

## WNCSource Head Start/Early Head Start Policy Council Minutes May 17, 2023

\* Indicates a vote is required

Kim Wilson called the meeting to order at 9:00 AM.

**Present:** Kim Wilson, Dan Edwards, Linda Carter, Amy Phillips, Kathleen McDavid, Lavonna Ruth, David White, Heather Brewer-Jones, Eric Hoffman, Kiara Gash, Kiki Jackson, Kristian Toro, Donecia Santana, Lisa Brown, Bridgett Librado, Laura Durham, Amy Smith, Yecenia Sandoval, Margit Nelson, Miranda Dudney, Dylan Allanson, Yessica Araujo, Patty Burgess, Maria Guadalupe Zamudio, Christian Cornwell, Danielle Richardson, Ibby Whitten, Jazmin Mejia

**Establish a Quorum** - It was determined that there were not enough members present to constitute a quorum at the beginning of the meeting, but enough other members joined a few minutes later such that a quorum was reached. Items needing a vote were voted on and approved with a quorum during the meeting.

\* Review and Approve Minutes from the April 19, 2023 meeting: A motion to approve the minutes was made by Laura Durham and seconded by Donecia Santana, and the April 19, 2023 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 \$20 McDonald's gift card in lieu of breakfast typically provided at in person meetings. Parents in attendance will provide their address in the chat box to Dan Edwards who will mail them the gift card.

### **NEW BUSINESS:**

#### **Finance Overview Training - Ibby Whitten**

- Ibby gave a slide presentation to educate the Policy Council about the policies and procedures of WNCSource's Finance Department, including an overview of the financial functions of nonprofits, WNCSource's funding sources, financial reporting, and the role and responsibilities of the Policy Council in budget planning and funding application processes. She explained the budget processes, how to read financial reports, the audit procedure, and strategic plan financial goals. The training slideshow will be sent via email to all Policy Council members for any desired additional review.

#### **Discussion of Future Meeting Format (Virtual/In-Person/Hybrid) - Linda Carter**

- Linda asked for feedback about the desired format of these meetings for the 2023-2024 program year - does the majority wish to continue meeting virtually or should we try

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in-person meetings or a combination of those two? Four members stated that they prefer virtual meetings (due to time and distance constraints), three members suggested trying a hybrid format for each meeting. We will research meeting location and technology options for hybrid presentation (a combination of in-person and virtual) and provide an update at the June meeting.

## **REPORTS:**

### **Chief Executive Officer's Report - David White**

- WNCSource has recently been working to increase the capacity of transportation for non-emergency medical trips for Henderson County residents, including hiring new drivers, purchasing new vehicles using grant funds, and working with a consultant to improve scheduling.
- WNCSource is in the process of becoming the sole property owner of the English Hills/English House housing and apartment complex in Brevard which is next to our Hillview child care facility and plans to make improvements there.
- David attended the National Head Start Association conference (he's the current Treasurer for the NHSA) and talked with the current OHS Director about workforce issues and full child enrollment; the Director implied that as long as local Head Start program grantees are making a consistent good-faith effort to address these issues, hopefully they will not incur any significant punitive measures / loss of funding.

### **Chief Financial Officer's Report - Ibbly Whitten (The April Financial Report will be emailed to all.)**

- All grants should be at 83% of budgeted expenses but are currently below budget, with the HS/EHS grant at 73%, EHS CCP grant at 60%, NCPK at 59%, and EHS Expansion at 37%. Expenses are lower due to staffing shortages and the resulting lower enrollment.
- Credit card expenditure for April was \$10,043, with most of the expense resulting from training and travel (\$5,700).

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

- Safety Training took place on 4/11; two of the topics emphasized were classroom safety and injury prevention for staff.
- WNCSource participated in kindergarten rallies at local public elementary schools in April.
- Staff visited Bear Wallow Valley Farms on 4/19 to learn about agriculture and healthy eating and were inspired with educational ideas to bring into the classroom.
- The annual Wellness Afternoon occurred on 5/3 with staff participating in various activities to promote wellbeing and team building.
- Staffing: Five new employees were hired, and six staff left including Pearl Saddler, EHS Program Services Manager. Area Manager Bridgett Librado was promoted to EHS Program Services Manager effective May 15th. There are 61 open positions. Our partnership with the Blue Ridge Community College Apprenticeship Program is on track to welcome apprentice applicants on 6/27. A segment of staff participated in employee stay surveys and focus groups led by external consultants to help inform hiring and retention efforts.
- Facilities: Main Street Children's Center has permanently closed and the contents of those classrooms will transfer to the Fletcher site in anticipation of reopening there in the new program year. Planters have been added to Tebeau's entrance, beautifying the area and

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providing an extra measure of safety to the walkway. The Outdoor Learning Environments at our sites are looking beautiful. If anyone would like to tour a site, please contact us.

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

- All sites are under-enrolled due to teacher shortages: The center-based EHS enrollment rate is 45%, home-based EHS is at 45%, EHS Expansion is at 15%, EHS/CCP is at 55%; HS enrollment is 50%, NC Pre-K is at 56%. 326 children are on the waitlist; no families are waitlisted for the Home Visiting Program.

