Little Rams Early Childhood Project
Planning Committee
Running Agenda & Notes

Click HERE for Membership List & Overview of Mission/Vision and "Deliverables"

Please use the links below to navigate meeting agenda. Just click on the date for the meeting and it will take you to the agenda. Notes will be kept for each meeting on the same document as the agenda for easy reference. If meetings are held via zoom, zoom links will be found at the top of the agenda. If meetings held in person, specific locations will be found at the top of the agenda as well.

September 16, 2021 @ 6:30 p.m.	**February 17, 2022 @ 6:00 p.m.**
October 14, 2021 @ 6:30 p.m.	**March 17, 2022 @ 6:00 p.m.**
November 16, 2021 @ 6:00 p.m.	~~**April 7, 2022 @ 6:00 p.m.**~~
December 16, 2021 @ 6:00 p.m.	**May 19, 2022 @ 6:00 p.m.**
~~**January 20, 2022 @ 6:00 p.m.**~~	**June 16, 2022 @ 6:00 p.m.**

Agenda: September 16, 2021
Meeting Location: GMS Library

6:30 - 7:00 p.m. **WELCOME & ICEBREAKER ACTIVITY**

- Welcome message - Heather Perry, Superintendent of Schools
- Introductions - Facilitated by Tara Williams
- Ice Breaker activity - Facilitated by Heather Perry

7:00 - 7:15 p.m. **DEVELOPMENT OF GROUP NORMS**
Facilitated by Heather Perry

- What are group norms and why are they important?

    - Procedural Norms and Interpersonal & Intrapersonal Group Norms

Brainstorm Norms

- We are all here on equal footing
- Honor confidentiality
- Respect others opinions (no judgement)
- Be comfortable with being uncomfortable
- Practice patience
- Be actively present
- Be prepared
- Have facilitation, advanced agendas/materials, minutes
- Determine plan of action for next meeting
- Strive for consensus (can go to a vote)

*Approve Group Norms (will revisit and approve at next meeting)

7:15 - 7:40 p.m. **SHARE DRAFT MISSION/VISION AND DELIVERABLES AND GATHER FEEDBACK TO ESTABLISH GOALS.**
Facilitated by Heather Perry

- Review Draft information (5 minutes)
- Concentric Circles activity (15 minutes)
    - What do you see as the ultimate outcomes for this work in Gorham?
    - Is there anything missing in the mission/vision and deliverables draft materials you think should be added?
    - Who do you believe are the key stakeholders we should engage in this conversation?
- Debrief as whole group (5 minutes)

Mission, Vision, Deliverables

- Equity and access
- Inclusive
- Sustainability
- Look at meaning of and intent behind “high” quality, perhaps drop the word “high”
- Discuss meaning of “early learning,” how do we define that (social emotional skills, academic/cognitive, domains of development)
- Student voice

7:40 - 8:00 p.m. **IDENTIFYING CHALLENGES AND BARRIERS**
Facilitated by Heather Perry

- Using sticky notes...one idea/response per sticky...please provide as many responses as you can to the following question: "What are the barriers and challenges getting in the way of ensuring access for all children to quality early learning and child care experiences in Gorham?

Transportation
Income
Availability of child care, not enough spots for children
Space, place to expand child care programs
Local zoning rules
Staffing and compensation
Professional development
FUNDING!!!
Variation of settings
Public perception
Parent or public knowledge, what are the choices
An established goal for a child entering Kindergarten
Communication between stakeholders
Child find, what children have needs, developmental
Buy-in
Knowledge about ratings, what they mean, story behind them
Knowledge and transparency around offerings, child care resource and referral

Opportunities:

- Collaborative community
- This group and momentum to work together
- Gorham is growing, commercial and residential, can engage employers
- Local funding potential, TIFs
- We are in a moment, spotlight on this issue
- Opportunity to raise professionalism of early childhood professionals
- There is some state and federal funding right now, there is a possibility for much more coming to Maine
- DOE is offering great support to develop child care partnerships, including funding
- DHHS will be offering grants to open new child care programs
- LD 1712: five pilots in Maine with child care partnerships

- Place stickies in the center of the table & mix up.
- Share stickies with the whole group & organize under common headings/themes.
- Discuss & Prioritize

Next Steps/Homework?

