1 Full CE with 20) + (1 Full CE with 18)**

**Total = 2.0 CE at FD rate based on 40 children**

Funds for 1 Full CE  $\$743.66 \times 20 = \$14873$

Full CE funds x 2 CE =  $\$29,746.40$  funds earned/up to allocation

*This model provides an additional \$1487.32 in funds for 38 spaces above individual space funding for  $38 \times \$743.66 = \$28,259.08$*

# Calculating Classroom Equivalents (CE)

## Example 2

Full (1.0) CE based on 11-20 utilized spaces (funds 20)

Half (.50) CE based on 1-10 utilized spaces (funds 10)

**23 SD (utilized spaces) (1 Full CE with 20) + (.50 Half CE with 3)**

**Total = 1.5 CE at SD rate based on 30 children**

Funds for 1 Full CE  $\$600 \times 20 = \$12,000$  +

Funds for 1 Half CE  $\$600 \times 10 = \$6,000$

Total CE funds earned \$ 18,000/up to allocation

*This model provides a potential additional \$ 4,200 in funds for 23 SD spaces above individual space funding of  $23 \text{ SD} \times \$600 = \$13,800$ .*

# Supplemental Payments

- COVID-19 Response Operational Expense Supplement
  - Provided to off-set operational costs to support programs with reduced utilization.
  - Calculated at 25% of program maximum allocation.
  - Supplemental payments are paid in addition to funds earned up to program maximum monthly allocations.
  - The supplement payment amount may fluctuate due to increased or decreased utilization from month to month.



# FY 21 Funding Calculation Grid

Space type and minimum hours of access to services must be provided

Max Monthly Allocation (Fixed)										
Space Type	Monthly Child Rate	March 2020 Grid	Spaces on Grid	Funding Allocation	Conversion	Classroom Equivalent Funding Rate per Month	Attended/Received services min. 1-day	# Classrooms Funded during	Classroom Funds	COVID-19 Response Operational Expense
					1-10 spaces = Half 11-20 spaces = Full					
Full Day (6.5-10 hours)	\$ 743.66			\$ -	0.00					
School Day (3-6 hours)	\$ 600.00			\$ -	0.00					
Part Day 2-2.5 hours	\$ 450.00			\$ -	0.00					
Extended Day (wrap)	\$ 231.00			\$ -	0.00					
Current SR Space and Funding Allocation			0	\$ -						
						Total Funding				
Total Monthly Payment ( funds earned + supplement up to full allocation)										

Monthly reimbursement rates per space for each space type



# FY 21 Funding Calculation Grid

“Current Spaces on Grid” indicates the current total number of approved spaces by space type for on-site, hybrid and remote services during a given month. May fluctuate month to month due to space conversions approved to meet changing needs of families. (This column is prefilled by OEC based on approved spaces).

Max Monthly Allocation (Fixed*)		\$ -								
Space Type	Monthly Per Child Rate	Space Allocation on March 2020 Grid	Current Spaces on Grid	Current Monthly Funding Allocation						
Full Day (6.5-10 hours)	\$ 743.66			\$ -						
School Day (3-6 hours)	\$ 600.00			\$ -						
Part Day 2-2.5 hours	\$ 450.00			\$ -	0.00	\$ 9,000.00		0.00	\$ -	
Extended Day (wrap)	\$ 231.00			\$ -	0.00	\$ 4,620.00		0.00	\$ -	
Current SR Space and Funding Allocation			0	\$ -			0		\$ -	
										% \$ - \$ -
										n) \$ - \$ -

Current monthly funding allocations auto-calculate based on the number of spaces listed in previous column. The current funding allocations total must remain at or below the highlighted max monthly allocation.



# FY 21 Funding Calculation Grid

Max Monthly Allocation (Fixed*)		\$	-						
Space Type	Monthly Per Child Rate	Space Allocation on March 2020 Grid	Current Spaces on Grid	Current Monthly Funding Allocation	Classroom Equivalent Conversion 1-10 spaces = Half 11-20 spaces = Full	Classroom Equivalent Funding Rate per Month (Full based on 20 and Half based on 10)	Attended/Received services min. 1-day during Reporting Period	# Classrooms Funded during this reporting period	
				\$ -	0.00	\$ 14,873.20		0.00	\$
				\$ -	0.00	\$ 12,000.00		0.00	\$
				\$ -	0.00	\$ 9,000.00		0.00	\$
				\$ -	0.00	\$ 4,620.00		0.00	\$
0				\$ -			0		\$
Total Funds Earned / Supplement based on 25%									\$
Total Monthly Payment ( funds earned + supplement up to full allocation)									

Classroom Equivalents and auto-calculate based on number of current spaces on grid indicated for each space type. This reflect the total CEs eligible to be funded in the given month.

Program enters number of utilized spaces during reporting period. The number of Classroom Equivalents eligible to be funded for the reporting period will auto-calculate based on utilization.



# FY 21 Funding Calculation Grid

Maximum amount of monthly supplement auto-calculates based on 25% of Max Monthly Allocation in highlighted box.

