

**WNCSource Head Start/Early Head Start Policy Council Minutes  
June 7, 2023**

\* Indicates a vote is required

Kim Wilson called the meeting to order at 9:02 AM.

**Present:** Kim Wilson, Dan Edwards, Linda Carter, Amy Phillips, Kathleen McDavid, Lavonna Ruth, David White, Eric Hoffman, Kiki Jackson, Bridgett Librado, Amy Smith, Margit Nelson, Dylan Allanson, Patty Burgess, Brian Spreng, Miranda Dudney, Christan Cornwell, Jessica Ownbey, Andrea Paniagua, Lisa Brown, Maria Guadalupe Zamudio, Danielle Richardson, Laura Durham, Donecia Santana, Yessica Araujo, Yecenia Sandoval, Adriana Abee, Shannon Marlowe, Heather Brewer-Jones, Tiffany Luckadoo, Paige Bronson, Jazmin Mejia

**Establish a Quorum** - It was determined that there were enough members present to constitute a quorum at the beginning of the meeting, so all items needing a vote were voted on and approved with a quorum during the meeting.

\* Review and Approve Minutes from the May 17, 2023 meeting: A motion to approve the minutes was made by Shannon Marlowe and seconded by Miranda Dudney, and the May 17, 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 should provide their address in the chat box to Dan Edwards who will mail them the gift card.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

**Policy Council Hybrid Format and Participation for Next Year - Linda Carter**

- For the 2023-2024 school year, we will try out a hybrid version for Policy Council meetings: We will meet in person in our second floor conference room at the King Creek main office on the third Thursday of the month at 9:00 AM. All are welcome to attend in person, but we will also continue to livestream the meetings so that members can join virtually if that works better for them. Current Policy Council members are needed to attend the September and October meetings of the new year to aid with the transition and vote on new officers, but are welcome to remain members for the duration of the new program year if eligible per the PC Bylaws: *"The past program year's membership remains active, however, until the members for the new program year are seated. Parent members stand for election or reelection by the Parent Committees as soon as possible in the Program year."*

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**Proposed 2023-2024 Policy Council Meeting Dates \* - Linda Carter**

**9/21/23 ■ 10/19/23 ■ 11/16/23 ■ 1/18/24 ■ 2/15/24 ■ 3/21/24 ■ 4/18/24 ■ 5/16/24  
■ 6/6/24**

- The proposed meetings for the 2023-2024 program year will fall on the third Thursday of each month at 9:00 AM as shown (except the final meeting which falls on the first Thursday in June 2024). A motion to approve the new hybrid format and the proposed 2023-2024 meeting dates was made by Shannon Marlowe and Lisa Brown seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

**Self Assessment Plan \* - Amy Phillips**

- Head Start requires programs to perform an annual internal review that analyzes data, sets a timeline, meets and collaborates with staff and community members/agency partners, determines any needed improvements, develops an action plan, seeks approval from the Policy Council and Board, and then implements the plan and recommendations. This year, we will be focusing on how to sustain a supportive, stable, inclusive and safe work culture; how to use a trauma-informed approach to support families to improve attendance; and how to equitably and inclusively create classrooms that are manageable for both children and teachers. A motion to approve the Self Assessment Plan was made by Laura Durham and seconded by Shannon Marlowe, and the Self Assessment Plan was unanimously approved.

**REPORTS:**

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

- External Consultant Mano-Y-Ola Teacher Retention Study Results: Some of the findings include: the staff turnover trend is improving; increased compensation would motivate retention; workload and time management are challenging; children with extreme behaviors are a factor in staff leaving; staff having to provide after-school care negatively impacts satisfaction and retention. Actionable steps to aid recruitment and retention, many of which have already been implemented, include: retention bonuses, pay raises, more behavioral intervention staff, hiring well-paid after-school staff, providing planning time to teachers, and having onsite childcare for employees.
- WNCSource continues its work with Crossnore as we work to incorporate and foster resiliency practices and processes with our staff and families. The Trauma Resilient Communities project includes seven Commitments: Emotional Intelligence, Social Learning, Social Responsibility, Non-violence, Open Communication, Growth and Change, and Shared Governance, which are intended to provide guidelines for everyone at every level of an organization to create and maintain a trauma-sensitive, respectful, and resilience-focused culture that supports goal setting.

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

- Due to the early date of this month's meeting, updated financial reports for May

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2023 are not yet available.

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

- The Children's Services team met in May to streamline the orientation process for new staff. WNCSource's transportation team will be assisting with giving new staff bus tours of all WNCSource services and departments on a quarterly basis.
- Currently there are 11 interested applicants for our Blue Ridge Community College Apprenticeship collaboration program, which will begin hiring on June 27.
- The CandL project shared data and next steps for advocating for child care and early childhood education needs in our region. Webinars are available for viewing.
- Representatives from Congressman Chuck Edwards' office toured the King Creek Children's Center on May 25. We hope to be able to meet with the Congressman in person soon.
- Classroom Closures: The Dana room and one room at King Creek were closed for 3 days due to staff shortages.
- Staffing: Five staff were hired in May, and two substitutes left employment. There are 52 open positions (not including after school team member positions).
- Facilities: Building access times for employees have been updated to 7:30am-5:30pm. The county permit was received to reopen two NC Pre-K rooms at the Fletcher Children's Center at Fletcher Episcopal Church in August 2023. Plans are being made to pave the lower parking lot at the Tebeau Children's Center.
- Current ERSEA Coordinator Kiki Jackson is being promoted to the role of Family Services Manager effective June 19.