Future meetings:
mini-trainings - child care licensing, quality rating and improvement system, state funding and new bills, components of new federal package

October 14, 2021 Agenda
Meeting Location: GMS Library

6:30 - 6:40 **WELCOME & CATCH UP**

- Take some time to chat and catch up with one another before we get down to business!

6:40 - 7:45 **DATA WALK (Facilitated by Tara)**

- We will review the following data utilizing a specific format as facilitated by Tara Williams:
    - Updated Early Care Provider data from Survey
    - Survey data from Gorham Parents
    - Enrollment data (school)
    - K screening data (school)
    - Statewide and county data on child care, young children and families

Guiding questions:

1. **Was there specific data you found interesting or compelling, and, if so, why?**

- Two Things: how people find out about child care- word of mouth. If you don't know someone, how do you find out? The number of 3rd graders that are where they are supposed to be (45% state wide) reading.
- 66% of people didn't feel there was adequate care available in Gorham. Lack of availability and cost. If you can't afford $300 per week, there isn't access.
- Availability is we don't have enough providers.
- Numbers of live births and then how many more families are moving in.
- Wages that are earning - not livable. Today is not matching - child care dollars can't keep up.

- Didn't see data - or question - for families in childcare. Should we find out how many would like child care but can't access it or how many don't need or want it.
- Are you satisfied or happy with your current child care?
- Total number of opportunities (openings) vs. students coming through and how that matched up.
- Current data - a lot of programs aren't at capacity right now because they don't have workforce, or because they have pulled themselves back due to dealing with COVID.
- Most family child care is licensed for 12, but when you put a 2 or younger in the mix, you are automatically capped at 8. If there are staff, family child care providers can get 12.
- We have 43 5 year olds in Gorham that are in child care. Are people holding them back, would be interested in learning more about why?
- Didn't see any information about families that do non traditional child care - like a family friend watches them, or grammie. Might be worth asking.
- Didn't get Gorham Rec in this survey. Many children receiving before and after school care. Should be some valuable information there.

2. **What data is missing? What additional information would help you better understand early childhood and school readiness in this community?**

3. **What do you notice about age, gender, language, or race/ethnicity in the data? Are there disparities we need to address to support children and families?**
    - Interesting to see how few we have on child care subsidy.
    - How few non white children represented.
    - State of Maine poverty rates (2018).
    - Where can I find racial/ethnic disparities regarding access to child care?
    - 45% of income of single parent - paid for child care.
    -
4. **What might be working to support young children? What might not?**

- The percentage of cost for family and income of child care providers...how do you get unstuck?
- Location is very important to parents seeking child care.
- Volume is a factor. Then there is a question regarding quality. Three legs, how many students, what you are charging parents, what you are paying staff. Move any one part impacts the others. Max numbers are set by the state.
- There are a lot of great choices with experience here in Gorham.
-

7:45 - 8:00 DEBRIEF & NEXT STEPS

November 16, 2021 Agenda

6:00 - 6:10 WELCOME & CATCH UP

- Take a few minutes to catch up before we get down to business!

6:10 - 6:50 **MDOE PRESENTATION ON PUBLIC PRE-K GUIDEBOOK**

- Special Guests Leeanne Larson and Nicole Madore from MDOE will be present to share information on how public pre k can work in partnership with public schools. We'll likely review key parts of THIS GUIDEBOOK as part of the discussion so feel free to bring your questions!

