



**Building Bright Futures State Advisory Council (BBF SAC)  
Meeting Minutes  
March 25, 2024 (Via Zoom)**

**SAC Members Present:** Flor Diaz Smith, Dimitri Garder, Eddie Gale, Christy Swenson, Carol Lang-Godin, Libby Daghlian, Ilisa Stalberg, Renee Kelly, Janet McLaughlin, Xusana Davis, Mike McRaith, Sharron Harrington

**Absent:** Alexis Duquette, Paul Dragon, Mike McRaith, Aryka Radke, Becca Webb, Shayla Livingston, Jessica Vintinner, Cheryle Wilcox, Senator Ruth Hardy, Meg Porcella, Representative Jessica Brumsted, Kendal Smith

**Community Partners/Guests:** Lisa Maynes, Becky Millard, Jocelyn Emilio, Donna Barrow, Amber Hewston, Erica McLaughlin, Lee Lauber, Julie Lowell, Ashley Maskell, Lynne Robbins, Karen Garrand, Danielle Mitchell, Evan Delgado, Amaryah Pendlebury, Tiffany North-Reid, Beverly Boget, Janet Kilburn, Amy Wheeler-Sutton

**Staff present:** Morgan Crossman, Beth Truzansky, Kate Bailey, Katie Mobbs, Anna Brouillette, Kelly Hayes, Michelle Kersey, Courtney Hillhouse, Dora Levinson, Linda Michniewicz, Valerie Wood, Jenn Schollmeyer, Darla Senecal, Tanya LaChapelle, Ali Dieng

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**This meeting was recorded and that recording can be found [here](#)**

**Welcome & Introductions**

**1. Welcome, mindful moment, review agenda**

**2. SAC General Business**

**February 2024 SAC Meeting Minutes**

Motion to approve the February 26, 2024, minutes was made by Christy Swenson, with a second by Carol Lang-Godin. There were none opposed. Dimitri Garder and Renee Kelly abstained from the vote. All members voted in favor of approving February 26, 2024 minutes

**3. Network Spotlight: Building Integration in Vermont's B-5 Early Childhood Systems (VIP B-5) project funded by the Preschool Development Grant**

Lisa Maynes, PDG Grant Manager and Valerie Wood, Early Childhood Systems Evaluator, provided an update about early successes and impact from the VIP B-5 project.

**4. SAC Membership and Role of the Council Members**

- a. The board and staff at BBF shared appreciation for three outgoing members: Mike McRaith, Lexi Duquette, and Paul Dragon.
- b. **Presentation of BBF Executive Committee nominations**

Ilisa then presented the nominations for the BBF Executive Committee members. The executive committee serves as the leadership team advising the BBF executive director and deputy director, non profit governance and strategic guidance for the State Advisory Council. The Executive Committee has 6 seats.

- Nomination of Janet McLaughlin to serve a 2-year term on the Executive Committee ending March 31, 2026
- Nomination for Christy Swenson to serve as Secretary
- Continuation for Ilisa Stalberg as public Co-chair, Flor Diaz-Smith, as private Co-chair, Becca Webb as Treasurer, and Renee Kelly to serve in an ex-officio non-voting role.

***The Building Bright Futures State Advisory Council, at the recommendation of the Executive Committee, moved to elect the following slate of officers to the Executive Committee***

Motion to approve by Dimitri Garder, a second by Carol Lang-Godin. Members nominated abstained from their own vote and voted in support of the others. All other SAC members voted in favor of approving. The following members abstained from their own vote: Ilisa Stalberg, Flor Diaz Smith, Renee Kelly, Christy Swenson, and Janet McLaughlin.

**a. Presentation of SAC At-Large Membership nominations**

Ilisa Stalberg presented the nominees to the SAC on behalf of the Executive Committee:

- Becca Webb who represents Regional Act 166 (serving 2nd term through 2027)
- Eddie Gale of the A.D. Henderson Foundation (serving 2nd term through 2027)

New nominations:

- Danielle Lindley Mitchell- nominated to serve a one year term, completing the term served by Heather Wilcoxon to represent the mental health sector
- Amber Hewston- nominated to serve a full 3 year term to represent families
- Erica McLaughlin- nominated to serve a full 3 year term to fill the Vermont Principals Association seat
- Dr. Debra Hartswick- nominated to serve a full 3 year term to represent medical services
- Kiona Baez Heath- nominated to serve a full 3 year term

***The Building Bright Futures State Advisory Council, at the recommendation of the Executive Committee, moves to elect the following at-large members to the Advisory Council:***

Motion to approve by Janet McLaughlin, a second by Dimitri Garder. All members voted in favor of approving. Becca Webb and Eddie Gale abstained from their own vote.

**b. About the SAC**

BBF was created as a nonpartisan, independent organization with multiple layers of public and private partners. This has proven to be important to advise and monitor policy and under Act 76, BBF has expanded our role to monitor implementation of changes to the early childhood system. Morgan shared briefly about the role of SAC members and key levers BBF uses to serve as advisors. This was followed by discussion in pairs to two questions and captured in JAM Boards. Here are some of the themes and responses,

*What are the levers that the SAC can use to create change and where have you seen this in the past year?*

- Partnership, collaboration and representation, “Increased relationships are key/show up for people and also help in making sure we are hearing from different voices”

- Monitoring, Data Use, and Communication, “Appreciate information shared through the network, information has become more accessible and clear. Information is valuable and relevant”
- Ongoing Identification of Needs moving toward advisement, “Identifying challenges and gaps on the ground and raising them to a higher, systemic level”

*What are the most important issues you want to see the council?*

- Responses included both issues like early childhood workforce recruitment, housing assistance and monitoring Act 76;
- About the process of how the SAC comes together including, “Diverse voices need to be heard” and “more collaboration between agencies and departments.”

### **5. Emerging Priorities Open Forum**

One of the roles of the SAC is to bring diverse perspectives and hold a space to better understand these perspectives and be able to build an aligned vision when possible. SAC members and partners were invited to share emerging priorities or hot topics they are monitoring that impact the early childhood system.

- Dimitri Garder spoke to the need he hears from the business community to track investments in child care under Act 76 by using short, intermediate and long-term metrics.
- Janet McLaughlin announced the expansion of income eligibility for the Child Care Financial Assistance (CCFAP) program on April 7; a change made under Act 76.

### **6. Adjourn**

The meeting adjourned at 3:00 p.m.

**Next Meeting- Monday May 20, 2024 1:00-3:00 | via Zoom**