



Empowering people, transforming lives

WNCSource.org

April 3, 2024

WNCSource Head Start Policy Council & Governing Board Brief

WNCSource currently has three Federal grants that fund our early childhood education programs:

- #04CH011737 – 185 HS slots & 120 EHS slots (\$6,194,271)
- #04HP000443 – 99 EHS slots (\$2,449,400)
- #04HP000306 – 80 EHS slots with CCP Partners (\$1,842,355)

Together, these programs serve 484 children and families throughout Henderson, Transylvania, Rutherford and Polk Counties.

During the pandemic, WNCSource had to close/consolidate classrooms due to a lack of staffing and low attendance. Throughout 2022 and 2023, WNCSource struggled to recruit and retain staffing levels, but was eventually put on an Under Enrollment Plan by the Office of Head Start. As part of our Full Enrollment Initiative (FEI), WNCSource created a recovery plan that included a focus on hiring and retention of qualified staff, as well as, the recruitment of eligible families. WNCSource also requested a Change in Scope to reduce enrollment levels for two of the three grants. Those changes included:

- #04CH011737 – Reduce to 136 HS slots & 80 EHS slots (89 total)
- #04HP000443 – Reduce to 35 EHS slots (64 total)
- #04HP000306 – No change

The total reduction of 153 slots was strategic in nature and based on community need, family preference, and the availability of staffing and wrap-around (after hours) care.

Moving Forward

The Office of Head Start met with WNCSource on 4/2/24 to discuss a possible solution to adjusting the enrollment and funding levels, while allowing WNCSource to be granted a waiver to achieve full enrollment status until the two grants are combined (August). In a conversation with David White, Elizabeth Whitten, and Linda Carter, the following enrollment and funding levels were proposed by the Office of Head Start:

- Grant #04CH011737 – Our Change in Scope will be accepted in the coming weeks. Going forward WNCSource will serve 136 HS and 80 EHS children. Funding will remain at the current level.
- Grants #04HP000443 and #04HP000306 will be combined under one grant (#04HP000306) to serve a total of 115 EHS children. The total Federal funding will be \$4,291,755 including \$89,779 in T/TA funds.
- The new Baseline grant will have combined Program Goals to ensure continuity and focus.

WNCSource will serve a total of 331 children and families through the two grants.

The leadership of WNCSource is very pleased with this offer and feels this is the best possible outcome that will allow us to continue to serving the children and families in our region. We appreciate the guidance of our Governing Board and Policy Council and will be discussing this at our upcoming Board meeting (4/11/24) and Policy Council meeting (4/18/24). We encourage you to reach out with any questions or concerns you may have.

Sincerely,

David White, CEO

Elizabeth Whitten, CFO

Linda Carter, Director Children's Services

CHILDREN'S SERVICES • HOUSING • TRANSPORTATION • OLDER ADULT SERVICES

Working with communities and partners, WNCSource improves people's lives by creating pathways to self-reliance and healthier living

220 King Creek Blvd. • PO Box 685 • Hendersonville, NC 28793-0685 • Ph. 828-693-1711 • Fax 828-697-4277