  Notes

  - Nicole shared some key myths and facts about PreK and Child Care partnerships in Maine (such as the Chapter 124 Rules, lead teacher having 081 certification)
  - Reviewed benefits of partnerships: fewer transitions for children, increased choices for families, shared resources, educators collaboration across child care and elementary, multiple funding streams, working towards universal preschool
  - Shared a timeline or "map" to partnership, what are the steps to create a partnership model
  - Key to success: communication, annual review of MOU,

6:50 - 7:30 **LEARNING ABOUT LICENSING**

- Tara Williams and our own local child care experts will help lead an informational discussion to learn more about what licensing requirements exist for family child care and child care centers, including Head Starts, in Maine.
- View SLIDE Presentation HERE.
- View Handout HERE

- Quick overview of licensing rules - Tara
- How does a program become licensed? - Anne and Deb A.
- Overview of a family child care licensing visit and licensing rules that are specific to family child care, ratios, home environment, etc. - Deb A. and Anne
- Overview of a center-based licensing visit and licensing rules that are specific to centers, ratios, credentials, etc. - Renee and Amy
- How do licensing rules interact with other systems and rules (Head Start Standards, chapter 124 public preschool, MRTQ PDN) - Tara and Debra F.
- Time for Q&A

Thursday, December 16, 2021
Location: GMS Library

Time: 6:00 p.m.

6:00 - 6:10 WELCOME & CATCH UP

- Take a few minutes to catch up before we get down to business!

6:10 - 7:00 KINDERGARTEN PRESENTATION (Amy, Karen, and Heather V.)

Goal: Understanding what current K classrooms look like

- SEL & Academic Expectations for students entering K.
    - SEL tools and resources used in K: mindfulness, restorative circles, Second Steps, code of conduct
    - Typical K Day - arrive, outdoor morning recess or indoor activities, circle time (calendar, weather, days of schools, morning message), snack time, Being a Reader program, center time, Reveal Math program, Lunch and Recess, Specials/Allied Arts, Being a Writer, Social Studies and Science
    - Listens and follows directions, works well in groups, solves problems appropriately, stays on task and uses time efficiently, follows school and classroom rules, uses grade level organizations skills, completes school work, and more
- Overview of SEL & Academic targets for students at end of K
    - Learn alphabet and basic features of letters and words, break down spoken and written words into syllables and letters and identify sounds, learn to read, and more
    - Count to 100, Read and write numbers up to 30, compare and order numbers up to 20, identify 2D and 3D shapes, create and describe patterns, solve addition and subtraction problems to 10, know days of the week and the purpose of the calendar
    - Science & social studies: life cycle of butterflies, plants and seeds, weather/seasons, community workers, building classroom community
- Overall rules/policies associated with Kindergarten
    - Screening
    - Support services: RTI, special education
    - Allied arts: Art, Music, PE, Library, Social Skills
- Questions & Answers from Committee Members
    - Our group is looking to improve transitions, improve our own community connections, relationships, how we work together every year
    - Discussion around transitions, what is done now, what is possible, think about transition form for previous form to fill

out, building our relationships, transitions for children, for families, and for parents specifically

7:00 - 7:20 ADDITIONAL INFORMATION NEEDED?

- As we get ready to launch into an initial development of our "deliverables" for this work (See reminder below in blue) we are wondering what additional information committee members may need in order to intelligently begin to put "pen to paper" on drafting ideas?
- Brainstorm Additional information folks need:

DRAFT "Deliverables":

Development of a written early childhood vision report for the community of Gorham. Report will include:

- Vision for early childhood learning (birth - 5) for Gorham
- Assessment of current community assets to build towards actualizing this vision.
- Assessment of current community gaps in actualizing this vision.
- Creation of draft priority action steps and approximate timelines for work needed to make the early childhood learning vision a reality in Gorham.

We could use more information about:

- Summarize what we know from all the data we already looked at, population and number of children under age 5 (about 200 of each age group, infants, toddlers, preschool, PreK), number of children who have not had a child care/preschool experience, number attending in other towns
- January 11th, town study presented, facilities, joint school committee and town council meeting
- Career pathways, workforce, training, credentials needed

7:20 - 7:30 p.m. QUESTION/DISCUSSION: COMMUNITY EVENT IN APRIL?

