

Chief Executive Officer's Report

December 8, 2021

The Office of Head Start is Changing Performance Standards to Address Covid 19

On Monday, November 29 the Office of Head Start (OHS) released a new announcement on covid 19. The Head Start Performance Standards is the document that sets all of the rules for Head Start grantees. WCCA was already getting ready for the vaccine mandate and is ahead of most grantees in having made changes to meet the mandate. The one major piece that we had been waiting on was whether our partners in the Early Head Start/ Childcare Partnership Program (EHS/CCP) would be mandated to have vaccinated staff too. Those partners will have to show that staff are vaccinated, or provide religious or medical accommodations.

Our partners could lose staff and serve fewer children because of the mandate. WCCA will continue to pay our partners for their December 2021 enrollment through at least March of 2022. If the partners are able to serve more children, we will of course increase their payments.

OHS believes the vaccine mandates, strict mask protocols and other health procedures are the fastest way to return to in person services for as many children as possible. If the new protocols cut down on the number of classroom closures due to covid exposures, it will certainly be an improvement.

Robert Hooper is WCCA's Next Housing Director

Robert Hooper has joined the WCCA team as our next Housing Director. Robert has worked for the Housing Authority of the City of Asheville since 2012. He has been the Housing Operations Director since 2017. In the Housing Operations Director position he supervised a department of 35 employees and an annual budget of over nine million dollars. Robert is well versed in many Housing and Urban Development programs. He has a Master of Public Affairs degree from Western Carolina University.

WCCA has received \$41, 880 in a grant from the Dogwood Trust to help with the transition to a new Hosing Director. This allows Robert to work with Sheryl Fortune. It also allows us to have Sheryl as a consultant during 2022.

Henderson County Transit Contract Request for Proposals

The Henderson County Planning Department has issued a RFP for the urban transit and paratransit services. The proposals must be submitted by January 10, 2022. WCCA has a contract with RLS and Associates to assist us in preparing our proposal. Ray Boylston with RLS has been meeting with WCCA staff and gathering data. RLS also helped WCCA complete a customer satisfaction survey this fall. The results of the transit passenger survey were positive and will be included in our proposal. WCCA has operated the fixed route transit system since it

started twenty years ago, but it has to be put out for bid at least every six years. We should know by April if WCCA's proposal has been accepted.

Winter Luncheon

Please join us virtually for the 2021 Winter Luncheon at noon on December 21st. There will be staff and Board recognition and lots of prizes. Kim Hall and Bobby Kimmons provide an entertaining event and we look forward to seeing you there.