

BBF Professional Preparation and Development

Committee Meeting Notes 1/21/2026

- I. **Meeting Attendees:** Deb Norris, Becky Millard, Elise Doner, deb Grennon Beth Truzansky, Tiffany Miller, Helen Mattheis, Sonja Bracey, Joanne Rouleau, Tia Fotion, Ammie Collins, Staci Otis, Jennifer Lyford, Margaret Barch-Pearsall, Bill Bonsignore, Amelia Struthers, Brendan Rooney, Adri Taylo- Behrman, Paula Nadeau, Joanna Houston, Michele Maitri-Mudita, Hailey Paschold, Arlynn Polletta, Holly Moriglioni, Courtney Isham

Meeting Summary:

- II. Welcome and Introductions (Becky)
- III. Oversight for Goal 4 “All children are supported by a well-prepared, well-supported early childhood workforce.” (Beth Truzansky, BBF), <https://www.buildingbrightfutures.org/strategic-plan/>
Goal of plan – long term vision – it’s the systems Strategic Plan.



55 page document with detail – will give us the big picture here.
Five main goals:

Vermont's Early Childhood Strategic Plan 2026-2030

Goal 1: All Children and Families Have Their Basic Needs Met including stable housing, nutritious food, income, and transportation.

Goal 2: All Children Are Raised in Safe, Healthy, and Healing Environments that promote healing and resilience.

Goal 3: All Children and Families Access High-Quality Opportunities for Development and Learning. Children gain access to inclusive, high-quality opportunities that support their development and well-being.

Goal 4: All Children Are Supported by a Well-Prepared, Well-Supported Workforce. Children are cared for by a well-prepared, well-supported, and equitably compensated early childhood workforce.

Goal 5: Our System Centers Families and Is Coordinated, Well-Resourced, and Data-Driven. Families and caregivers must hold real power in shaping decisions, and systems must be transparent and accountable

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About Vermont's Early Childhood Strategic Plan



- Vermont's statewide strategic framework for early childhood through 2030
- A comprehensive, cross-sector "plan of plans" to align policy, investments, and implementation
- Developed through extensive community and family engagement and informed by data and system analysis
- Designed to guide long-term policy, budget, and system planning

Read the plan at:

<https://www.buildingbrightfutures.org/strategic-plan/>

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Unanimous endorsement – created from community engagement process.

Goal 4: All Children Are Supported by a Well-Prepared, Well-Supported Workforce



Early Childhood Workforce is defined broadly - Providers of services, programs, and supports for pregnant people, young children and their families and caregivers, and their peers.

For example:

- early childhood and family mental health providers
- early elementary teachers
- perinatal and pediatric healthcare providers
- early childhood educators
- special educators
- data stewards
- administrators
- case managers
- social workers

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Broad range of workforce – prenatal to primary grade.

Mental Health providers, perinatal, ECE and ECE spec ed, primary grade, Early Intervention

Where is there progress, barriers? Message to state agency folks to assist in breaking down barriers. Policy Recommendations needed? Come together twice a year to look at this.

Goal 4: All Children Are Supported by a Well-Prepared, Well-Supported Workforce



Goal 4 Governance - BBF Early Childhood Workforce Advisory Committee

Purpose - To monitor Goal 4 and identify shared interest and strategies across early childhood workforce sectors

Membership - Representation from early childhood workforce sectors as well as representatives of implementation teams like PPD and the EC Higher Ed Collaborative

Frequency - Two times a year

Contact: Anna Brouillette, BBF Policy and Program Manager, Kelly Hayes, Regional Manager

** PPD would continue, though no longer as a BBF committee. Focus would maintain on the ECE registered workforce.*

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OBJECTIVE 4.A.: ENSURE THE EARLY CHILDHOOD WORKFORCE IS WELL PREPARED

4.A.1. Guarantee access to pre-service training, education, and professional development to improve child outcomes.