- Tara will lead in a discussion regarding whether or not we'd like to do something together to celebrate the "young child" in April as a community. Would be a great way to get the "word out" about our work and celebrate the importance of early childhood programs at the same time **ADJOURN**

February 17, 2022 AGENDA
Location: Gorham Middle School Library

6:00 - 6:05 WELCOME & CATCH UP

- Take a few minutes to catch up before we get down to business!

6:05 - 6:40 LEARNING THROUGH PLAY (Tara Williams)

Pre Work: Select 2-3 Items from the resources sent via email and linked below to review/read and come prepared to discuss.

Resources Linked Here:

- *The Best Kindergarten You've Ever Seen- Ted Talk*
- *Observing, Planning, Guiding: How an Intentional Teacher Meets Standards Through Play*
- *Rethinking Early Childhood Environments to Enhance Learning*
- *Holding on to Play, Reflecting on Experiences as a Playful K-3 Teacher*
- *Tumbling over the Edge, a.k.a. the why? and what? of play*
- *Benefits of Play Infographic*
- *How Every Child can Thrive by Five-Ted Talk*

- **Small group discussion w/discussion protocol**
    - Save The Last Word For Me Protocol

- **Small group report out to large group**

Note from large group discussion

- Ted talk about architecture and how it effects the learning environment- provoke us to think about things in new ways
- "You are waterproof, you won't melt in the rain. Children are meant to be outside!"
- Concerned that her engagement was looking at it from birth up- a lot of the conversation is about public PreK- bias toward play- it is important to meet them at developmental level- there is time for freedom- play is a time for social/emotional growth- there has to be intention from adult so the adult can encourage children so their development is progressing
- Play is hierarchical, stages of play, it is multifaceted- we need to nurture the foundation so children can grow when they get to school
- There was a nice balance of understanding the progression of play- teacher creates meaningful playful activities and observes

6:40 - 7:30 DEVELOPING THEMES FOR OUR DRAFT VISION (Nicole Poole)

- Break into groups of 5-6 each

- Take ten minutes to Review Data summaries prepared:
    - Key Notes from Meetings Summary
    - Gorham Summary Data
    - Initial PK Survey Summary Data - Gorham
    - Gorham Schools Enrollment Study Info.
- Affinity Diagram Activity

  Activity Question: If you could imagine the perfect birth to age 5 early learning program for our community, what would it look like? What core components would it have? How would it be integrated among community partners? What core values would it espouse? Etc. Overall, what would its core components be?

    - 5 minute brainstorm w/stickies answering assigned question. Remember - ONE IDEA per sticky only please!
    - 20 minutes sharing and organizing stickies into categories/themes
    - 5 minute report out of categories/themes from each group.

Child's experience - play, outdoor learning,
Care provider considerations - continuity of care, multi-age groups, responsive care
Professional Development
Collaboration with larger Gorham community and with stakeholders
Structural needs - well-resourced, enough spaces for children
Guided, not mandated
Space/Environment - indoor/outdoor, resources, materials
Equity - access, choice, affordability
Parent engagement, education, outreach
Local zoning, codes, rules

March 17 AGENDA
Location: GMS Middle School Library
Start time: 6:00 p.m.

6:00 - 6:05 **WELCOME & CATCH UP**
Facilitator - Tara Williams, MaineAEYC & Heather Perry

- Take a few minutes to catch up before we get down to business!

6:05 - 6:40 **CONTINUED LEARNING - SPECIAL SERVICES PROGRAMS**
Facilitator - Nicole Poole, Asst. Director of Special Services

- Meg Sigovich, Part C, Birth-Age 2 CDS (Child Development Services)
- Part B, Age 3-5 CDS
- Transitioning to Special Education Services in Public Schools

For each of the above, we will have a special guest present to share a brief presentation on types of services offered and how families access those services. Then Structured Q&A. We will have some questions pre-prepared, but WE WANT YOUR QUESTIONS TOO…Please CLICK HERE to add YOUR questions by Tuesday, March 15!