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

- All sites are under-enrolled due to teacher shortages: The center-based EHS enrollment rate is 51%, home-based EHS is at 50%, EHS Expansion is at 22%, EHS/CCP is at 50%; HS enrollment is 50%, NC Pre-K is at 55%. 365 children are on the waitlist. One expectant family is on the waitlist (they have requested the Home Visiting program).

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

May average daily attendance: The average attendance rate goal is 85%: EHS was at 82%, CCP at 83%, HS at 82%, and NCPK at 85%. Most of the absences were due to non-COVID illnesses or injury (none were related to COVID). May absences decreased by 73 compared to April, with a total of 918 absences for the period 4/28-5/25.

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

- 271 First Home Visits have been completed, 1 visit was past due. 146 Second Home Visits have been completed with one currently past due. 223 First Family Conferences have been done with one past due. Staff are currently in the process of scheduling and completing second Family Conferences since end of the year checkpoint assessments have been completed.

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- 212 coaching contacts were completed in May, with 28 being intensive coaching. QCIT observations focusing on concept development were completed in nine EHS rooms with an average rating of 4.95 (5=good, 7=excellent); additional training will be provided to work towards quality teacher-child interactions that promote learning. Onboarding was provided to two new EHS and one CCP/EHS teacher.

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

- Disabilities: 14% of funded HS enrollment, 4% of funded CCP enrollment and 7% of funded EHS enrollment are receiving disabilities services, with diagnosed disabilities that include autism; health, hearing, speech, language or orthopedic impairment; and developmental delay.
- ASQ screening rates are at (or very near) 100% for all programs, with areas of need being identified and strategies/activities provided to parents. One screening resulted in a referral. Eleven more staff will be trained soon in the ASQ completion process.
- Mental Health: A total of 64 children across all sites were served during May, and the mental health consultant is providing direct support to 24 children and 4 families.

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

- Well child check status (physicals): 56 children are not up-to-date, while 80% of child physicals are up-to-date program-wide; there was a slight decline in the number of children in CCP 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. The rate of EHS children who are up-to-date increased by 2%.
- Dental status: 79 (30%) children have been seen by a dentist in the last six months. While 81% have dental homes, 50 children over age 1 do not have dental homes.
- CACFP April reimbursement was \$21,816.

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

- 89% of preliminary Family Strengths and Needs Assessments (FSNA) were completed, while 50% of end-of-year FSNA's have been completed so far with 83 more due in the next 30 days. None are past due.
- Parenting Curriculum: 241 families are connected to the Ready Rosie school readiness and parent engagement curriculum; there were over 300 video views last month, with the number of families watching increasing to 174.

#### **EHS Report - Bridgett Librado**

- We are growing our EHS staff base, having onboarded new teachers for the Flat Rock, King Creek, and Tebeau sites.
- The Hillview site needs an infant support teacher. That site had a well-attended family engagement event on May 24, as did the Etowah site.
- Teacher Appreciation Week was May 8-12 with teaching staff receiving special tokens of appreciation and support in numerous ways.

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

- Kindergarten Transition reports and assessments were all completed by May 31 and will be shared with the public schools where the students will be transitioning to.
- Last day of school is June 9, teaching teams are being configured for next year, and teachers will return on August 7 to prepare for the new school year.
- Interviews continue for all teaching positions, and professional development plans are created for each new hire to ensure all staff have the required credentials.

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

- Recruitment for both staff positions and child enrollment continues for three of the partnership sites.
- Two new CCP sites are being onboarded in Henderson County: child care center *Little Bright Minds* and a family child care home (FCCH) called *God's Gifts Child Care*. A third partnership with a FCCH in Forest City called *Above and Beyond* is in the development stages.

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

- Our partnership with Blue Ridge Community College's apprenticeship program will intensify on June 27 when apprentice applicants will be chosen. All staff will come together on June 14 to celebrate and share their learning experiences from the 2022-23 school year. Family Services staff will train on using a new platform called *Parent Gauge* to support our work with families. EHS teachers will have a QCIT training on June 28.

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

Etowah: Miranda reports the site has a great resource bulletin board (free food pantry at site today, family resource day at Jackson Park on June 17, Kicks for Kids free shoe program); applicable resources will be shared with all Family Advocates to inform parents at all sites.  
Forest City: Laura's work schedule may prohibit her from attending some Policy Council meetings in the future; she reports appreciation for the supportive staff at the site.  
Public School Sites: Christan reports that things are going well at the sites.  
There were no further comments or questions.

\* **Adjournment:** A motion to adjourn was made by Shannon Marlowe and seconded by Laura Durham. The meeting was adjourned by Kim Wilson at 10:09 AM.

**Next hybrid (in-person/virtual) meeting date: Thursday, September 21 at 9:00 AM - Invitations will be emailed in August. The Policy Council Officer nomination process for the 2023-2024 school year will commence at the September meeting.**

**Thank you for your service to the Policy Council for the 2022-2023 school year!**