

The Early Years:

Where
potential **meets**
opportunity



2016-2017
ANNUAL REPORT





Our Mission:

Wake County SmartStart works to ensure children, birth to five, are prepared for success in school and in life.

Wake County SmartStart Core Values

Respect

We honor the unique experiences and needs of each young child and family.

Cultural Sensitivity

We value diversity, promote inclusive practice, and support community empowerment.

Advocacy

We provide a strong, united voice for those most vulnerable—our children.

Responsiveness

We respond to the individual needs of children and families with regard for our larger community as a whole.

Community Collaboration

We support community collaboration through authentic relationships characterized by honesty, integrity, and compassion.

Innovation

We value flexibility, actively seek new approaches in practice, and regard challenges as opportunities for growth.

Accountability

We value our role as public stewards through the use of best business practices, strong internal controls, and accurate documentation of our efforts.





“

Every child deserves a champion—an adult who will never give up on them, who understands the power of connection and insists that they become the best that they can possibly be.

— DR. RITA PIERSON,
EDUCATOR

”



TWENTY YEARS OF PROGRESS AND ENVISIONING THE OPPORTUNITY AHEAD

In April 2017, Wake County SmartStart (WCSS) celebrated 20 years of helping young children enter Kindergarten ready to learn and ready for life. We took a look at the impact over the last two decades, thanked the partners who helped make it happen, and rolled up our sleeves to plan the work ahead.

I am fortunate to lead a dedicated, diverse, and talented Board of Directors who are all champions for children. As we considered the direction ahead, we looked at where we have seen progress – like the fact that 77% of young children are now in high quality child care as compared to 20% in 2001. We also looked at the tenacious challenges of poverty that leave 32% of third graders behind on grade-level reading. Understanding how WCSS’s goals support larger priorities for our community and state led to the adoption of a new strategic plan and a more intentional focus on system improvements.

The alignment of our goals within larger efforts sets our course ahead. Envisioning potential is what WCSS is all about – connecting children and opportunity with helpers along every path. Thank you for your support as we connect the dots—and the opportunities—for young children.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Angie C. Welsh". The signature is written in a cursive style.

Angie Welsh
Wake County SmartStart Board Chair





Envisioning a System of Opportunity

All 68,513 of Wake County’s young children birth to five deserve the best futures possible. WCSS envisions a system of opportunity, one that works to ensure each child in every Wake County community is connected to the resources they need to thrive. Our strategic plan outlines

strategies for success, built on data, best practices, and partnerships which expand our reach from Rolesville to Holly Springs, and from Morrisville to Zebulon. The plan includes a map for moving forward and the measures that will determine success. In this report, we document where we are on our community’s journey to support young children and our vision for what’s ahead.



At the 20 year mark, we reflected on the progress made, the current need, and the future ahead. This “20/20 vision” drives the work within the strategic plan.

Donors 2016-17

- Gale Adcock
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- Barbara K. Allen
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- Carol Mitchell
- Cathy Moore
- Barbara Morales Burke
- Eileen Morgan
- Peter Morris
- Jenna Marie Nelson
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- Carolina Ale House
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- Cary First Christian Church
- Catherine Davis Photography
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- Creative Schools
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- DPAC
- Duke Energy Foundation
- The Durham Hotel
- Early Preschool and Learning Center
- Empire Eats
- Environmental Federation of NC
- Family Resource Center South Atlantic
- First Citizens Bank
- Heather Park Child Development Center
- John Rex Endowment
- Kaplan Early Learning Company
- Learning Care Group
- Learning Tots Academy
- Little Believers Academy
- Locks Nails and More Hair Salon
- Lucy Daniels Center for Early Childhood
- Marbles Kids Museum
- Mayton Inn
- MacGregor Downs Country Club
- NC Early Childhood Foundation
- NC Symphony
- NC Theatre
- Northwestern Mutual
- Paragon Bank
- PNC
- Pool Professionals of the Carolinas
- Prestonwood Country Club
- Priceless Childcare



Quail Ridge Books
Raleigh Marriott City Center
Raleigh Nursery School, Inc.
Raleigh Rescue Mission, Inc.
Rave Revue Hair Designs
Retirement Plan Solutions, Inc.

Seaboard Wine
Supper Meals
The Produce Box
TN Nails
Toast Paninoteca
Triangle Wine Company

Tupelo Honey
UNC-TV
UNC Rex Healthcare
Videri Chocolate Factory
Vineyard Vines
Wake AEYC

Wake County Government
Wake Technical Community College
Whisk
Winwood Hospitality



Members of the 1996 Society at the Garden Party launch



The 1996 Society was launched in 2017 and recognizes our most committed supporters. The founding members include the visionary leaders who chartered Wake County SmartStart, driven by a mission to ensure that children are prepared for success in school and life.