Notes:

CDS (Child Development Services)

- Birth to age 5/Kindergarten
- 9 regional offices, CDS REACH in Portland serves Gorham
- Early Intervention (Part C), infants and toddlers
    - Referrals: parents, child care program, home visiting, pediatricians, DHHS
    - Usually a developmental concern
    - May lead to comprehensive evaluation which determine if child qualifies for services, there are some automatic qualifications for services, can use their own expertise at CDS to support qualification
    - Coaching model with parents, families, and child care staff; planning together, embed strategies in everyday routines
    - Who works in CDS part C: early childhood special educators, occupational therapists, physical therapists, speech and language
- Transition to Part B, the Part C staff helps start the process about 6 months ahead, child has to be re-evaluated if evaluation took place more than 6 months before 3 years before
- CDS Special Education (Part B), 3-5 years old
    - Referrals come from Part C, parents, child care programs, preschools, pediatricians
    - Services have to be provided in an educational setting (child care, preschool) and run on a school-year calendar
    - Workforce shortages in this part of CDS affecting waitlists, not all children getting timely services
    - Services: Speech, Occupational therapist, Physical therapist
    - Longest waitlist right now is for those children who qualify for a developmental preschool
- Public School Special Education (Part B), 5-21 years old
    - Special Education strategists in public schools start getting information in December about children coming from CDS to Kindergarten next school year
    - Gorham School District starts outreach in January with families, then can observe children in their setting
    - Most important aspects of a strong transition, building relationships
    - Gorham has several children coming from Developmental special purpose preschools

6:40 - 7:30 DRAFT VISION WORK

- Sharing key topics identified from last meeting
- Sharing of a few key templates/examples
- Review Draft Outline (using data from last meeting & Templates)
- Group Feedback Activity: - Parking Lot

- We need a good title, motto, think about the audience
- #LittleRams
- Early childhood partnership, we all need to work together
- Accessible language
- Length of example from Madison, but format more like Detroit
- Table of contents
- Planning process in flow chart, not too long or wordy
- Share one long term goal, why are we doing this
- Summary followed by detailed breakdown
- Vision statement and guiding principles
- We can connect with Aspire Gorham in our document, maybe have a couple of photos with children saying what they want to do when they grow up
- Why it matters? Importance of early childhood
- Graphics, photos, infographics
- Data - charts, graphs, survey data tables (what's happening here)
- Barriers and needs
- Breaking down goals into ongoing, short term, long term
- Goals, objectives, recommendations, priorities, imperatives?
- Color-coding the goals or recommendations
- Examples from other places
- Profile of parents, caregivers, child care program leadership and staff
- Appendices - resources

Week of the Young Child - Tara will email some resources about Week of the Young Child events, flyers, proclamations

IF TIME… (If not, we'll move to next meeting)

- Break into 3 small groups
- Assign each group one of the larger "headings" from draft outline
- For each assigned heading, each group use the P3T protocol j
- Report out to whole group
- Record salient points.

7:30 ADJOURN

Agenda May 19, 2022

Join Zoom Meeting
https://networkmaine.zoom.us/j/84970214836?pwd=ACCK9lmYBTm9KpAxsB86ql5C0cWSxI.1

Meeting ID: 849 7021 4836
Passcode: 243382
One tap mobile
+16468769923,

6:00 - 6:45 p.m. **FOCUS ON EXISTING DRAFT**

- Split into 2-3 Groups. Each group will review existing draft and respond to the following questions on chart paper or digital media:
    - Is there anything that is too repetitive that can be removed?
    - Is there anything ESSENTIAL missing in the data?
    - Are there any particular data pieces that should be a graphic and not just in the narrative?
    - Are we missing any key goals?
    - Is there additional information in appendices that we should have?

