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Preparing Children for Elementary School is an “All Heart” Effort in the City of Bristol

The Bristol Early Childhood Center provides many programs to help prepare preschool children for a successful transition to Kindergarten.

BRISTOL, CONN., August 22, 2019 – During the summer months, the teachers and staff at the Bristol Early Childhood Center work with Bristol preschoolers to help them develop the skills they will need to begin Kindergarten.

Kickstart to Kindergarten Program at the Bristol Early Childhood Center (BECC) – this pilot, grant-funded program focuses on providing intensive instruction in the areas of literacy, numeracy and writing. These essential school readiness skills are critical as children enter Kindergarten.

This summer, the program was taught by long-time Bristol educators and Kindergarten teachers, Barbara Tedesco, Bryan Cistulli, and Kristen Varano. The four-week program consisted of rigorous instruction using The Foundations Program™. This program uses a multisensory and systematic approach to developing phonemic awareness among other essential skills including spelling and handwriting. The data results from this program show excellent improvement with all students.

The last day of the program was July 25th. In order to maintain the skills developed during this program, the students were all sent home with specific daily work to complete. The students then met with the teachers on August 21st to hand in their homework and to get a “refresher” on what they learned in order to make sure they are now prepared to start the school year.

“It’s important to focus on our youngest learners and I am happy to be an integral part in the wonderful work that happens prior to elementary school so that our children will be prepared for Kindergarten and beyond.” – Kristen Peck, Supervisor of Early Childhood, Bristol Public Schools

Quotes from several parents of students in the program:

"The amount of learning and instruction I was able to see during these four weeks is truly amazing. Kindergarten readiness is critical to all future success both academically and socially emotionally. I believe these students' academic futures have been changed by this program and the remarkable instruction they have received. I applaud these teachers for committing their time in the summer to helping students walk into kindergarten academically prepared and confident."

"Great program – I saw such an improvement in letter recognition and excitement to learn."

"We are grateful this program was available to our child in order to better prepare him for kindergarten."

"Thank you for offering this amazing program!"

"This is a wonderful program to reinforce important social and academic skills needed for my child's next step in elementary school."

"I am glad that my son can write his name and has a better chance at success in kindergarten."

Terrific Tuesdays – In its third year, the Terrific Tuesday program is offered to Bristol families for their preschool children. During the month of August the Bristol Early Childhood Center (BECC) offered free preschool playgroups for Bristol families which was sponsored by the Bristol Board of Education and held at Chapter 126. Each Tuesday from 9:30 to 11:00 am Bristol families were able to bring their preschool children to Chapter 126 to enjoy time for sensory play allowing them to develop fine and gross motor skills, social skill building for all abilities, and socializing with others in their age group. The staff of BECC worked alongside staff from Chapter 126 to conduct the playgroups.

Each Tuesday included different activities along with a visit from the WOW Bookmobile where children were able to borrow as well as receive free books to take home and read with their families. The last Terrific Tuesday will held on August 27th be sure to bring your child to enjoy the fun!

Captions for Photos Attached:

Kindergarten teacher, Barbara Tedesco (on the left) posing with Mayor Ellen Zoppo-Sassu and the Kickstart to Kindergarten class at the Bristol Early Childhood Center.



Preschoolers and their families enjoyed a morning of fun playgroup activities at Chapter 126 during a recent “Terrific Tuesdays” event.



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