

# Meeting Minutes

## Strive – June 14, 2019

**Attendees:** Kelly Walker, Cora Burns, Jessi Keenan, Cheryl Read, Michelle Valladares, Dil Troup, Amanda Benton, Kara Pihlak, Lauren Goosens, Meaghan MacDonell, Ally Scott, Sheryl Third, Katie Stortz, John FitzGibbon, Pat Chenier, Dana Hansen, Sheri Spriggs, Doreen Martin, Kasondra Luyten, Lee-Anne Cross, Linda Grainger, Emily Paulger, Teresa Sulowski, Tanja Linkes, Ruth-Ann Whitley, Veronica Clough

**Present via Zoom:** Kinderville

---

### 1. Welcome and Introductions

Ally welcomed everyone and introductions were made.

---

### 2. Adoptions of Agenda/Additions

Agenda approved. No additions.

---

### 3. Approval of Friday May 10, 2019 minutes

Minutes approved.

---

### 4. Updates from Project Manager

- We have begun tracking how people are hearing about Strive events during the registration process. This data will be used primarily as a means of informing how and if we continue to print hard copies of our professional learning calendar. What we have noticed so far is that word of mouth and the website are by far the most popular means through which information about our events is being transmitted/received. Social media is demonstrating itself to be a very useful medium as well with a visible correlation between posts on our various social media platforms and registration numbers. With this in mind, we would continue to ask the community to like, share and comment on Strive social media activity as this boosts the engagement of the post and how widely the platforms will distribute it. To date, only 4% of respondents indicate that they heard about an event through the printed calendar, so we will be paying close attention to these numbers across our next calendar cycle as well.
  - Strive will begin work on a new strategic plan come the fall. This is a process which will define our direction and goals moving forward and the strategies we will put in place to realize them. To help prepare for and inform our planning we will be distributing a survey in early/mid July that will ask you to consider what you think Strive does well and what we could look to improve. We ask that this survey be shared widely amongst members of the early learning community. More details to come.
  - We want to highlight a unique learning opportunity we are excited to be bringing to this community in August. Niki Buchan, an ECE and nature pedagogue from Australia will be in North America this summer doing several speaking engagements, London now among them! Niki is well regarded internationally as an advocate and champion of children's rights, including having regular access to the outdoors. We are excited to share in her knowledge and perspective. Save the date of Wednesday, August 14<sup>th</sup> and stay tuned
- 



---

for more details to come soon. As more details and registration information are confirmed and released, we will once again be calling on our Strive community to help spread the word about this!

**a) Elgin Update**

- The resource kit information night was well attended with positive feedback about the variety and intentionality of the resources. The kits are now in active circulation and we were so happy to see the lovely post on Facebook by the St Thomas Early Learning Centre sharing their experience engaging with the resources in their programs. We hope that the Elgin early learning community will continue to enjoy and implement these resources as well as share how they are using them in their work with children and families.
- The Cultivating a Caring Culture through Consideration event with Debbi Sluys was also well attended, both afternoon and evening sessions. It was exciting to see one organization in particular take the message of what was shared and almost immediately make some changes to their staff room to promote self-care and educator well-being. We love to see that direct impact to practice.

---

**5. Professional Learning opportunities**

**a) Spring/Summer Calendar**

We have nearly come to the end of our Spring calendar cycle with only a small handful of events remaining.

The final Seed Planting event through the Journey Together committee is happening on Monday, June 17<sup>th</sup> and there are still spaces available. There has been such positive feedback from the community about this experience, so we would strongly encourage people to consider attending. On Thursday, June 20<sup>th</sup>, our very own Michelle Valladares will be facilitating *How Does Self Care Happen?* This will be an exploration of well-being, confidence and self-care practices that is so important in our current climate where stress and anxiety have become a detrimental norm. A few spaces still remain for this event as well.

Over July and August we will also be offering two webinars. A mindfulness focus with Abe Giesbrecht and *Art-Full Wellness* with Arielle Bush from Hoto Art Therapy.

**b) Fall Planning**

Fall planning is well underway and we want to highlight a few opportunities to look out for.

- Site tours have been an increasingly popular addition to our calendars and so we are very excited to bring three to you this fall, one in each of our service regions. We will be visiting the London Waldorf School, Little Lambs in Strathroy and a TBD Elgin location as well.
  - We feel so lucky to once again be able to offer the Community Connector training. The information shared in these sessions is so important for those working with children and families and highlights many of the amazing resources and services we have available here in London. If you are interested in being better equipped to share resources with families and colleagues and to be able to make more informed referrals, this is an opportunity not to be missed.
  - Along with the Community Connector training, we will once again have the opportunity to offer another session on Trauma Informed Practice facilitated by Anova.
- 



- The 9<sup>th</sup> Annual Family Literacy Conference for Professionals will be held on October 26 at Sir Arthur Currie PS. This year's focus will be on the 100 languages of children as well as the voice and rights of the child. This exploration will be led by the distinguished Karyn Callaghan, President of the Ontario Reggio Association.  
... stay tuned for the rest of what the Fall has in store.

Elgin has also defined many wonderful learning opportunities for the Fall. In particular, we wish to highlight a two-day event geared toward school-age Educators taking place on October 3 & 3<sup>rd</sup>. These workshops are being facilitated by the team at ECCDC and will focus on a variety of topics around effectively delivering programming to school-agers as well as how to best meet their unique needs.

---

## 6. Information Sharing

It was shared at our Professional Learning Committee meeting that the LCCN Recruitment and Retention advocacy campaign will soon be launching their transit posters as well as the landing page. A 1-minute video will also begin shooting soon with an anticipated fall release.

The Association of Early Childhood Educators of Ontario in collaboration with the Ontario Coalition for Better Child Care held a two-day learning opportunity here in London in early June. Meaghan MacDonell (Strive) and Kara Pihlak (Oak Park Co-operative Children's Centre) of London were both in attendance. The focus was on advocacy measures and building up Educator's skills and empowering them to be better advocates for themselves and for their profession. The sessions really highlighted the importance and power of our voices to illicit positive change and was especially pertinent messaging considering the upcoming federal election. It is so important that we see child care actively highlighted on party platforms with substantive commitments to appropriate funding.

---

## 7. Community Updates

Fanshawe College is moving into the fall welcoming 236 students across 5 intakes into their ECE program with an additional 3 intakes expected in January. The college recognizes the need and demand for Educators and is increasing their numbers to try and help meet this demand. This of course requires commitment in return from the community to support their efforts by finding spaces for students on placement. Sheryl Third and Kim Woods will be offering their Tools of Mentoring session again in the fall to help support those mentoring students as well as those who may be interested in doing so but who are reticent.

Construction on the new infant and gross motor space has started at Milestones Children's Centre and they are very excited and eager to watch that transformation unfold.

---

## 8. Open Spaces for Conversation: Celebration!

We welcomed in the approaching summer months by spending this time in conversation over treats and lemonade! We at Strive want to extend our thanks to this community for coming out to these meetings and for showing such unrelenting support for the work we do. Enjoy your summer and we look forward to connecting once again in the fall!

---

## 9. Next meeting:

Next meeting: September 20, 2019, 1:00 – 3:00 pm @ Childreach

---