6:45 - 7:30 p.m. **FOCUS ON OBJECTIVES/OUTCOMES**

- Remain in the same 2-3 Groups. Each group will. . .
    - Review each goal.
    - Outline 3-4 potential objectives and/or action steps that should be accomplished in each goal area.
    - Record/take notes
- Be prepared to report out

Notes from First section "Whip":

- Needs to be digestible.
- Right way or folks will be lost…needs to be readable in bite sized chunks
- Easy to read.
- Investment - big investment - important investment
- Not just a school thing - a COMMUNITY thing!
- Excited, collaborative effort
- Key take aways needed.
- Why it matters is favorite part
- HIGHLIGHT THE WHY!

- Excited abou tit coming to life
- Community piece.
- Great so far - no jargon! Let's keep it that way!

Notes from 2nd section "Whip":

- Strengthening relationships will remain key.
- Community piece needs to remain a focus.
- Bridging gaps and transitions is a good focus.
- Awareness for community
- Level of advocacy is something to consider.
- Partnerships
- Enhanced collaboration
- How this is all laid out will impact how the public judges the outcomes.
- Creative ideas.
- Keep it moving - positive work indeed
- Community collaboration
- Overwhelmed - so much good and important work to do.
- Educating community
- Levels. Thankful this town included ECE professionals. Excited. For once, a purposeful meeting.
- Clarify of objectives and activities.

GROUP 2 Notes: Questions to Guide Conversation

- **Is there anything that is too repetitive that can be removed?**
- **Is there anything ESSENTIAL missing in the data?**
- **Are there any particular data pieces that should be a graphic and not just in the narrative?**
- **Are we missing any key goals?**
- **Is there additional information in appendices that we should have?**

Overall Concern: this isn't about the Gorham school system. This is about babies and young children. I want to make sure that this doesn't sound like it's from the school system. They are a leader in bringing this together, but we need some engagement and ownership in this. We want the partnership to form. There are some places that do read a little heavy on "school system."

Vision and Mission language: when I see the "healthy development and school readiness" worries me → as a parent, I really like the "nurturing care and healthy development"

Pg. #4: Arrows pointing make you read it in a way that follows the arrow.

- Arrow is interesting in that it catches the eye … but needs to be reformatted.
- Maybe different colors?

Pg. #5: "Failure to …" → is this too negative?

- It's realistic, not necessarily a negative. This feels appropriate.

- With everything happening in our society and in our workforce, it's going to get worse, not better unless there's some kind of intervention.
- Change language to reflect that it's a structural problem: "Failure of our community to meet this need to ensure…"

Pg. #6: "We Learned: …63% of childcare providers in Gorham are below their licensed capacity"
Do we need this? This is misleading - COVID, staffing shortages, retirement preparation, etc.

- "Lack of workforce" - not just staffing shortages, but there are retirements and not a lot of new people coming into the field.

Note: Subsidy levels have changed. It would be good if we could make families in Gorham aware. Family of 4 can make up to $95,000 and still receive a subsidy. So many people think it's only for baseline poverty. → how can we inform families?!?!?

- Once a family has a school-aged child, the schools become a distributor of important educational and community news. Prior to families joining the schools, how do they find information?
- CDS will share information, providers are supposed to, website

Pg. #9: re-format or add graphic for the Maine Data highlights

Strategic Goals and Objectives

Review goals - are these right, do they need changes?

Once we firm up these goals, as a group, collaborate and create *objectives* or *specific action steps*.