Max Monthly Allocation (Fixed*)		\$ -								
Space Type	Monthly Per Child Rate	Space Allocation on March 2020 Grid	Current Spaces on Grid	Current Monthly Funding Allocation	Classroom Equivalent Conversion 1-10 spaces = Half 11-20 spaces = Full	Equivalent Funding Rate per Month (Full based on 20 and Half based on 10)	services min. 1-day during Reporting Period	# Classrooms Funded during this reporting period	Classroom Funds Earned	COVID-19 Response Operational Expense Supplement*
Full Day (6.5-10 hours)	\$ 743.66			\$ -	0.00	\$ 14,873.20		0.00	\$ -	\$ -
School Day (3-6 hours)	\$ 600.00			\$ -	0.00	\$ 12,000.00		0.00	\$ -	
Part Day 2-2.5 hours	\$ 450.00			\$ -	0.00	\$ 9,000.00		0.00	\$ -	
Extended Day (wrap)	\$ 231.00			\$ -	0.00	\$ 4,620.00		0.00	\$ -	
Current SR Space and Funding Allocation			0	\$ -			0		\$ -	
Total Funds Earned / Supplement based on 25%									\$ -	\$ -
Total Monthly Payment ( funds earned + supplement up to full allocation)									\$ -	\$ -

Funds earned during the reporting period auto-calculates.  
Eligible amount of supplement payment auto-calculates.  
 Total reimbursement amount auto-calculates to total funds earned + supplement **up to** Max Monthly Allocation in yellow highlighted box.



# Reporting

- CE Grids will be distributed to Liaisons to share with programs so that they can become familiar with the Classroom Equivalent model for funding.
- Monthly Report templates will be available by mid September once applications have been approved.
- The status of a utilized space (space type and learning model) on the last day of the reporting period shall be reflected in the monthly report for that month

# Addendum

- Additional information on these topics is provided in the following slides:
  - Hybrid and Remote Learning Models
  - Group size limit change
  - Updated mask guidance
  - Health & Safety Guidelines

# Hybrid and Remote Learning Model Requests

- When possible, on-site services should be accessible to families.
- Cases when on-site care may not be possible at all or not possible 5 days per week:
  - A program is unable to provide on-site services to all enrolled families due to COVID-19 group size limits;
  - Facility closures in response to Public Health Guidance;
  - Classroom closures in response to Public Health Guidance;
  - Other COVID-19 related circumstances.

# Hybrid and Remote Learning Model Requests

- In these cases, programs may request to implement alternate learning models.
- Hybrid Learning is provided to the child through a combination of on-site and remote learning experiences.
- Remote Learning is provided to the child through off-site learning experiences only.

# Hybrid and Remote Learning Model Requests

- Programs requesting to implement alternate learning models must submit plans for Council review. Plans shall include:
  - A rationale for implementing this model over five-day per week in-person learning;
  - Details describing the remote learning component including communication/activities with children, remote conferencing with families, planning time and professional learning related to remote learning.
  - Staff training and/or qualifications to ensure effective delivery of remote learning family engagement activities;
  - How the remote learning will be tracked
  - The anticipated date of implementation.

# Hybrid and Remote Learning Model Requests

- Councils shall submit plans to the OEC for final approval.
- In cases when a program closes unexpectedly and needs to transition to an alternate learning model quickly, the Council shall work with the program to establish times lines for submission of plans.
- Programs offering on-site services may choose to submit plans for review to allow them to transition to an alternate learning model should the need arise unexpectedly at any time

# Hybrid and Remote Learning Model Requests

- Programs operated by LEA's may attach their district's State approved Hybrid or Remote Learning plan to the OEC Hybrid and Remote Learning Plan Details Form.
  - Programs attaching the LEA's plan may reference the State approved plan as appropriate in the OEC document.
  - LEA plans are outline Remote and Hybrid Learning expectations for children in K-12 and may not necessarily address the specific needs of 3 and 4 year old children.
  - The OEC may request additional information regarding the implementation of Remote and Hybrid Learning for preschool children.



# Group Size Limit Change

- The decision has been made to increase the allowable group size in child care programs, including public school preschools, before and after school programs and camps to 16 children.
- It is a program decision whether to increase group size in their classrooms when limits increase.
- Increases in group size do not impact the funding levels provided in the FY 21 School Readiness Funding Model.

# Updated Mask Guidance

- **Updated CDC and Academy of Pediatrics guidance on the wearing of masks.** *“Children 2 years and older should wear a mask over their nose and mouth when in public settings where it’s difficult to practice social distancing. This is an additional public health measure people should take to reduce the spread of COVID-19 in addition to (not instead of) the other everyday preventive actions listed above.*
- **Pediatrics:**  
<https://www.aappublications.org/news/2020/08/13/covid19facecoverings081320>
- **CDC:** <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/daily-life-coping/children/protect-children.html>
- Additional guidance will be issued by OEC in the upcoming weeks.

