

WNCSource Head Start/Early Head Start Policy Council Minutes May 18, 2022

❖ Indicates a vote is required

Donecia Santana called the meeting to order at 9:00 AM.

Present: Donecia Santana, Kristian Toro, Kashevia Jackson, Amy Phillips, Dan Edwards, Claudia Campaña, Pearl Saddler, Bridgett Librado, Bobby Kimmons, Itzel Palacios, Linda Carter, Margit Nelson, Amy Smith, Adriana Abee, Jeanette Rodriguez, David White, Adrienne Chaney, Shannon Marlowe, Dylan Allanson, Diane Nelson, Jessica Ownbey, Zaida Gomez, Yadira Ortiz, Yessica Araujo, Kathleen McDavid, Maria Guadalupe Zamudio (joined meeting late)

Establish a Quorum - It was determined that there were not enough members present to constitute a quorum. Items needing a quorum will be sent out electronically for a vote.

❖ Review and Approve Minutes from the April 2022 meeting: A motion to approve the minutes was made by Shannon Marlowe and seconded by Jessica Ownbey. There were not enough members present for a quorum, so an electronic vote was sent out after the meeting. The following members cast their votes electronically and the April 2022 minutes were approved with a quorum: Amanda VanDuyne, Megan Keiser, and Selena Uriostegui.

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.

New Business:

❖ **Human Resources Policy Updates - Bobby Kimmons**

The main updates to the HR Policy include: The company name and a few job titles were updated throughout the policy; Juneteenth (June 19) is proposed as a new paid holiday; the number of paid bereavement days has increased to 48 hours/year for full-time staff and 32 hours/year for part-time staff and staff will have more flexibility to use the days for whichever relative they choose; the PTO buyback program (where staff could trade unused PTO hours for money added to their paycheck) will be limited to 40 hours this year and then discontinued starting next year in order to encourage staff to use their PTO for their mental and physical well-being. All policy changes were highlighted in the document that was sent out. A motion to approve was made by Shannon Marlowe and seconded by Diane Nelson. There were not enough members present for a quorum, so an electronic vote was sent out after the meeting. The following members cast their votes electronically and the HR Policy Updates were approved with a quorum: Amanda VanDuyne, Megan Keiser, and Selena Uriostegui.

❖ **Proposed School Calendars 2022-2023 - Amy Phillips**

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Amy presented an overview of the calendars for the 2022-2023 school year for Henderson, Rutherford, and Transylvania Counties, showing days in the classroom, teacher workdays, teacher training half-days, leave/break days, and holidays. All calendars are as closely aligned as possible with the public school calendars in their respective counties. A motion to approve (including adding the Juneteenth holiday pending approval from the Board of Directors) was made by Diane Nelson and seconded by Shannon Marlowe. There were not enough members present for a quorum, so an electronic vote was sent out after the meeting. The following members cast their votes electronically and the School Calendars were approved with a quorum: Amanda VanDuyne, Megan Keiser, and Selena Uriostegui.

❖ **COLA and QI Funding Application, Grant #04CH011737 - Linda Carter for Ibbly Whitten**

This funding request for the HS/EHS grant includes a proposed 2.28% COLA pay rate increase (totaling \$125,959) which would be effective 7/1/22. The requested QI funds (\$25,791) would be used for salary increases, e.g., for degree or certification achievement, merit increases, and across-the-board salary increases to bring compensation in line with regional and industry pay rates. A motion to approve was made by Shannon Marlowe and seconded by Kristian Toro. There were not enough members present for a quorum, so an electronic vote was sent out after the meeting. The following members cast their votes electronically and the COLA/QI Application for grant #04CH011737 was approved with a quorum: Amanda VanDuyne, Megan Keiser, and Selena Uriostegui.

