

Bright Starts Cooperative Early Learning Centre Board Meeting

Tuesday, August 17, 2021, at 6:45pm

Chairperson: Kennedy Sherwood

Meeting by Videoconference

Minutes

In attendance: Karen Hinnigan, Stacey Reid, Kennedy Sherwood, Jennifer Bleakney, Tetyana Reichert, Michelle Bauer, Angie Docking, Julia Carvalho, Mariam Hassan, Emily Kozlowski, Robilyn Vanos

Regrets: Edwin Ng

Meeting called to order at 6:51pm

Motion to approve agenda

- Moved by Jennifer
- Seconded by Robilyn
- All in favour, none opposed, no abstentions
- Motion carried

Motion to approve June minutes

- Moved by Michelle
- Seconded by Emily
- All in favour, none opposed, one abstention
- Motion carried

Executive Director's Report – full document

Financial:

- There is currently no new money from the Ministry to share with operators; Stacey is hopeful that in the fall there will be new updates (considering new guidelines)
- The Region has confirmed there is stabilization fund money for BSCELC available from September to December
 - Will receive \$125 per operating space, per month of operation; Stacey is anticipating \$70K based on April's application and the money is expected to come in September, or early October
- Region funding has allowed us to keep extra staff in place during COVID; we might lose some funding because of our change in toddler capacity, but we are hopeful we can keep the same amount of funding in place, including wage enhancement (an increase of \$2/hour for staff)
- Received \$5,000 in funding, which was flowed to affected parents of recent COVID-19 case
- Our HST rebate came in at \$7,200
- Received \$4,600 when parents whose children have aged out of BSCELC chose to donate back their registration fees
- We will be invoicing families for \$50 membership fee in September
 - Question: Does the max of 10 in toddler rooms ever get exceeded? Karen – no, it is a hard cap

Health and Safety:

- Ministry has an updated COVID screening tool, which we have implemented at the Centre
- Playground sandboxes are now back in service after receiving confirmation that we're allowed to use them
- Stacey investigated portable air filtration systems as the HVAC system is not compatible with our filters- it would cost \$30K x3 to update to the current UW system
- Recommends as replacements \$4K to purchase outright, and \$78 per system every 3 years thereafter to replace filters (brand is Austin air system)
- Air would exchange 3.5 times per day, run all day in rooms; Austin systems are being used in labs on campus, other daycares in the Region and have been purchased by the School board – all feedback has been positive
- We can get a discount if we purchase all 12 units at the same time – original cost per unit is \$780, discounted price per unit is \$680; we would then spend \$350 for filters every 3 years
 - City will give \$2,500 and rest can be paid from the Region's stabilization funding
- Questions / Discussion on portable air filtration systems:
 - Are the systems quiet? Stacey – have heard they are, will pop over and listen to the system in one of the labs before we purchase
 - What is the total cost of them altogether? Stacey - \$9,000 after discount
 - Can we purchase more for office spaces as well? Stacey – we can get as many as we want, the recommendation is to just do classrooms at this point.
 - Are there any discussions about replacing the windows based on recommendations to keep the windows open? Karen – there are windows that open in every classroom, so there is some air moving
 - Jennifer advocates for an additional unit to be purchased for the office - total of 13 units.

Motion to purchase 13 August Air filters that have been vetted by UW's procurement team.

- Moved by Robi
- Seconded by Julia
- All in favour, none opposed, no abstentions
- Motion carried

Enrollment:

- Infant, toddler enrollment at 100%
- There are a few Preschool spaces available with school starting
 - September – 84%, October – 94%.

Staffing/programs:

- Natalie from Toddler 1 has resigned and is returning to school to study pastry
- Dana from Toddler 4 has resigned to move back to her family in Owen Sound
- Rebecca has gone on maternity leave
- Debbie has taken an extended sick leave
- Currently doing interviews now to fill these open positions; supply staff is still needed
- Stacey also looking for additional admin support for interviews, mentorship, staff recruitment as Heidi is working in the office more than before
 - Question: Does this work take away from Heidi's role as Team Supervisor? Stacey – No.

Other:

- Noted a parent complaint in June to the Ministry of Education – parent observed their child being bumped by another child with a walking toy while sitting in their car. Parent recorded video, which was shared with the Ministry, and they saw no problems with the educator’s response time.
- Still waiting on a quote from UW to repurpose bathroom into meeting room and for extra storage in hallway by Toddler 1 + 2
- If Board is interested in reading relevant info from the recently released report on the Ministry’s parents’ survey – read p. 61 - p.76.
- National Childcare plan still in play - \$10 /a day by 2026. ON has not yet signed on, an increase in educator wages is holding up the negotiations. New federal election may change this plan.
- Preschool rooms have been interested in purchasing a loft; \$11K is cost, and then will need to pay to have it assembled (Stacey to ask UW first). Stacey interested in purchasing for 1 as a pilot and can add them to all preschool rooms if there is interest.
- Questions/ discussion on lofts:
 - How would the preschool room be selected? Where educators interested? Stacey – Yes, Preschool 5 indicated interest in adding in their room. We will let all preschool rooms know, and if there is more interest than just room 5, names will be drawn from a hat.
 - Could we add to the gym space so all kids could use it? Stacey – would like to reserve the gym for other activities.
 - Is there a weight limit? Stacey – yes, 2000 lbs. Will put a limit on it to be safe when their introduced into the room.
 - Where in the budget does it come from? Stacey – can come from our rainy-day fund; Michelle – we have \$229K in rainy day fund, net income has been on the plus side for a while so there is cash for those.
 - Where are they made from? Is it made in Canada? Stacey – it’s made in the States.
 - Is a safety inspection required? Stacey – before purchased, we will run by the Ministry. I do not believe that they require safety inspections.