Goal #1:

- Ways to help support families to complete the subsidy application process → inform, provide support for completion, etc.
    - Advocate to the legislature - any way to have this be an automatic / check-box thing when submitting state taxes (they already have the documentation needed to verify eligibility)
- Request local legislative delegation work to make increasing infant and toddler child care spots a priority in policy & funding at state levels → also add an action step around making people aware of this work and any changes that occur.
- Not every provider has to accept the subsidies as well, even if a family is eligible - this is another area that needs to be considered …
    - Encourage providers to complete the "Market Rate Survey" - now it's starting to ask about the true costs of running a childcare business.
    - Town can support and encourage local providers to complete this and figure out the true cost of care.

Goal #2:

Feedback: Is it the responsibility of the community to provide training for providers? It's great if they want to support. → Change language to "support" Caution on endorsing or promoting any one *type* of facility.

- Community of Practice - to continue
- When school has specific trainings that would be appropriate, at times that can be accessed by childcare providers.
- Adult Ed has done trainings for providers.

Goal #3:

Feedback: I don't know what this one exactly means. *Want to have a strong, sustainable childcare system in Gorham* (that would include centers, family, co-ops, head start).

- Connect w/MaineAYEC, Maine Afterschool Alliance - est. associations that reflect the childcare structure in the state
- Utilize the Community of Practice through Maine Roads to Quality.
- CTE program in Westbrook! Promoting this program in middle and high schools.
- Apprenticeship pathways
- Town itself puts up barriers to opening childcare centers → planning board, code enforcement. Collaborate w/Town to improve this environment.

Goal #4:

Feedback: Problem in focusing on children 3-4.

- Move the specific age piece OUT of the goal, but make it a very specific objective.
- Continue to provide early intervention strategies PD
- How to get that information out to families - can specialists w/in school system do webinars, do it through Adult Ed, family nights (specific for families who are not yet in the school system) → starting to build the relationship to the school system
    - Lean on Library and Rec Dept for this part?
    - Posting things places - Hannaford, Walgreens, Gorham Times

Goal #5:

- Meetings held at mutually agreeable times.
- Gorham can create a feedback form SEPARATE from CDS. Send out to providers.
- Questions: What do they love? What do they really not like?
- Going from C to B → a lot depends on the family, provider, where the CDS services are at
    - What can the community do about it?
    - Information, getting it out to families, understanding the work-arounds → repository of resources to help fill in these gaps
    - Key concepts and strategies from trained experts (OTs, PTs, etc) → check w/Heidi W.

Goal #6:

- Continuing some version of this group -> a steering committee w/key stakeholders
- Town Council committee -> rep from school board, rep from providers, rep from parent, rep from early elementary school ed
- "Gorham School Committee will host an annual Child Care Fair where families can learn about opportunities in the community and make informed decisions about their children's

care and education" → it makes more sense for *this* group to host it rather than the School Committee (or in partnership)
    - Challenge in how this will be received if it "lives" in the School Committee *or* Town Council → it *has* to be collaboratively within the town *community*.
        - Challenge w/political stuff right now
        - Is it possible to have this become a sub-committee - something nonpolitical

Notes from Breakout Group 3

- Exciting to see this coming together, to see all our work organized and written out, feeling sense of accomplishment already
- Excited to look at pieces to take out at graphics, text boxes with quotes and anecdotes, and to add photos and pictures to the final copy
- The graph in the "why this is important" section already stands out and that information stuck on first review
- We need to look at how the data is worded for the general audience, some could be misread and misunderstood, for example, first three bullet points about the child care programs survey
- In the family survey section, change word "PreK" to "preschool" or have "preschool age children" since it makes it sounds like those children go to some different type of programs, really they are in PreK classrooms in their child care center, or they attend a center that doesn't enroll infants and toddlers (like Gorham House)
- We should add a little about importance of young children developing secure attachments and why continuity of care is important, helps emphasize the importance of having a strong and stable workforce of early childhood teachers (if the turnover in ECE was happening in K-12, public and policymakers would be up in arms and acting fast)
- In the why it matters section, explain how ECE investment pays for itself, what exactly does that mean
- On page 11, in the introduction to the six goals, change the word challenges to opportunities
- We recommend changing the wording in goal #2 to something about improving collaboration, sharing expertise, and learning together, add child development to the end where play is named
- For goal #3, we came up with several strategies/activities including
    - Access to better compensation without increasing costs for families, state and federal public investment
    - Funding for early educators to complete credential and degrees without taking on debt
    - Ensuring the ECE workforce as access to benefits (health insurance and retirement), could created a state shared service model for those in child care or could include early educators in K-12 benefits
    - In Gorham work with high school Guidance counselors, Aspire Gorham, CTEs, and middle school teachers to introduce kids to the field of early education, when visiting area businesses, include a visit to an early care and education program
    - Include early childhood and K-12 in local careers directory, could have state ECE career directory
- For goal #4 we talked about a strategy around strengthening what parents know about child development and what to expect at each age and stage of development
- For goal #5 we talked about a having a form or communication strategy that brings "whole child" information from families and child care programs to the elementary school staff as