Example Actions:

- Ensure credential and degree programs align with workforce needs, are offered at Vermont higher education institutions, and provide stackable, portable options.
- Stabilize and expand funding for early childhood post-secondary education and training, making programs accessible, affordable, and attractive for earning necessary credentials to meet current and future workforce needs.
- Invest in post-secondary education and training infrastructure, including financial and academic counseling, to support an equity-centered recruitment strategy, using inclusive language and diverse outreach to students, advisors, and counselors.
- Use equity-centered recruitment strategies to attract students, advisors, and counselors from diverse backgrounds through targeted outreach and financial and academic counseling.
- Invest in and retain early childhood higher education faculty and trainers by funding positions (tenured when possible), research, graduate programs, and professional supports.
- Identify opportunities for school- and community-based Universal Prekindergarten early childhood educators to collaborate on professional development (e.g., alternatives to funding limitations, Supervisory Unions and Supervisory Districts including school and community-based early childhood educators in their professional development planning).



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Read through and pause and add reflections. Goal 4 is in two parts.

Holly: What can Head Start programs do to utilize funding better?

How HS can better align with Career Ladder and meet folks where they are at (bandwidth for training).

Paula: first bullet, youth apprenticeship – thinking about aligns with the professionalization work and the needs of the field – investing and retaining partner with folks who can encourage high quality professionals to branch out.

OBJECTIVE 4.A.: ENSURE THE EARLY CHILDHOOD WORKFORCE IS WELL PREPARED

4.A.2. Set expectations for services and organizations to promote equity and justice and dismantle systems of oppression.

Example Actions:

- Build workforce capacity to respond to trauma and community crisis through training, peer support, and mental health resources, embedded in healing-centered practices.
- Examine existing equity standards in quality frameworks, licensing, and improvement plans, and seek out opportunities for continuous quality improvement.
- Invest in and expand the use of tools that prioritize equity (e.g., Northern Lights Equity and Inclusion Audit Tool, foster parent training, and staff training for the Department of Children and Families (DCF) and Family Services (FS)) and develop new resources based on community-identified needs.



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Becky: Shift in language to healing-centered from Trauma Informed. And to look at the use of this language in NL as well.

Holly: Likes seeing use of Community Crisis – Change in administration and affect on Equity, Justice and use of that language is challenging.

OBJECTIVE 4.A.: ENSURE THE EARLY CHILDHOOD WORKFORCE IS WELL PREPARED

4.A.3. Advance a well-prepared, well-qualified early childhood workforce by developing a clear system of professional expectations, career pathways, and accountability.

Example Actions:

- Advance credentialing and licensure, with strong transition supports for the current workforce, alignment across agencies, and mechanisms for coaching, mentoring, and continuous quality improvement.
- Promote transparency and accountability by ensuring families have access to information about educator qualifications, program practices, and learning environments, with a focus on increasing positive experiences and outcomes for children.
- Revise Vermont's early childhood workforce registry according to the PER standards established by the National Workforce Registry Alliance. Workforce registries are a best practice recommended by the National Institute for Early Education Research to help states track credentials, training, and professional development needs.
- Reward the commitment of veteran professionals by supporting systems that award longevity and quality-based bonuses or increased reimbursement rates.
- Expand access to expert, business-specific guidance for child care owners and directors tailored to their unique business models.

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Tia, likes the working of second to last bullet.

Beth: Struggle for folks to find new trainings that they haven't done before when they have been in the field for a long time.

deb: Stackable credentials adding in a business component.

OBJECTIVE 4.B: ENSURE THE EARLY CHILDHOOD WORKFORCE IS STABLE AND ABLE TO THRIVE

4.B.1. Ensure that the early childhood workforce is well-compensated and can meet their basic needs.