Motion to purchase 1 Preschool Loft from Play with a Purpose as a pilot for the Preschool program.

- Motion moved by Michelle
- Seconded by Emily
- All in favour, no opposed, no abstentions
- Motion carried

Treasurer’s Report – [full June report](#), [full July report](#)

- June’s highlights – revenue is \$24K higher than budget, expenses \$4K over budget; net income: \$15,241.36
 - Question: significant overage in expenses in June. Michelle – this is due to payroll + program supplies (sunscreen, bubbles for summer outdoor activities). Stacey – every few months purchase supplies (sand, toilet paper, etc.).
- July’s highlights – revenue is \$22K higher than budget, expenses \$2K under budget; net income: \$18,938.53

Ministry’s Operational Guidance for Child Care

- 2 weeks ago, the Ministry updated guidelines for daycare centres. There was hope that cohorts could mix, and parents could come back to centre, but to no avail.
- There is a strong push to use provincial screening tool – staff, parents, volunteers.

- The Centre no longer must retain records for staff, they can be moved to the daily screening tool if they provide proof. During high-risk times (holidays) they may ask the centre to retain proof of screening.
- Staff can move between groups and centres, but children cannot move cohorts.
- Cleaning requirements have been relaxed; high-touch areas need to be cleaned regularly.
- Staff no longer must wear masks or goggles outdoors, but still must wear them indoors.
 - Question: do educators still wear masks when they drop off pick up? Stacey – yes.
- Visitors and parents permitted in the building now but need to maintain physical distancing.
 - Not a lot of room to social distance in the Centre’s lobby, so this is likely not to change a lot for us - can offer tours to new families and families who have not yet been inside (one family at a time).
- Families must now show record of screening and we need to keep records at drop-off.
- Can mix cohorts outside if playgrounds can support it. Programs that share bathrooms will likely share outdoor space.
- Sensory play & family-style meals can resume inside – with a focus on hand hygiene.
- Centre must have proper ventilation (air purifiers, windows open, replacing old systems)
- Vaccines are now mandatory for childcare workers.
- Stacey is currently updating our policies based on this new document. Updated policies will go through the Health & Safety Committee, and then will come to the Board for approval.

Motion to approve resuming sensory play in the programs and allowing educators to remove masks and goggles during outdoor time as per the Ministry’s revised guidance document.

- Moved by Mariam
- Seconded by Julia
- 6 in favour, no opposed, 2 abstentions
- Motion carried

Hours of Operation

- There was hope that in the fall that we would go back to regular hours of operation but based on Ministry description (no mixing cohorts) not likely to happen.
- Centre isn’t set up to social distance in the lobby and different drop off zones is working well; would have to hire 5 extra staff part-time until January (approx. \$50K) if we allowed parents into Centre for regular hours. It’s also hard to recruit for 4-mos contracts.
- Questions / discussion on whether to open Centre to parents/visitors and go back to regular operating hours:
 - Would it make sense to offer extended time to programs who need it more? (i.e., infants as they take longer to get ready in snowsuits, etc.) Stacey – thought about this, worry about parents with siblings in different programs.
 - To what extent would parents want to be able to enter the centre and want their kids exposed to more adults in an indoor space, can we poll the parents? Stacey – very complicated - recommends we stay as status quo; parents have liked the outside drop-off and educators have done a great job.
 - Do educators like outdoor pick-up/drop-off and reduced hours? Karen – educators prefer it outdoor pick-up/drop-off and reduced hours
- Board agrees to stay status quo and revisit this discussion in January; Stacey to draft an email to send out to parents who have had children start during COVID to offer a tour

Confirm Committee membership

- All Board members have signed up for 2 committees
- Finance, Fundraising still have space for 2 parent volunteers; Policy and Personnel have space for 1.
 - Finance has a former Board and Chair of the committee who has indicated they'd be happy to stay on
- Stacey to draft an email to notify parents of volunteer committee opportunities. Will be sent to comms committee first before circulated to parents.
- Question - how often do committee meets? Stacey – up to the Chairs to decide.

Confirm Board meeting time

- Doodle poll confirms everyone was available at 730pm

Motion to change Board meeting time from 645pm to 730pm effective immediately.

- Motion moved by Michelle
- Seconded by Julia
- All in favour, no opposed, no abstentions
- Motion carried

8:30 New business for next meeting

- Annual review of Program statement + Health and Safety Policy (Stacey)
- Questions:
 - Will we vote on the Ministry guidelines next meeting? Stacey – will work on those and will send to Policy & Personnel Committee to present to Board next month.
 - Will we extend cohort outdoor time? Stacey – will bring back to the staff a week before the Board meeting to see how comfortable they are; interested in getting staff feedback before implementing other recommendations.
 - Is there comms going out to let parents know about changes (educators removing masks for playground, sensory play in the rooms, mandatory vaccines for childcare workers)? Stacey – yes.

Regrets for next meeting (September 21)

- None

Motion to adjourn

- Motion moved by Mariam
- Seconded by Robi
- All in favour, no opposed, no abstentions
- Motion carried