

## WNCSource Head Start/Early Head Start Policy Council Minutes March 23, 2022

❖ Indicates a vote is required

Donecia Santana called the meeting to order at 9:04 AM.

**Present:** Meghan Arnold, Margit Nelson, Dan Edwards, Kiki Jackson, Linda Carter, Claudia Campaña, Bridgett Librado, Donecia Santana, Itzel Palacios, Amy Smith, Amanda Vanduyne, Maria G Zamudio, Adriana Abee, Shannon Marlowe, Megan Keiser, Jessica Ownbey, Yessica Garcia, Marisol Cruz, Zaida Gomez, Amy Phillips, Diane Nelson, Yesenia Morales

**Establish a Quorum** - It was determined that there were enough members present to constitute a quorum. Items needing a quorum will be voted on during the meeting.

❖ Review and Approve Minutes from the February 2022 meeting: A motion to approve the minutes was made by Shannon Marlowe and seconded by Megan Keiser. The February 2022 minutes were unanimously approved.

### **Announcement for Parent Representatives- Margit Nelson**

Margit announced that any parent representative who attends the Policy Council meeting will receive a \$15 McDonald's gift card. Parents in attendance will provide their address in the chat box to Dan Edwards who will mail them the gift card.

### **Reports:**

#### **Chief Financial Officer's Report - Ibbby Whitten**

- Financials and Credit Card Expenditure Reports: Ibbby was not present at the meeting, thus no report was given.

#### **Enrollment Report – Kasheiva Jackson**

- Enrollment across all programs is at 43%, due mainly to classroom closures due to staffing shortages, with 270 children on the waitlist. The graph showed the enrollment percentage of each individual program. 51 new applications for enrollment were received during February.

#### **Attendance Report - Meghan Arnold**

- Attendance rates in February remained steady between 70% and 80% for all programs except EHS Expansion which had a 93% attendance rate. Absences were mainly due to parent decisions and illness.

#### **Family Services - Claudia Campaña**

- 58% of Family Partnership Agreement forms have been completed for currently enrolled students. 76% of Family Strengths & Needs Assessments have been completed; these are

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usually completed at the initial home visit but staffing shortages, as well as COVID and family choice, have affected completion times and rates.

#### **Program Director's Report – Linda Carter**

- Fourteen classrooms were closed at varying times in February due to COVID and lack of staff. We are hovering around 70 employees down and are not receiving qualified applicants, but our CDA Pathway training program has four candidates in the hiring process and has generated interest among some parents as well.
- Future development of an EHS center was approved by the town council in Rutherfordton. Renovation continues on the new Forest City and Tebeau Drive centers. New WNCSource signage continues to be installed at our existing facilities.
- We received funds from a stabilization grant and are working with Finance to determine how best to spend those monies, with proposals for OLE installation, retention incentives, parental mental health support, and more. Part of the funds have already provided additional pay to staff who work wraparound hours (before- and after-school care).
- We continue to focus on both staff and student recruitment utilizing the CDA Trainee program, attending multiple job fairs and community events, promoting/advertising on social media, with every employee playing the role of recruiter.
- Amy Phillips has been invited to present at the National HS Conference in May on the topic of the self-assessment process. Several Children's Services staff - two teachers, a site supervisor, CS Director and Program Support Services Manager will be attending the NHS Conference.

#### **Time for questions about any of the Operational Reports, including those not read aloud**

- Megan Keiser asked about the status of the Hillview site. Linda stated that conversations have been occurring with a developer who is interested in buying part of the surrounding property there to build housing. The Hillview facility is aging and will need to be replaced in the future, thus any plans would take into consideration WNCSource's future needs for placing a replacement children's center on the property.

#### **New Business:**

##### **❖ CCP Grant Refunding Application Due 5/1/22 - Linda Carter**

The CCP Grant provides EHS services to 100 children mainly in private childcare centers (currently four sites) that have partnered with WNCSource in Henderson, Polk, Rutherford, and Transylvania Counties. Each year the Policy Council must approve a request for refunding of the grant as part of the annual re-application process. We are in the fourth year of a 5-year funding cycle for the CCP grant, and the requested federal funding amount (including funds for training and technical assistance) equals \$1,667,389, plus \$416,847 (or 20%) for non-federal share, which includes volunteer time, extra child educational time from parents, donations, etc., which brings the total grant amount to \$2,084,236. A motion to approve the Childcare Partnership (CCP) Grant Refunding Application was made by Shannon Marlowe and seconded by Megan Keiser. The CCP Grant Refunding Application was unanimously approved.

##### **❖ EHS Expansion Grant Refunding Application Due 5/1/22 - Linda Carter**

WNCSource was awarded the EHS Expansion Grant a year ago to provide EHS services to 99 children primarily in center-based facilities but also in family child care homes in Henderson, Polk, Rutherford,

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and Transylvania Counties. Each year the Policy Council must approve a request for refunding of the grant as part of the annual re-application process. The requested federal funding amount (including funds for training and technical assistance) equals \$2,223,396, plus \$555,849 (or 20%) for non-federal share, which includes volunteer time, extra child educational time from parents, donations, etc., which brings the total grant amount to \$2,779,245. A motion to approve the EHS Expansion Grant Refunding Application was made by Amanda Vanduyne and seconded by Itzel Palacios. The EHS Expansion Grant Refunding Application was unanimously approved.

#### **Selection Criteria - Meghan Arnold**

The selection criteria have not changed from last year's criteria (which was approved by the Policy Council at that time); the criteria were developed with the help of an outside consultant, and that process incorporated an in-depth review of our community assessment as well as comprehensive analysis of all pertinent factors affecting the need for HS and EHS services. Meghan gave an explanation of how the point system functions and justification for how point values are determined. She also explained how children are enrolled based on the highest need and how the waitlist operates.

#### ❖ **Program Operation Plan - Amy Phillips**

This plan outlines how the Children's Services department provides needed services and is reviewed and updated every year. The text in red font shows the changes made for the upcoming program year. Some of the major updates include: the name change of WCCA to WNCSource; updating certain position titles as well as our current site locations; clarification of age/EHS to HS program transitions and procedures for following policy/regulations while also addressing the family's needs; updates pertaining to curriculum programs and how they are implemented, particularly *Parents as Teachers*; updated COVID-related health policies and procedures; frequency of family meetings and engagement events including Kindergarten readiness events; changes to minimum qualifications for certain staff; and the addition of an in-house mentoring program. A motion to approve the Program Operation Plan was made by Megan Keiser and seconded by Shannon Marlowe. The 2022-2023 Program Operation Plan was unanimously approved.

**Comments and Questions / Any updates from site representatives:** There were no additional questions, but Amy Smith provided the following comments: WNCSource appreciates the continued collaboration with public school sites as well as the opportunity to participate in Kindergarten Readiness rallies. Outdoor Learning Environments (OLEs) continue to be installed at all sites. The temporary merging of the Main Street site into the King Creek site proceeded smoothly and positively, and potential CDA Pathway program trainees are being hosted at the King Creek site.

❖ **Adjournment:** A motion to adjourn was made by Shannon Marlowe and seconded by Diane Nelson. The meeting was adjourned by Donecia Santana at 10:13 AM.

**Next meeting dates:** April 20th  
Virtual Meetings May 18th  
June 15th

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