#### **Attendance Report - Kasheiva Jackson**

- April average daily attendance: The average attendance rate goal is 85%: EHS was at 81%, CCP at 79%, HS at 84%, and NCPK at 84%. Most of the absences were due to non-COVID illnesses or injury (only 0.4% were related to COVID). April absences increased by 440 compared to March, with a total of 991 absences for the period 3/25-4/27.

#### **Education and Child Development Report – Lavonna Ruth**

- 269 First Home Visits have been completed, 4 visits were past due. 145 Second Home Visits have been completed with none currently past due. 227 First Family Conferences have been done with none past due. Assessments will be due again soon as the year comes to an end and home visits or family conferences will be scheduled to share results with families.
- 184 coaching contacts were completed in April, with 24 being intensive coaching. Coaches are also videoing classrooms for CLASS observations (quality indicator/child-teacher interactions/language and critical thinking skills). QCIT observations are ongoing in the EHS rooms. Onboarding was provided to two new EHS and two new HS teachers.

#### **Early Intervention Report - Patty Burgess**

- Disabilities: 14% of funded HS enrollment and 8% of funded EHS enrollment are receiving disabilities services, with diagnosed disabilities that include autism; health, hearing, speech, language or orthopedic impairment; and developmental delay.
- Mental Health: A total of 72 children across all sites are being served, and the mental health consultant is providing direct support to 14 children and 4 families.
- Early Intervention: 53 children are receiving private therapy, and over 110 hours of individualized support have been provided by community therapists. Some forms of support include parent education events, newsletters, sensory tools/strategies, teacher support, and collaboration with several outside agencies and behavioral health specialists.

#### **Nutrition and Health Services Report - Dylan Allanson**

- Well child check status (physicals): 53 children are not up-to-date, while 81% of child physicals are up-to-date program-wide; there was a slight decline in the number of children in all programs who are up-to-date and we are working with center staff and sending reminders to families to ensure children receive check-ups consistently.
- Dental status: 72 children are not up-to-date on dental exams (waiting for paperwork from providers for 30 completed appointments). While 81% have dental homes, 48 children over age 1 do not have dental homes. Most Transylvania County dentists don't accept pediatric patients. Parent member Kristian Toro stated that with more patients needing to be seen than there are dentists/dental staff available, ABC Dental is now having to schedule maintenance appointments for children at 8-month intervals instead of 6-month intervals.

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- CACFP March reimbursement was \$22,797 (lower due to spring breaks). Reimbursement has increased during the year due to increased enrollment and better program management.
- Thanks to the sponsorship of ASAP (Appalachian Sustainable Agriculture Project), staff were able to attend the professional development and wellness event at Bear Wallow Valley Farm.

#### **Family Services Report - Eric Hoffman**

- 93% of Family Strengths and Needs Assessments (FSNA) have been completed, with none being past due. The end-of-year FSNA surveys are due at the end of May to ascertain what progress has been made and what the current needs may be.
- Parenting Curriculum: 238 families are now connected to the Ready Rosie school readiness and parent engagement curriculum; there were over 90 video views last month, with the number of families watching increasing to 169.

#### **HS/NC Pre-K Report - Amy Smith**

- One EHS classroom opened on 5/15 at the new Tebeau site.
- NC Division of Child Development and Early Education licensing and county sanitation visits are occurring at sites during the spring. Sites stay prepared and in compliance by utilizing the monthly comprehensive internal monitoring procedures led by supervisors and managers.
- HS and NCPK classes are preparing students for the transition to kindergarten with rallies, visits to elementary schools, and distribution of books and other resources.

#### **CCP (Partnership) Report - Kathleen McDavid**

- Concentrated efforts are being made to hire staff and ensure full enrollment at each of the four CCP sites with slow but steady progress being made. WNCSource will now be able to provide retention and sign-on bonuses to the CCP sites, which should help this effort.
- We are in talks with potential new CCP sites and are moving closer to partnering with a new family child care home in Henderson County.

#### **Professional Development - Amy Phillips**

- Training plans for 2023-24 program year continue to be developed; three staff are participating in the NHSA manager credential course; we're working to hire a Professional Development Coordinator and an Apprenticeship Coach for the apprenticeship program.

#### **Comments and Questions / Any updates from parent representatives:**

Representatives for Etowah, Forest City, and Sugar Hill all report that things are going well at the sites. Sugar Hill presented flowers to all the moms for Mother's Day. There were no further comments or questions.

\* **Adjournment:** A motion to adjourn was made by Kristian Toro and seconded by Laura Durham. The meeting was adjourned by Kim Wilson at 10:17 AM.

**Next virtual meeting date: June 7 at 9:00 AM**

**Future Meeting Schedule:** June 7 is the last meeting of the 2022-2023 program year. An invitation to the first meeting of the 2023-2024 program year in September will be emailed to you later in the summer. Please plan to attend!

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