



**Friday, July 31, 2020**  
**Virtual Meeting: 9-10 a.m.**

**Present:** Bill Flanagan, Tara Tinder, Rachelle Elliott, Erin Conway, Monica Krysztopa, Cindy Laube, Brenda Plakans, Kathy Pohl, and Sue Stein.

**1) Welcome and Announcements from Tara Tinder, Executive Director, SCF**

Tara noted that decisions for community businesses, educational entities and non-profits for re-opening during COVID-19 are fluctuating and ever changing. Given this, she appreciates everyone's sensitivity and flexible perspective throughout this process to remain safe and do what's best for children, parents, educators and essential workers. With stimulus funds at an end, some families are facing eviction as not all landlords support federal guidelines.

**2) Insights from Rudder Group: Bill Flanagan, BLFLI Chair**

Bill mentioned that as a volunteer to an adhoc team for the district, he worked in tandem with former Director of Curriculum Anthony Bonds to find creative ways to close the achievement gap. One of the statistical measures initiated through this collaboration of community leaders can be reviewed via [published research](#) from Beloit College Professor Diep Phan. Dr. Phan and 2 recent graduates within the Economics Department examined 3<sup>rd</sup> grade math and reading test scores as well as demographic feedback from surveyed families to hypothesize leading factors influencing this gap. Further, it identifies policies and practices that can be most effective in overcoming this gap trend. Ideally, we would need representation from all local school districts, notably OLA, RCC and eventually the Lincoln Academy to make this comprehensive and avoid a segmented view of our Stateline Area. To address this literacy gap, Carolyn Heinrich, who is cited in this document and is a public policy expert at Vanderbilt University, will be the guest speaker at a virtual banquet for Family Services in October. Contact Bill if interested in hearing her speak!

**3) Fall Literacy Plans: Rachelle Elliott, Director of Early Literacy, SDB**

Rachelle reported that currently all day 4K registration numbers are down by almost 50%. Enrollments might increase with the lack of childcare as parents are returning to work. While Head Start, (under 4K) is a fantastic way to help prepare future students, special funding for programming is not provided by the state. An effective program for that age group is [Ready Rosie](#), which can support a classroom of 30 students, perhaps the perfect scenario for grant funding? Whether young minds are in school or learning at home, families are encouraged to incorporate numbers and words in everyday situations!

## Partner Reports:

- **Sue Stein (Nutrition & Health Associates, Inc.)** Sue has seen an increase in numbers of clients, although mail outreach has a high return rate due to constantly changing addresses. Items in demand are diapers, wipes, and soap. Parents struggle with food supply and providing distance learning for their school aged kids. NHA has been attempting to send out art materials to provide engagement, but is contemplating home deliveries or drive-thru pick up to serve more families. Sue aims to make these packages “fun” to reduce parent guilt. Funding for some of these has been provided by SCF. Central Christian Church is also using COVID grant funds for drive-thru handouts.
- **Katharine Clark (Beloit Public Library)** The virtual reading app [Beanstack](#) is a huge success!. This summer has seen reading challenges, scavenger hunts, make and take craft bags and a story train in collaboration with the Downtown Beloit Association The community room has been accessible for safe use with masks and shields.
- **Erin Conway (UW-Extension)** They have been following a summer learning calendar for extension staff. She also noted a high return rate up north for bulk mail.
- **Cindy Laube (Beloit Even Start)** Meeting with Rachele to address instructional plans.
- **Monica Krysztopa (Chief of Communications & Marketing, SDB)** There is [free Wi-Fi](#) access up to ½ mile from all school grounds, iPads will be provided to 4K students, SDB app is free and already has 12,000 downloads, and a micro-website “[safe to learn](#)” is available to families and provides advocacy for early literacy programs!. The district is hoping for creative deliveries via buses in correlation to the district’s contract with Durham.
- **Kathy Pohl (St. Paul Soup Lunch)** They are continuing to provide 100-110 meals on Wednesdays, the church has started in house services. Their Little Free Library is slowing down, but their adult book cart at lunches seems to be quite successful! Kathy inquired about Gloria Heiss’ grant but UW-Madison has stipulated no “in person” activities.
- **Brenda Plakans (Welty Environmental Center)** Brenda has been working diligently with a science curriculum liaison for the School District of Beloit. Welty has some grant money remaining which she looks forward to using for some creative covid activities.
- **Ana Montoya (Community Health Center)** Ana was unable to attend, yet wanted BLFLI partners to know of a food drive/book event for August 20<sup>th</sup>. They are partnering with Second Harvest and Stateline Community Foundation to offer a mobile food pantry giveaway and distribution of age appropriate books to families with children.

## 4) Calendar: NO AUGUST MEETING!

Next meeting date: Friday, September 25th (TBD if virtual)

Minutes respectfully submitted by Jamie Gurholt on 8/11/2020