Example Actions:

- Work toward compensation and benefit parity across school- and community-based settings, sectors, and age of children served so families experience consistent quality regardless of where they access early childhood services.
- Provide funding to support comprehensive benefit packages, comparable to other fields with similar qualifications and levels of responsibility, including benefits especially relevant to this field, including paid family leave and child care benefits.
- Promote and enhance existing state policies that seek to provide affordable benefits to Vermont employers and employees (e.g., Vermont Health Connect, Vermont Saves).
- Increase reimbursement rates for billable services to enable community-based programs (via Children's Integrate Services, Parent Child Centers, Designated agencies) to increase compensation for professionals, including mental health providers, social workers, speech-language pathologists (SLPs), occupational therapists (OTs), and physical therapists (PTs).
- Continue incremental increases to Child Care Financial Assistance Program (CCFAP) reimbursement rates to provide child care programs with sufficient funds to increase wages and offer benefits.

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Deb: retention issue because providing benefits is unaffordable for many

OBJECTIVE 4.B: ENSURE THE EARLY CHILDHOOD WORKFORCE IS STABLE AND ABLE TO THRIVE

4.B.2. Promote recruitment into the early childhood workforce.

Example Actions:

- Implement targeted marketing and recruitment campaigns to elevate the visibility and value of early childhood and related careers (e.g., home visitors, early interventionists, special educators, speech-language pathologists (SLPs), occupational (OTs) and physical therapists (PTs), early childhood educators, mental health clinicians).
- Promote clear, supported career pathways beginning in secondary schools and technical education programs, consistently and statewide, with opportunities to explore early childhood education licensure, Master's of Social Work (MSW) programs, allied health careers, and other roles that serve children and families.
- Invest in recruiting a diverse workforce through internships, grow-your-own programs, scholarships, mentorship, and streamlined licensing for Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) and immigrant professionals.
- Expand access to scholarships, tuition assistance, loan repayment, and wage incentives to encourage workforce entry.
- Ensure coordination across training, licensing, and support programs so that entry points into the workforce are clear, visible, and accessible across disciplines.

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Deb: last bullet a challenge – and complicated

OBJECTIVE 4.B: ENSURE THE EARLY CHILDHOOD WORKFORCE IS STABLE AND ABLE TO THRIVE

4.B.3. Promote retention of the current workforce.

Example Actions:

- Enhance workforce well-being with policies and supports that reduce burnout (e.g., substitute staffing pools, mental health resources, reflective supervision, and flexible schedules).
- Support equitable hiring, retention, and promotion practices, including bias-free recruitment, equitable pay, and clear career pathways.
- Expand the capacity of the primary care, mental health, and pediatric behavioral health workforce using consultation programs, with attention to both geography and demographic representation.
- Strengthen interdisciplinary professional networks (e.g., Vermont's Early Childhood and Family Mental Health (ECFMH) Directors, Home Visitors, Early Childhood Networks, program directors, speech-language pathologists, social workers, and other care professionals) to foster connection, reduce isolation, and support peer learning.
- Invest in professional development by covering training time, travel, substitutes, and licensure costs to keep the workforce current and improve child development and family outcomes.
- Support leadership development of experienced professionals with expanded roles, professional development, mentorship, and recognition to improve continuity and quality for families.

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Deb: bullet two new training Hiring done well and lawfully – 40 people registered

Amelia: last bullet - 13 people in PDC CoP... show application of 70 Director Competencies – portfolio process, feedback from peers.


Helen: thinking deeply about this and how to support our partners in the process.

Paula: Addition of Family Services workers is great...and cross pollination with other EC fields and professionals

IV. Northern Lights Equity and Inclusion Tools Overview (Arlynn Polletta)

Michelle and Arlynn – equity work together for a long time and both designed tools for NL.

Go through each tool first and then



EQUITY & INCLUSION AUDIT TOOL

FOR EDUCATIONAL &
PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT TRAININGS

► **Purpose of Tool**

This tool is designed to evaluate the equitability and inclusiveness of educational / professional development training.

