

Everything I Know About The Full Enrollment Initiative and What's Next

Thank you to all of the Board members that attended the training on July 18th. Laurie Leiner with the Training and Technical Assistance division of the Office of Head Start provided training on governance and the Full Enrollment Initiative. Laurie and I met again at the NC Head Start conference in Wilmington the next week.

Khari Garvin, Director of The Office of Head Start (OHS), was also in Wilmington. I did get the chance to speak with Khari there and told him we were beginning to come back strong. Below is a list of classrooms that we will be reopening in the next three months:

New Classrooms- July 2023- December 2023

EHS-

- Forest City- Room 1- opened July 24th, 2023
- Flat Rock Room 3- projected opening- September 18th, 2023
- Tebeau – Room 3- projected opening – October, 2023

HS

- Hillview- Head start Room #8- August 2023
- Hillview- Head start Room # 5- October 2023
- Tebeau- Head start Room -7- August 2023

NC Prek

- Fletcher-September 2023
- Edneyville-October 2023 (NEED TO HIRE A TEACHER)
- King Creek -August 2023

When these classrooms are full, we will be serving an additional 132 children we were not serving in May 2023. This remarkable progress was cheered by Khari and many others at the conference. I believe that with the progress we have made in hiring and retaining staff, we will continue to improve enrollment. I asked Khari “If we are making good progress, but are not at 97% enrollment by February 2024, will The Office of Head Start pull the rug out from under us.” He said that is not what OHS plans to do. Khari plans to handle the Full Enrollment Initiative with “grace and flexibility. We need to work our plan and make solid progress.

WNCSource staff will take a look at another change of scope. If we need to make further changes to be able to sustain wage increases, or pay for other needs, we may recommend another enrollment reduction. I do not believe we can reduce funded enrollment enough to get us to 97%. I do not believe that large a reduction is advisable or feasible.

Progress at Columbus Early Head Start Facility

We have signed a contract with Dunlap Construction for the Columbus Early Head Start Center. A lot of the civil engineering work has been completed. The sewer work and storm water have been completed. The foundation has been dug. We will have to install rock to support our new building. We are still looking at opening the new building in mid to late 2024.