part of the routine process for all children, that information from parents and other caregivers and educators is welcome and used by Kindergarten teachers and other staff in the school, the expertise of those who have cared for and educated the children for the first five years is valued (not looked at as needing to start from a blank slate or from scratch)

- For goal #6 we talked about how to continue these types of meetings in some form, to have a Gorham Little Rams projects that works each year to implement the strategic plan and bring stakeholders together

AGENDA June 16, 2022

Location: Central Office Upstairs Conference Room

6:00 - 7:15 p.m. **REVIEW EXISTING DRAFT GOALS, OBJECTIVES & ACTION STEPS**

First , Some background: When I went more deeply into the writing work, I found that two of our earlier goals actually nicely fit in under some of the others, so I consolidated what was 6 goals at our last meeting into 4 goals. Then for each goal, I used previous meeting notes and other resources to develop 3-4 draft objectives for each goal and then under each objective, I have listed 3-4 specific action steps. I also tried to go a little more deeply into the timeline piece by indicating short, mid, long term and/or ongoing work.

I've been spending A LOT of time with this data recently, which is good - but unfortunately, it also puts "blinders" on as a writer. You can get a little too close.

So once again, I NEED YOUR FEEDBACK to make sure I haven't veered too far off the path! THAT WILL BE THE PURPOSE OF THIS MEETING!

Understanding we already have feedback on changes to the narrative, data formatting and how to make the document flow better, etc. I need us to spend one more session fully focused on the goals, objectives and action steps to make sure I am not missing anything that people believe is crucial to this conversation moving forward.

With that in mind - here's what we'll do together:

1. Break out into FOUR groups (one for each identified goal).
2. Once in your groups, elect a note taker (notes can be handwritten or digital…whatever works best, but make sure you email me a copy when done).
3. Dive into the assigned goal and associated objectives and action steps and answer the following questions:
    a. Does this goal accurately state what we want to accomplish? If not, suggested changes?
    b. Is this goal too big? Should it be divided into smaller goals?
    c. Is the goal too small and really should be an objective under another goal?
    d. Do the action steps align to each objective?
    e. Are the action steps realistic and "doable"?
    f. Are there any goals, objectives or action steps that are missing? If so, what would you add and where?

Please make sure notes are taken and emailed to me. Nicole and Tara will be there for questions and comments and to keep the work on track. When you have either run out of things to talk about, or the clock has reached 7:15 you can stop. Take 15 minutes to share out highlights of your conversations with the whole group and then enjoy the rest of your evening!

We will meet again as a full group with a "beautified" and cleaned up version of the plan in August at least once…perhaps twice in order to finalize the document and prepare it to be shared publicly this fall BROADLY. I will send a doodle poll to schedule mid to late July. We'll map that process out together…and YES - I WILL NEED YOUR VOICES as we share this work with our community!

That is it for tonight…THANK YOU again for your participation in this important work…it really is coming together nicely and I can't wait to see the more polished version after Jen has had a chance to get ahold of it!