



CT Office of Early Childhood Parent Cabinet Meeting Minutes Template September 22, 2015

Time & Location: 6pm, Zoom

Facilitators: Chena Russell, Parent Cabinet Coordinator, Tricia Hamlin, Parent Cabinet region 4, Amber Alessandro, Parent Cabinet region 5

Members Present at Start: All members

Mission: *To build strong connections, listen intentionally, and partner with Connecticut families of young children, communities, and OEC to incorporate the expertise of all parents throughout the early childhood system to ensure family-driven equitable policies and programs.*

Meeting Purpose (*Why is this meeting needed?*): To reconnect after the summer break, welcome new members, share updates on Early Start CT and the Early Childhood Endowment, and engage members in outreach and data collection efforts.

Intended Outcomes (*What do we want to achieve by the end of this? What will success look like?*):

- Reestablish group norms and expectations
- Share updates on LGPs, Early Start CT, and the Endowment
- Review and support the Parent-Caregiver Survey
- Train members on the new outreach data form
- Gather feedback on the One Entry Portal design
- Plan outreach strategies by region

Agenda Item/Topic	Facilitator	Notes	Key Takeaways and Implications for Parent Cabinet Members
Welcome & Norms	Chenae Russell, <i>Parent Cabinet Coordinator ,OEC</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reintroduced group norms, welcomed new member Jocelyn Furtado, and celebrated her birthday. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reaffirmed commitment to listening, trust, and respect. - Jocelyn brings new energy and perspective.
Icebreaker	Amber Alessandro, <i>PC member Region 5</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Members shared one word or highlight from their summer via Slido. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Built community and connection. - Members shared personal milestones and challenges.
OEC Updates + Feedback	Tricia Hamlin, <i>PC member region 4</i> Malissa Griffith, <i>Parent Outreach Initiative Program Manager</i> Chenae Russell, <i>Parent Cabinet Coordinator</i> Maggie Adair, <i>Communications & Legislative Program Manager</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Updates on LGPs, Early Start CT, and Parent Ambassador guidance. 48 LGPs now cover 89 towns. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Parent Ambassador connection, training and guidance forthcoming. - Early Start CT RFA launching in Fall 2025 Early Childhood Education Endowment Status/Next Steps Endowment is building on Blue Ribbon Panel Child Care report vision <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Permanent savings account to help fund Early care and education services and initiatives such as expansion costs (increased Early Start CT spaces including infant & toddler etc.), programmatic costs (LGPs, workforce scholarships etc.) and administrative costs (staffing at OEC, data & technology). - Reminder: Free childcare for Early Start CT enrolled families earning under \$100K begins July 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -LGP/PC map developed to with outreach - Members encouraged to attend Early Childhood Education listening sessions in their region - Ensuring communities know who is Early Start CT in their community. Those towns that only have school year, ensuring families do research to bring awareness around needs so more child care programs will apply for Early Start Ct funding to allow more access for families looking for all year preschool versus school year as we get close to 2027

		<p>2027.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Advisory board just met and Advisory board just had its 1st meeting (emailed the press release), its charge is to advise on the fund's use and submit annual reports: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Administered by the Office of the Treasurer ▪ Tri-chaired by a member of the Senate, House, and the Commissioner of OEC - The Advisory includes diverse voices such as PC member and only father Cris Jimenez-Porrata <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ \$300m of unappropriated state budget surplus from FY 25- FY26 was added to the endowment. Future contributions depend on budget surpluses and reserves. Up to 12% can be used the next 2 fiscal years then up to 10% after. ○ Spending Plan FY 26 - (treasurer's website) (highlight Smart Start + Early Start) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Reviewed funding structure, advisory board, and upcoming outreach. ○ Listening Sessions will continue in November ○ Fact Sheet for families being translated ○ LGP Fact sheet is forthcoming ▪ Commissioner Bye's retirement and Deputy Elena's appointment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Thanked the Coordinator and parents for their leadership and how it has guided the work of the Endowment 	<p>-Members play important role in One Point Entry Portal work which is funded by the Endowment</p>
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Parent-Caregiver Survey	Veronica Hanna (UConn), Jennifer St. John	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Overview of survey goals, outreach strategies, and incentives. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Survey open through November 2025. - Members encouraged to share via trusted networks and not the survey link on social media to avoid bots
Outreach Data Tool Training	Coral Wonderly	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demonstrated how to access and use the new data form and dashboard. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Members must log outreach activities. - Dashboard helps track regional engagement and themes.
Regional Breakouts	Tricia Hamlin	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Members brainstormed outreach strategies for survey promotion. - - Focus on non-LGP/community-based outreach. 	Members refer to Padlet to develop plan based on strategies brainstormed.
One Point Entry Portal Feedback	Eloisa Melendez, Justin Tyack	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Introduced One Point Entry Portal (name coming soon) concept and user ability experience, looking at New Orleans example. Gathered feedback on features. Members want communication tools, accurate data, and multilingual access. Feedback will inform future design sessions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Members to revisit state examples explore websites and provide feedback. Follow up conversation at the next meeting.
Closing & Evaluation	Chenae Russell	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shared evaluation link and thanked members. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Next meeting will continue portal discussion. - New facilitators will be selected.