❖ **COLA and QI Funding Application, Grant #04HP000443 - Linda Carter for Ibbly Whitten**

This funding request for the EHS Expansion grant includes a proposed 2.28% COLA pay rate increase (totaling \$49,457) which would be effective 7/1/22. The requested QI funds (\$10,000) would be used for salary increases, e.g., for degree or certification achievement, merit increases, and across-the-board salary increases to bring compensation in line with regional and industry pay rates. A motion to approve was made by Diane Nelson and seconded by Shannon Marlowe. There were not enough members present for a quorum, so an electronic vote was sent out after the meeting. The following members cast their votes electronically and the COLA/QI Application for grant #04HP000443 was approved with a quorum: Amanda VanDuyne, Megan Keiser, and Selena Uriostegui.

❖ **COLA and QI Funding Application, Grant #04HP000306 - Linda Carter for Ibbly Whitten**

This funding request for the CCP grant includes a proposed 2.28% COLA pay rate increase (totaling \$37,206) which would be effective 7/1/22. As with the other grant requests, the requested QI funds (\$10,000) would be used for salary increases. A motion to approve was made by Jessica Ownbey and seconded by Diane Nelson. There were not enough members present for a quorum, so an electronic vote was sent out after the meeting. The following members cast their votes electronically and the COLA/QI Application for grant #04HP000306 was approved with a quorum: Amanda VanDuyne, Megan Keiser, and Selena Uriostegui.

Reports:

Chief Executive Officer's Report - David White

- WNCSource will be looking at submitting a proposal to the Office of Head Start (OHS) requesting a change of scope for the main HS/EHS grant (and possibly the CCP and EHS Expansion grants) with the main goals being increased salaries, a fully-staffed workforce, and

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full student enrollment, since we have been unable to fully staff all sites and thus unable to meet full enrollment requirements. Secondary reasons for changing scope would include increased costs of food, insurance, etc. A change of scope would likely entail closing some classrooms in order to maintain the quality of services that we are able to provide with fewer employees. The consultant group Foundations for Families is helping us draft the change proposal, and the answer from OHS may come 4-6 months after submitting the request. The COLA/QI funds (requested above) and carryover grant funds (approved by the Policy Council previously) will also help increase salaries and provide bonuses for staff retention. If approved, the change in scope may not be implemented until the start of the 2023-24 program year. A wage study is being undertaken now, and various data and strategies are being researched to determine how a change of scope could be effective in serving families as well as sustaining increased salaries in the future. Fewer families would be able to be served - but with a hopefully higher level of quality, considering that under the current program scope we are already serving fewer families because of the staff shortage.

- WNCSource received a \$33,400 donation from the Henderson County Community Foundation which will be used to support the CDA training program.

Chief Financial Officer's Report - Linda Carter for Ibbby Whitten

- Financials and Credit Card Expenditure Reports: Due to the staffing shortage and the resulting lower enrollment, all grants are tracking below budget. We have applied for carryover funding to cover soft costs at the Columbus site, staff retention plans, family childcare home startups, new centers, and CDA training program costs. The child nutrition program is still experiencing a \$36K loss due to program overhead costs and lower enrollment/attendance numbers. Henderson County will continue to provide meals at no cost to our students through the end of the school year. Credit card costs were about \$6,000 with the majority being spent on program supplies.

Enrollment Report – Kasheiva Jackson

- Enrollment during April across all programs was at 39%, due mainly to classroom closures due to staffing shortages; 330 children are on the waitlist. The graph that was presented showed the enrollment and waitlist percentages for each individual program. 53 new applications for enrollment were received during April.

Attendance Report - Kasheiva Jackson

- Attendance rates in April remained steady between 75% and 81% for all programs. Absences were mainly due to parent decisions. Attendance increased by 10% over the months of March and April for the Head Start and Dual Enrollment programs.

