



CT Office of Early Childhood Parent Cabinet Meeting Minutes Template February 24, 2025

Time & Location: 6pm-8pm , Zoom

Facilitators: Amber and Jennifer

Members Present: Regan A., Jenny C (R1), Shannon, Raquel (R2), Christina P., Tiffanie (R3), Cris, Tiffanie (R4), Mallory, Amber, Kelly C (R5), Stephanie, Jennifer (R6)

Meeting Purpose (*Why is this meeting needed?*):

- To continue to strengthen relationships and communication amongst members, ensure members have tools and information needed to succeed
- Receive parent cabinet input

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

Regions have met to continue mapping of their region and building relationships

- Members have questions answered about Legislative bills, testimony and Universal Preschool Endowment
- Members bring any questions around Sparkler App and how families can use it

Agenda Item/Topic	Facilitator	Notes	Key Takeaways and Implications for Parent Cabinet Members
Legislative Session	Michelle Cook,	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Discussed upcoming bills, Senate Bill 1369 concerning Child Care	All OEC

Bills update & Testimony Questions	Special Advisor, OEC Maggie Adair, Communications and Legislative Program Manager, OEC	<p>Support for CT's Workforce and House Bill 7044 regarding the early care and education portal.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Opportunity to testify as a Parent Cabinet member for House Bill 7044 as OEC supports that bill. Members can testify as parents for Senate Bill 1369 ○ OEC appreciates the intent of Senate Bill 1369 but does not have the fiscal resources to support the full facts of the bill ○ Upcoming Governor press events on Universal Preschool Endowment ○ Mallory shared her experience testifying as a Parent Cabinet member and how it was a full circle moment from her being a child seeing her mom benefit from access to early childhood care to as a parent herself. The legislatures really listened to her and was attentive which made it even better. Encouraged others to try it. ○ Parent asked if the portal mentioned is the same as what is proposed in the Governor's Proposal? They both aim at a need to have a central enrollment system 	<p>testimony can be found on OEC website https://www.ctoec.org/legislative-testimony/</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OEC to continue to share testimony OEC will be doing and whether in support and opportunity for members to testify as a member with OEC support • Members to continue to share any questions on upcoming early childhood bills
<p>Universal Preschool Endowment Questions</p> <p>&</p> <p>Early Start CT Local Governing Partners</p>	Acting Commissioner Elena Trueworthy. OEC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Asked the parents on any questions they had? And thing they had been hearing? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Reminded that this will ensure that families who want and need access to preschool will be able to get that in a way that is affordable, right, like very low cost or free for families. And so having a plan to build out and expand what we're currently doing for preschool and infant and toddler care and making that more available within the next, you know, seven, eight years that it's accessible 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parent Cabinet members to review again and tasked to talk about it with parent ambassadors and with other groups, and family members. Ask them, what are some

follow up		<p>universally for everyone across the state.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Questions came on if this will be just for those funded by OEC? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ It will provide more funding for Early Start CT spaces which when there is a request for applications all have opportunity to apply and become a state funded and offer more preschool spaces that are free or affordable for families. It'll be an opportunity to grow the system and bring many more providers in who want to be, including family childcare, schools and centers in a mixed delivery system ○ Question was asked on whether programs will need to follow certain curriculum guidelines or like the ELDs if receiving this funding? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Yes when you become a state-funded provider, you agree to doing certain standards around quality that are really important to positive experiences for young children in those environments. The ELDS, the Early Learning and Development Standards and linking that to a curriculum and an assessment that they're using to help plan for children's experiences in the classroom and what they need to learn, right, or be supported on. ▪ Accreditation, we lean very heavily on because we know that that's like the gold quality standard, and there's a lot of different components under that. Quality and access need to go hand-in-hand. It's not enough to just say we're going to increase access if we're not ensuring that quality is a part of that. 	<p>questions? challenges?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Encouraged members to become a part of these conversations if not already at your local level. More to come at the next meeting
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External Committee and Subcommittee updates	Chenae R, Parent cabinet Coordinator, OEC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ OEC External Steering Committee <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Mallory attended first meeting ▪ State Inclusion Planning Team <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Shared the addition of Kelly S and Stephanie ▪ CT ELDS Planning Team <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ This group is overseeing the update of the CT Early Learning and Development Standards (ELDS) which has not been done in 11 years. Many Child Care centers go by these standards, especially those that are state funded. ○ Trying to update them make it more diverse and culturally appropriate with equity. We did a survey for caregivers and we reviewed it. We're just going to continue to gather input ▪ Connecticut State Personnel Development Grant (SPDG) Planning Committee <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ This group is a committee that is looking at the transition from birth to three into preschool, special education, acknowledging that the current IFSPs don't really inform 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Members tasked to ask other any experiences they have had with the transition from Birth to Three to preschool special education to share any feedback with Tricia sending an email of stating for example these were the things that I didn't feel were met within this

		<p>an IEP very well because they're so home-based and family-oriented versus looking at goals and objectives for a school system. So this group has been talking about where some of those gaps are and how we can help to kind of provide some professional development, get more people at the table and make those things align more, make that process easier for parents.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Looking for anybody who's had this experience wanting to know more about your perspective so that we are addressing what those needs are because there is somebody from CPAC and there is myself, but it's otherwise providers on the committee, so getting that parent perspective is important ▪ OEC Data subcommittee <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Met recently to start work and began going over a new data for activities ▪ OEC Parent & Caregiver Survey planning parent committee <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Met a few times and have started to develop questions for the survey and outreach ideas 	<p>transition or these are things I think you guys should focus more on.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The ask is to review the ELDS https://www.ctoec.org/supporting-child-development/ct-elds/ and share as parents what is hard to understand, or if you've ever heard of it, or has your caregiver ever mentioned it to you before. And just have parent feedback on if you think it's important.
Regional Breakouts	Amber A., Region 5 Parent Cabinet member	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Region 4 member Cris shared they had identified 'desert areas' with limited parent engagement and connections in their region and they all decided to collectively tackle specific areas like Granby, using combined resources and connections. Throwing everything against the wall and see what will stick as far as making sure that we have connections there. ▪ Region 1 shared awesome to have Kaitlyn, alumni here, because have not spent time with her talking before. So just making that 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Mapping support to come ▪ New community outreach materials coming to be delivered or picked up

		connection, that personal connection, and really hearing on the ground what kinds of things she did, what she would recommend, just gave them a really good feeling.	
Sparkler Overview and Questions	Bethanne Vergean, CDC Learn the Signs Act Early Ambassador for CT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Shared overview on Sparkler the mobile application to do the Ages and Stages Social Emotional questionnaires which helps track your child's social and emotional development during their first five years and connection to early intervention services through 211 Child Development Info Line. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Beth Ann reported significant progress in Sparkler app adoption, noting 50-70 daily referrals through 211 ○ Expansion of Sparkler app language options to include Chinese and upcoming Arabic version ○ Beth Ann clarified that information is protected under FERPA and only shared with 211 Child Development or specific programs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Members to download and test Sparkler app, then share feedback and promote it within their communities
Closing	Chenae		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Evaluation link to be shared out ○ Requested volunteers for co-facilitating the next two meetings