# Health & Safety Guidelines

- The guides for child care centers, family child care homes and home visitors are located here:

<https://www.ctoec.org/covid-19/oecs-covid-19-guides/>

- Programs should continue to follow this guidance to support the health and wellness of children, staff and their families.



# Mayor's Cabinet for Young Children



# Today's Agenda

- **For update:**

- Co-chair reports
- Staff report

- **For action:**

- Approval of FY21 School Readiness grant awards
- Approval of Catholic Charities' program site change
- Approval of waiver for variance in hours of service
- Approval of bylaw change

- **For review:**

- Kindergarten-eligible children policy
- Hartford resident 50/50 policy

- **For discussion:**

- Re-opening plans for Hartford's School Readiness provider network



# Updates

- Mayor Bronin
- Superintendent Torres-Rodriguez
- Staff report  
(Please see written report.)

# FY21 School Readiness Grant

**RECOMMENDATION:** Motion that the Mayor's Cabinet for Young Children, in its role as the local School Readiness Council for Hartford, Connecticut, approve the staff's recommendation to award slots to early learning providers as follows:

Program	FD/FY	SD/SY	Jul - Aug	Sep - Jun
Boys & Girls	30		\$44,660	\$223,098
Catholic Charities	120		\$181,540	\$892,392
Capitol Child Development Center	22		\$24,095	\$163,605
CREC - River Street	5		\$3,880	\$ 37,183
Community Renewal Team	125		\$185,835	\$929,575
DFCYR – City of Hartford	128		\$188,160	\$951,885
Hartford Neighborhood Centers	32		\$47,060	\$237,971
Hartford Public Schools		365	\$ -	\$2,190,000
King's Chapel	20		\$29,760	\$148,732
Pequenin	72		\$107,160	\$535,435
Pride & Joy	30		\$44,080	\$223,098
Salvation Army	122		\$119,040	\$907,265
Trinity	25		\$37,000	\$185,915
Village	20		\$29,760	\$148,732
Women's League	135		\$151,800	\$1,003,941
YWCA	31		\$29,760	\$230,535
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>917</b>	<b>365</b>	<b>\$1,223,590</b>	<b>\$9,009,362</b>

# FY21 School Readiness Quality Enhancement Grant – Priority

**RECOMMENDATION:** Motion that the Mayor’s Cabinet for Young Children, in its role as the local School Readiness Council for Hartford, Connecticut, approve the staff’s recommendation to award funding to vendors as follows:

Vendor	Description	Sep - Jun
Donna Rooney	Coaching	\$23,000
Sue Vivian	Coaching	\$20,000
TBD	Distance Learning	\$57,000
	Capacity Building and Support	
	Miscellaneous expenses	\$12,523
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>\$112,523</b>



# Waiver for Variance in Hours of Service

**RECOMMENDATION:** Motion that the Mayor's Cabinet for Young Children, in its role as the local School Readiness Council for Hartford, Connecticut, and on behalf of School Readiness-funded programs, approve the waiver for variance in hours of service such that programs have the option to operate for a reduced number of hours per day for each space type.

# Catholic Charities Site Change

**RECOMMENDATION:** Motion that the Mayor's Cabinet for Young Children, in its role as the local School Readiness Council for Hartford, Connecticut, approve the change in program site location from the Therapeutic Learning Center to St. Cyril and Methodius for Catholic Charities Child Development Center.

# Bylaw Change

**RECOMMENDATION:** Motion that the Mayor's Cabinet for Young Children approve a change in the Bylaws of the Mayor's Cabinet for Young Children such that there is an addition to the section titled "Decision Making" that states the Co-chairs are able to approve a resolution or action with the purpose of sustaining the operations of the Cabinet, partner providers, or programs to support the children and families of Hartford on behalf of the Cabinet during times of emergency as declared by the Governor of the State of Connecticut

# Policy Review

## Kindergarten-Eligible Policy

- Children who are ages 3 and 4, and children 5 years of age who are not eligible to enroll in kindergarten may enroll in a School Readiness program. Under C.G.S. Sec 10 -16t, a School Readiness Council (SRC) may elect to reserve five percent of its spaces for 5-year-olds eligible to enroll in school provided they have been in the program for one year and the parent or legal guardian, the School Readiness provider and local or regional school district agree that the child is not ready for kindergarten.

## Hartford Resident 50/50 Policy

- School Readiness sub-grantees must prioritize the enrollment of Hartford preschool children and must maintain a minimum of 50% Hartford children each month. If this percentage is not achieved, it may be necessary to not seek reimbursement in a given month for a number of non-Hartford children in order to meet the 50% Hartford resident threshold.  
(August 8, 2015)

# Discussion

## Re-Opening Plans

- All 16-members of Hartford's School Readiness Network are or will be open as of September 8, 2020.
- Key challenges include health and safety protocols including PPE, low enrollment, staffing, distant/remote learning, OEC grant reimbursement methodologies, class size, etc.
- Currently, we are not conducting onsite monitoring – teaching/learning or compliance.
- Providers were invited to share their experiences, challenges, and lessons learned regarding COVID-19 and re-opening with members of the Cabinet.



Thank you!