



**Southeast VT Building Bright Futures
Oct 1, 2014 Regional Council
Advisory Board Meeting Minutes**

1. Welcome and Introductions

Facilitator: Sue G. (UWWC); Note taker: Sadie F. (AHS)

Attendees: Chad S. (BBF), Cindy T. (VT DOH), Chloe L. (WP), Sandy S. (EES), Deb G. (EES), Elizabeth R. (WCCA), Nancy W. (WCCA), Gretchen H. (BCCC), Noreen L. (PCAB), Kathy R. (WNESU), Janice S. (WSESU), Katherine J. (Food Connects)

2. Review/Approval of Sept. 3 SeVT BBF Advisory Board Meeting Summary

We confirmed that all present were getting the emails. If you are not, get in touch with Chad. Sandy asked that her salary arrangement be clarified in the notes (paid by the hour up to \$2,000). Chad will update the notes.

3. From Strategy to Action

Activity: Propelling BBF SeVT strategy forward

Chad introduced an activity to propel our work forward and how to include voices that might not be at our advisory board table. We will get some assistance at the local level to do strategic planning and implement our actions. Today's activity will help us figure out how to use that technical assistance. From different people, Chad heard that people are really interested in being inclusive, collaborative, take advantage of our successes, include more voices, and identify specific actions.

Topics for discussion:

- Ideal: planning to action
- VT early learning
 - Framework

Many people were familiar with the document

Aly Richards did present about the framework

We agreed that we likely don't need specific learning about the framework now
 - Action plan

Because we have not had a final version, people were less familiar with this

We are not clear on the prioritization because the process is slow

We want to know and understand the expectations for the BBF councils in the action plan
- SEVT BBF
 - Full council (whoever supports the vision and mission of SeVT BBF)

People think of us as a hub for EC in our area (advisory group, website); we keep our eyes on the big picture and connect that to the community

Our role is to address population needs, not to provide services

We do council projects/events, aligned with our strategic action plan

We are adjusting to new capacity

We are the unified voice of EC—so we need more health care practitioners (physical and emotional) and EC practitioners, the business community, municipalities, etc., as much as possible—although we will not always reach consensus

We push the strategic plan forward and communicate it

We provide a place to network

We convene and facilitate conversations

The place people in the community go to have voice in or understand things like Act 166, expansion grants, etc., like a clearinghouse

Whose voice is not here? Business, towns, medical providers/health care providers

- Advisory board (anyone who attends the monthly meetings)

We do have some structure in our bylaws, including the entities we would like to be represented on the advisory council

We vet ideas and make decisions by consensus

We need to revisit the structure and membership of the advisory board and council; the previous model was based on need and lack of capacity

We could have committees that are designated with the council authority to make decisions, including a core group (advisory group) that makes decisions

- Monthly meetings

- (Quarterly) events

We have been told that some dollars will be set-aside for local councils, but we don't know yet how that can be used. Some of it is federal funding so cannot be used for food.

- Committees

- We need to identify and get up and running committees and ad-hoc committees

- Direct service

We get just under \$26,000 for direct service programming. Other councils get between \$20,000 and \$180,000. Some councils are very involved in the direct services dollars, and others do not. Historically, the direct service dollars have been removed from the Council and dedicated to the Welcome Baby program. The Council funds have been matched with funds from EES. Last year, we took a small amount of funding to support the month of the young child activities. People agreed that it was ideal to keep the funding separate from council activities. In the past, we have approved the plan at the advisory group for the funds.

Chad mentioned that BBF may seek additional direct service funds from outside sources. We wondered where the money would flow in terms of which state agency. We also wondered how additional funding would be distributed. We decided to focus on the action plan so that if money were available, we would know where we would put it. The group agreed we would like transparency in how the money will be distributed. We want an equitable share for our community.

The charge of the grant will be to implement the action plan.

- Issues facing children, families and ECD field

Chad's monthly report

He tried this as a way to start a dialogue and put together what he's been doing. Feel free to look at it and send him feedback. We would like to have that on the agenda each month connected to the action plan.