Family Services - Claudia Campaña

- The completion rate for Family Partnership Agreement (FPA) forms has increased by 50% for currently enrolled students, thanks to the hard work of our Family Advocates who have also received additional training in completing documentation. The FPAs help families set goals that are worked on over the course of the year. 87% of Family Strengths and Needs Assessments have been completed which includes a 23% increase rate for CCP families. These are usually completed at the initial home visit, but staffing shortages as well as COVID have affected completion times and rates.

Program Support Services Report – Amy Phillips

- Family Engagement in Children's Education: We are retraining staff in the procedural elements of conducting family conferences and home visits; the graph shows the specific completion rates and description of events.
- Curriculum Implementation-CLASS: The first graph presents the strong scores that our HS classrooms achieved for emotional support which measures the positiveness of the classroom climate. The second graph reflects scores for classroom organization and management that are below the desired quality threshold, thus we will focus on training and growth in this area. The third graph highlights the strong scores we had in the area of instructional support which relates to effective curriculum implementation.
- Curriculum Implementation-Creative Curriculum: Through coaching and support, the teachers have made growth as compared to where scores were at in December with effectively using the curriculum and completing child assessments. Trainers from Teaching Strategies will provide additional assessment training at our PreService days in August.
- Disabilities Services: We're not meeting the 10% requirement for funded enrollment due to low overall enrollment numbers and classrooms being closed; however, in relation to our actual enrollment numbers, we are serving about 10% or more of that number. We are running slightly behind in the referral process mainly due to COVID, so some referrals will spill over into next year.
- Professional Development: Several staff attended the NHSA conference; trainers from HS Region 4 T/TA will be training supervisors on The 5Rs likely in June.

EHS Program Manager's Report – Pearl Saddler

- The ExCELS survey was completed by Etowah staff who will be compensated for participating. Etowah also had an unannounced licensing visit from DCDEE with a positive compliance outcome. Hillview families participated in a Family Fun Day presented by Transylvania County and in a Kindergarten Readiness Rally. Sugar Hill families participated in a Healthy Kids Day event in Henderson County.

HS/NC Pre-K Program Manager's Report – Amy Smith

- Outdoor Learning Environment installations continue at seven sites with spring planting activities coming soon.
- Child assessments continue, and there has been more face-to-face engagement among staff and families working to develop children's school readiness.
- LETRS training was completed by NC Pre-K teaching staff for the school year, and the second training phase starts in September and runs through December.
- Individualized School Readiness Kits were prepared for HS children who are heading to Kindergarten for families to use over the summer.

Program Director's Report – Linda Carter

- Highlights: We are partnering with Blue Ridge Community College to provide coursework to students working toward either an Infant Toddler Care Certificate or an Early Childhood Preschool Certificate, which can replace the need for a CDA. We recently held our second annual staff wellness afternoon where staff had the opportunity to choose from a variety of activities to focus on wellness and relationship building with their coworkers. Several staff are participating in a wellness initiative/training being presented virtually by UCLA that will help us develop staff wellness systems. The free school meal program will end on 6/30, and

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we are working with Henderson County Public Schools to plan for meal provision for next program year.

- Program Structure Updates: The OHS recently announced that families who are receiving SNAP (supplemental nutrition assistance) are categorically eligible to receive HS services.
- Staffing: Five employees were hired in April and three employees left the agency.
- Classroom Closures: Six classrooms were closed at various times during April due to a lack of staff. There have been virtually no closures due to COVID.
- CCP Updates: CCP directors meet monthly; the CCP sites have also faced staffing issues; we hired a candidate for the newly created position of CCP Program Quality Support; we continue our outreach efforts to find an additional CCP partner site.

Comments and Questions / Any updates from parent representatives: Kristian, CCP parent representative, expressed her appreciation for the CCP EHS services. There were no additional questions or comments.

❖ **Adjournment:** A motion to adjourn was made by Diane Nelson and seconded by Shannon Marlowe. The meeting was adjourned by Donecia Santana at 10:17 AM.

Next virtual meeting date: June 15 at 9:00 am virtual meeting