



By-Laws & Roles and Responsibilities

History: The Coventry STEPS Collaborative was first formed in 2005 when Coventry received the School Readiness Grant from the State Department of Education. At that time, Coventry was required to form a school readiness council to oversee the management of the school readiness grant. In 2008, Coventry became a recipient of the Discovery Grant from the William Casper Graustein Memorial Fund. The Discovery Grant brought many new opportunities to Coventry and the STEPS Collaborative has since widened its focus to address the community's needs of children birth to age eight, with a specific focus on the preschool population and their families.

Mission: The STEPS Collaborative will strive to increase the community's awareness about the importance of quality preschool education, to strengthen the early learning experiences for all Coventry children, and to offer resources and support to families as the first teachers of their children. By bringing together families, schools, and community leaders, we are making progress in ensuring that all children have access to a quality preschool experience, that all families have the information necessary to make the appropriate decisions for their child in regard to early care and education, and that all children in Coventry have enhanced early learning experiences.

Membership:

1. The Town Manager and the School Superintendent will appoint one member each to represent their offices.
2. The total membership will consist of parents, early childhood providers, local and state officials, businesses, members of the faith community, educators, community representatives and the collaborative agent.
3. Review of membership will be conducted annually and efforts to recruit individuals are on-going.

Roles and Responsibilities of Members:

1. Perform the work of the Discovery Action plans.
2. Make recommendations to the Town Manager and Superintendent of Schools about early care and education policies in Coventry.
3. Keep the community informed about the work of STEPS.
4. Establish goals for the year and strategies to accomplish them.
5. Attend monthly meetings.
6. Participate in at least one committee.

7. Review STEPS communication and provide feedback.
8. Notify STEPS Chair, in writing, if no longer interested in serving on the Collaborative.

Roles & Responsibilities of Co-Chairs

1. Report progress to Town Manager and Superintendent.
2. Coordinate and oversee the work of committees.
3. Participate on Executive committee.
4. Review membership annually.

Meetings:

1. The STEPS collaborative will meet ten times per year on a monthly basis. Meetings will be held from September through June.
2. Special STEPS meetings may be called at any time. The membership will be notified of any special meetings at least 3 days in advance.
3. The meeting schedule for the following year will be set at the June meeting.
4. Electronic agendas will be sent to the membership prior to every meeting.
5. All meetings are open to the public.
6. All decisions will be made by consensus.

PROGRAMMATIC RESPONSIBILITIES AND POWERS

STEPS shall monitor its contracted School Readiness programs as well as other grant funded programs to ensure programmatic and fiscal responsibility. The Alliance shall ensure that each School Readiness funded program is implementing the quality components specified in Connecticut General Statute Section 10-16q as amended by Public Act 99-230 by ensuring:

1. A plan for collaboration with other community programs and services and for coordination of resources in order to facilitate full-day and year-round child care and education programs for children of working parents and parents in educational training programs;
2. Parent involvement, parenting education and outreach;
3. Referrals for health services, including referrals for appropriate immunizations and screenings;
4. Nutritional services;
5. Referrals to family literacy programs that incorporate adult basic education and provide for the promotion of literacy through access to public library services;
6. Admission policies that promote enrollment of children from different racial, ethnic and economic backgrounds;

7. A plan of transition for participating children from school readiness program to kindergarten;
8. A plan for professional development for staff;
9. A sliding fee scale for families participating in the program pursuant to section 8 of PA 99-230;
10. An annual evaluation of the effectiveness of the program.

Committees:

1. Executive Committee

STEPS Co-Chairs, Committee Chairs, Discovery Coordinator.

2. School Readiness Committee

Will oversee the the SR Grant to provide a quality preschool experience for Coventry children. Co-Chaired by Town Manager and School Superintendent designees. Members include Director of School Operations and Director of Educational Programs.

3. Membership Committee

Will work to increase membership on the STEPS Collaborative, particularly among parents.

4. Communications Committee

Will work to increase the community awareness of the value of high quality preschool experiences. This committee will work to engage and educate families, community members and key stakeholders.

5. Special Events Committee

To plan STEPS participation in special events in Coventry, including but not limited to: Famers Market, Pumpkin Festival, the Early Educators Collaborative Dinner, and the STEPS annual luncheon for early care providers, local and state leaders.

By-Laws:

1. The Alliance shall enact such by-laws and rules and regulations governing the proper conduct of its business as necessary.
2. The by-laws may be amended at any STEPS meeting by a majority vote. The proposed change(s) must be sent to the membership prior to the meeting.

Drafted 10/09