► **Who Should Use this Tool?**

Evaluators utilizing this tool should have increased competencies in Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion topics.

In order to use this tool effectively, evaluators require specialized training in topics such as understanding equity and inclusion, navigating bias, cultural competence, and universal design learning, etc.

► **What is Equity & Inclusion?**

Equity, in an educational context, is a commitment to assessing individual needs and fairly (oftentimes unequally) allocating resources, access, support, and opportunity to meet the unique and diverse needs of members of all social identity groups in order for all to achieve optimal learning outcomes. Working towards equity may also involve changing systemic barriers as well as inequitable policies, practices, institutional cultures, and ideologies.

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Inclusion, in an educational context, is a commitment to the creation of a learning environment where members of all social identity groups, people of diverse backgrounds, perspectives, and identities feel a sense of belonging. All people are valued, heard, considered, accepted, respected, and fully integrated as their authentic selves without bias.

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1. UNDERSTAND TERMINOLOGY

Take time to **review Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion terminology** to be able to use this tool in the way it is intended.

It is vital to have a clear and thorough understanding of all relevant terminology in order to apply this tool effectively. Understanding also involves ongoing review as language evolves over time.

Key terms to review:

2SLGBTQIA+ (Two Spirit, Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Intersex, Asexual +), Age, Ageism, Assigned Sex, Body Shape / Size, Bias (implicit, explicit), BIPOC, Culture, Discrimination, Diversity, Equity, Ethnicity, Family Structure, Gender, Gender Expression, Gender Identity, Historically Marginalized, Inclusion, Inclusive Language, Intersectionality, Marginalization, Microaggression, People of Color, People with Disabilities, Prejudice, Race, Racism, Religion, Secularism, Sexism, Sexual Orientation, Social Class, Social Identities, Social Identity Groups, Stereotype



2. DETERMINE WHAT YOU ARE EVALUATING

This tool is designed to evaluate **Instructional Materials and Facilitation**. It may also be used as a roadmap for equitable and inclusive instructional design during the curriculum planning and development phases.



3. EVALUATE

Use this tool to evaluate identified instructional materials and facilitation on the **scale of disagree** (does not meet standard), **agree** (somewhat meets standard), **strongly agree** (meets standard), **unsure** (unable to evaluate and may need support / resources to complete evaluation), **or not applicable** (standard does not apply after careful consideration).



4. REFLECT & REVISE

After completing an evaluation, **identify and reflect on needed changes**.



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After completing an evaluation, **identify and reflect on needed changes**.

While it is recommended you begin the reflection and revision process with areas labeled "disagree", **growth opportunities exist at every level**. Equity and inclusion goals should evolve continuously.

Make appropriate revisions and adjustments towards more equitable and inclusive outcomes using the tool and the listed recommendations as a guide.



INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS (Pages 4-5)

Instructional Materials refer to content, resources, texts, sources, visuals, handouts, slide decks, videos, and audio used in a training.

To achieve greater equity and inclusion, instructional materials should **intentionally incorporate diverse representation of social identities** (including historically marginalized identities, racial identities; gender identities; national origins; cultures and traditions; disabled and neurodiverse identities; 2SLGBTQIA+ identities; appearances (e.g. body shape and size); religious, spiritual, and secular belief systems; ages; family structures, and socioeconomic backgrounds) **without stereotyping and tokenizing and with an awareness of the impacts of dominant culture and ideology on learning and socialization.**

In a U.S. context, dominant culture refers to the collective norms, values, and practices upheld by white, heterosexual, cis-gendered, upper middle-class, Christian people of northern European descent. Dominant culture influences societal standards, expectations, and social systems/structures.



FACILITATION (Pages 6-7)

Facilitation refers to how trainings are conducted (e.g. instruction, discussion, learner engagement, etc.).

To achieve greater equity and inclusion, facilitators actively **foster belonging**, communicate in a way that **demonstrates respect** for all social identity groups, and **allocate facilitation resources equitably** (e.g. time, attention, encouragement, feedback, support, etc.) so all learners can learn.