4. BBF coordinated events

Raising of America screening

Let's Grow Kids has organized a screening Oct. 28 in the community. There are a lot of partners, but a lot of the coordination is falling to the council. This is a great opportunity for us to reach out to groups under-represented on the council. The goal is to generate interest in being an advocate for early childhood. The focus will be business and town leadership. Sue, Noreen and Chloe are working with Chad on that event.

Other events

In the past, we had planned quarterly events. The goals were: meet more people in EC, raise awareness about the importance of EC, get information about BBF, networking, know who more of the players are in the EC system, advocate for or garner support for legislative actions. Our advocacy is partially providing information and data. We tried to leverage places where BBF appeared or had a presence at established events. We need to clarify for legislators and others the relationships between BBF, Let's Grow Kids, and the VT Alliance.

We discussed the possibility of organizing a legislative session. If we do one, we want it to be meaningful; we want to look back at the last couple of years because we have had some successful events. We discussed the possibility of a forum about what's happening with EC (Race to the Top, BBF, etc.). We might want to focus on what RTTT means for Windham County. We could invite Carolyn Wesley. We could invite folks from CDD. We don't know yet if we will be able to provide food at any event.

We discussed the possibility of combining our event with the *Raising of America*. That is a Let's Grow Kids Event, so we might not have as much control over the agenda. We do have an opportunity to shape the panel and facilitation. We could use it as an opportunity to connect what is happening locally through the panel/discussion after. It might also be a next step. The December meeting could be launched at the October event and a continuation (like *Raising of Windham County*). Chad will put out a call to see if we can get a planning committee and they will decide if we are going to do an event in December in the next 2 weeks. Sue and Sadie volunteered to be involved with Chad. We will look at December 8 and 15th as possible dates.

We have historically been involved with Month of the Young Child in some way. Last year we had an annual meeting/celebration of our work.

2014 was the first year we did an annual meeting/celebration event. Look into continue doing this as it aligns with our action plan.

5. Universal Pre-K

There is a lot going on in terms of the rule making, what the law means, etc. [See draft rules at <http://education.vermont.gov/act-166-draft-rules>.] Frank Perotti (former Springfield Superintendent) will be a Dover School on Thursday, Oct. 9 from 3.30-4.30 to talk about the

legislation. We would like to have Mr. Perotti come mid-October. Chad has connected with the Director Group and will connect with Judi Rosner to talk with the Starting Points network about to see when would be best.

Preliminary question/concern process for council members. Questions and concerns by BBF council members can be sent directly to Act166Questions@buildingbrightfutures.org no later than **Friday, October 3rd by Noon** (very short turnaround). These will be sent directly to Reeva Murphy of AHS and Manuela Fonseca of AOE - members of the Act 166 Informal Working Group.

6. **Funding priorities**

BBF supported child care at the recent Bonnie Harris event at Hilltop (co-sponsored by WCCA, and WP). They have asked us to provide funding for child care for the follow up workshop on Oct. 18 at Hilltop Montessori. We discussed concerns about the event (profit for the presenter, cost to families, other use of and commitments of our funds, fit with our action plan). We decided not to support the follow up workshops.

7. **Updates**

Direct Service activities

Sandy has been working on getting the new Parenting in your Pocket out. They should be dropped off with *Parenting Express*. She is also working on updating the parent education list.

Outreach

Sandy went to the Wellness Fair to table. She got 13 LGK pledge sheets signed. She got 3 people signed up for Welcome Baby visits. She was representing these 2 groups as well as BBF. The River Valley Kids Fair was at the same time. WCCA had a big presence and had BBF information as well. Vicki at the Co-Op is the only ambassador that has been going out to talk about BBF/LGK. Chad was at the BEEC Wild about Books event and talked with a lot of parents about LGK.

Speaking engagement opportunities

Think about places/organizations where Chad could talk about BBF. Chad is really thinking about how to connect to the business community. He is hoping to get more ideas, so send them his way.

8. **Announcements**

Visualizing Vermont Data: 4th data stakeholders and stewards meeting.

Thursday, November 20th, 8:30-3pm at the Montpelier Elks Lodge, 203 Country Club Dr. Montpelier. Meeting Purpose: Provide an opportunity for data stewards, stakeholders and end-users to share their innovative ideas to shape Vermont Insights v1.0. Built from [Building Bright Futures](#) (BBF) Early Childhood Data Reporting System working prototype (bbfdata.com), Vermont Insights v1.0 is a publicly accessible online toolbox that integrates meaningful data on the well-being of children, families and communities. To register, [click here](#).

Next meeting: November 5th, 12:30-2:30pm at EES' Conference Room (2nd floor), 130 Birge St. in Brattleboro.

Lunch: Noreen

Facilitator: Sadie

Note taker: Sandy

For those interested in reading the full white board notes, read on!

October 1st White Board Notes (full)

From Strategy to Action

- **What do we want the Council and Advisory Board to look like and do?**
 - Council:
 - Action Plan connected projects and events
 - Network for Early Childhood (EC) field
 - Hub for all things EC (not providing services). This means being a clearinghouse, convener, and connector for the EC field in southeast VT. Communicating Early Childhood Framework and Action Plan and providing an open space for discussion. Ex: website, advisory board, events, newsletter, information sharing. Issues such as Act 166, PreK expansion grant
 - We are a unified voice for EC (health care community, municipalities, social service providers)
 - Get clarity as to our council's relationship/connection with VT Early Childhood Alliance (VECA)
 - We need to clarify how we as a council operate.
 - Get clarity from BBF
 - Need a map of early childhood system so that those not directly involved in the system, but have a role or want to play a role can understand the system. Make it VT-based as well as specific to Windham County
 - Advisory Board:
 - Revisit bylaws and structure of Advisory Board to make more open for increased inclusion, but, keep small and nimble in order to make decisions. Size and responsiveness
 - Committees have authority to make decisions and move forward. Advisory board give clear direction to these committees and empower them
 - It is helpful to have core group moving things forward
- **Familiarity and connection with state Early Childhood Framework and Action Plan**
 - Some familiarity, primarily with those that have been on the advisory board for some time and took part in the process of creating and Aly Richards presentation. For those that are new to the field, new to the advisory board and/or council or those that we recruit to be on the advisory board, it may be worthwhile to have another info session. Also, include some sort of "system map"
- **What should be the council's relationship with Direct Service grant dollars?**
 - Historically, this has been separate. WCCA is the fiscal agent and keeps this money separate. Council has say as it relates to the SeVT BBF action plan. Small amounts of these grant dollars have been used in the past for specific events/initiatives that tie back to the action plan (Ex: Month of the Young Child)
 - Most agreed to keep this separate, however, had two questions/requests:
 - How is the distribution of Direct Service grant dollars being decided? What is the formula?
 - Would like the process to be more transparent and equitable.

- **How should we prioritize and organize events?**

- Come back to action plan. Revisit our action plan to make sure it is aligned with state framework/action plan
- Create committee/ad-hoc group to organize as they come up
- Goals for events:
 - Take place quarterly
 - Raise awareness
 - Opportunity to network
 - Informational: legislative, system
 - Be involved/connect with things already happening
 - Advocate for early childhood
 - How we advocate depends on issue and appropriateness
- Specific events coming up/possibilities:
 - Raising of America film screening and discussion. Tuesday, October 28 from 5:30-7:30pm at the Latchis Theatre. Team: Chloe, Chad, Sue, Noreen.
 - Opportunity to raise awareness and seek involvement
 - Could be part one of two part series encouraging support for early childhood (ex: legislative forum/early childhood forum would be next step)
 - Legislative forum (may call something else). Proposed dates: Dec 8 or 15. Team: Sue, Sadie, Chad.
 - Team gather and come up with frame and title. Do this in first two weeks of Oct and move on it!
 - Possible themes/frames: Promise Communities; celebrate RTT; what does EC look like and what do we want it to look like; use our name: Building Bright Futures: A vision for Early Childhood in Windham County
 - Check in and review past legislative forums/events. Diana Wahley (kindergarten survey); Carol Wesley
 - Act 166 informational & feedback sessions:
 - Oct 8th Directors group meeting will discuss
 - Oct 9th event in Dover with presentation by Frank Perotti
 - Chad will look into organizing others as needed
 - Month of the Young Child (April)
 - Month-long series of events planned. Successful and great reception in past years
 - Annual meeting/celebration
 - Could be fun, participatory and way to increase participating/gain valuable input/feedback from diverse partners