Go through the tool questions – will be posted on NL Website: and then make recommendations on content visualization etc... recommendations around communication and allocation of resources.

Companion Tool: meant to support the foundational tool.

COMPANION

TO EQUITY & INCLUSION AUDIT TOOL

For sponsors and others who hire, host, and promote professional development opportunities in Vermont

► Purpose of Tool

This equity checklist complements the Equity & Inclusion Audit Tool for Educational & Professional Development Trainings, offering guidance on equitable practices for hiring, hosting, and promoting training events.

► Considerations

The goal in completing the following checklist is to check as many boxes as possible. If you encounter limitations in providing equitable training opportunities, actively seek out resources and support for continued growth (e.g. accessing professional development opportunities focused on equity and inclusion, consulting with Equity and Inclusion experts within or outside your organization, engaging in peer collaboration and learning communities to share best practices, and/or seeking feedback from those impacted by inequities to inform your approach).

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Equity, in an educational context, is a commitment to assessing individual needs and fairly (oftentimes unequally) allocating resources, access, support, and opportunity to meet the unique and diverse needs of members of all social identity groups in order for all to achieve optimal learning outcomes. Working towards equity may also involve changing systemic barriers as well as inequitable policies, practices, institutional cultures, and ideologies.

Inclusion, in an educational context, is a commitment to the creation of a learning

Focuses on Hiring, Hosting and Promoting...

Can be paired with other tool or used separately.

Virtual vs In Person

Overview of training created for Northern Lights- goes over the topics you need to know to use the tools successfully. Key Terms, Stereotyping Tokenization and then Hiring Hosting and Promoting... Self Eval piece is important and needs to be built out a bit more.

V. Overview of 2026 PDG Projects (tentative)

Helen: update PDG grant

Systems-Building PDG '26 Initiative

January 20, 2026 | 1

- One-year initiative; approx. \$13 million
- Supports series of mostly CDD-led strategies to help unify Vermont's early childhood system so that it is easier for:
 - Families to use
 - Programs to run
 - Better for children
- Head Start participation and data improvement are themes throughout the activities.



Projects that could get done in a year as it was a year long grant.

Goal 1

January 20, 2026 | 2

Goal 1: Fix fragmentation and align systems.

- Universal prekindergarten system alignment
- Screening, intake, and referral (statewide CIRS model/developmental screening infrastructure and training)
- Mental health model for EC support
- Workforce pathways (Workforce analysis, AOE licensure, associate's degree pilot)



Multiple activities under these goals...

Goal 2

Goal 2: Expand availability, affordability, and quality.

- Child care capacity (specialized child care/SAG/business technical assistance)
- CCFAP (eligibility analysis/outreach)
- STARS (portfolio tool/CLASS data alignment/family outreach)
- Digitized background checks
- Health and safety (Consultation/training/supplies)

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Mattheis, Helen (she/her) (Unverified) — +



How to improve the timeliness of background check. Initiative shepherded at the highest levels.

Goal 3

Goal 3: Use shared data to guide and improve the system.

- CDDIS expansion
- CIS data system
- Vermont's EC Data and Policy Center and cross-agency coordination

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Mattheis, Helen (she/her) (Unverified)



VI. Partner Updates and Upcoming Events and Links

Deb G: FCF - supply demand gap analysis. Gap is getting smaller in chitty county but not in Franklin county. New trainings... gathering folks with similar needs – and then offering the trainings. Bring people to FCF if you hear of any needs.

Amelia: Five sections of Fundamentals will use the new fund curriculum. Two sections of the pilot completed and were successful. Will continue to review and look for improvements going forward.

Paula: VTAEYC career advancement – bank st college of education – planning family child care model of apprenticeship – more to come on this. Cohort that just when thru mentor pedagogy and ready to mentor folks in family child care.