Program Introduction

Young children grow up to be good neighbors, productive coworkers, and compassionate friends when they get a solid foundation for life. Knowing this, WCSS funding supports four key Goal Areas critical to a young child's success:

- **Goal Area 1:** Children are in safe, supportive home environments
- **Goal Area 2:** Children are in high quality care that contributes to positive child outcomes
- **Goal Area 3:** Children are healthy and developmentally ready for school
- **Goal Area 4:** Children and families are supported by a strong, diverse, integrated early childhood system

In Fiscal Year 2016-2017, 17% of Wake County's young children lived in poverty, a factor that limits access to high quality early learning opportunities. All funded programs prioritize services to children in families with limited resources and additional risk factors and to the child care facilities serving these families. WCSS has used this definition of children with "greatest need" for over 10 years in order to target available resources. WCSS invested \$19,741,372 in FY2016-17 in support and services to 19 programs serving children, families, and child care facilities.

Our children are dreaming about what they want to be when they grow up. Mapping a path that leads them to this success is the work of our entire community. Research has shown that participants in high quality early childhood programs grow up to earn more money, pay more taxes, and be less dependent on government services. Please join us as we work to create a system that helps each child in every community reach their full potential.



GOAL AREA 1: CHILDREN ARE IN SAFE, SUPPORTIVE HOME ENVIRONMENTS

The home is a child’s first learning environment, a parent or guardian their first teacher. Last year, WCSS provided almost 7,000 home visits to help strengthen families. WCSS funds programs that empower parents with the tools needed to prepare a child for the larger world ahead.

Crianza con Cariño is one such program, blending parenting information with support to strengthen Spanish-speaking families. The goal is for families to reduce their stress and increase their parenting skills, creating nurturing environments free from abuse and neglect.

“
Our family was eating together, which I learned was important in the program. My children asked me what was going on because they couldn’t believe I was praising them instead of punishing them. They were so happy we were getting family time together.”

– ALEJANDRA, CRIANZA CON CARIÑO PARENT

”

Alejandra came to Crianza con Cariño experiencing stress as a parent of four children. She found herself yelling, using harsh words and sometimes physical punishment.

From the first session on, when she felt herself grow frustrated, she remembered what she had learned in the classes. She began hugging and praising her children for the first time. She had never received hugs or praise from her own parents and did not know how until parent educators showed her.

Alejandra’s husband decided to attend with her after hearing their children talk about what they had learned and how happy it was making them. Their family began to experience peace and happiness and their marriage improved; they didn’t want to see the program end.



GOAL AREA 2: CHILDREN ARE IN HIGH QUALITY CARE THAT CONTRIBUTES TO POSITIVE CHILD OUTCOMES

In Wake County, 21,643 young children attended 522 licensed child care centers in FY2016-17. Over half of the child care facilities in Wake County received WCSS support in the form of on-site consultations, trainings, or other quality assistance. WCSS supports programs that increase the quality of care and education in centers and provide access to care for low income parents working outside the home. In this same fiscal year, 68% of children were living in homes where the sole parent or both work, underscoring this need.

The Child Care Subsidy Program receives funding from WCSS and is managed by Wake County Human Services (WCHS). This program provides financial assistance to families in the form of vouchers for child care. One out of four children in early care lives in a family dependent on a child care subsidy voucher. This represented an average of 4,885 children who benefited from vouchers each month.



Over half of all licensed child care centers in Wake County received WCSS support in the form of on-site consultations, trainings, or other quality assistance.

WCSS advocated for system changes within this program to reach more children by expanding funding and supporting efforts to leverage every dollar. WCHS Director, Regina Petteway, said, “WCHS had a successful year maximizing opportunities to ensure families receive the full benefits of funding granted. We are committed to effectively spending all funding so that programs like Child Care Subsidy can serve as many children as possible.”

Subsidy vouchers are a critical link for building community sustainability, each representing a child, a wage earner, and a family. Seventy percent of the child care centers that served children in families receiving subsidy also received WCSS support, as part of our work to make sure that children from all economic backgrounds have access to high quality education early.

GOAL AREA 3: CHILDREN ARE HEALTHY AND DEVELOPMENTALLY READY FOR SCHOOL

Making sure children are ready for “big school” means more than academic preparation. They also need to be healthy, making progress developmentally, and have support for their social-emotional well-being. WCSS funds programs that bring healthier food to children’s lunch tables, encourage early screenings, and promote play-filled learning of key academic concepts.

The Supporting School Readiness program is an example of a funded program that meets these goals. Rising Kindergarteners without previous child care experience attend sessions structured like condensed preschool. Activities include circle time, center play, snack time, and playground visits to introduce the children to a structured school day. During the sessions, the child’s parent or caregiver participates in group discussions on how they can help their children.

“Three months before starting this program, we moved here from the other side of the country—leaving behind family and friends. The transition had a serious impact on my son, Carter. It felt as if my son’s happy, confident personality was slipping away. This program helped identify the reasons for his struggle. Armed with new knowledge and tools and emotionally boosted from the time spent with other parents in the program, I was able to help Carter work through a tough time.

-Erin, Carter’s mother

“

“Because of the excellent teaching that occurred, my son will enter school emotionally ready for the challenges he will face.”

-ERIN, CARTER’S MOTHER

”



GOAL AREA 4: CHILDREN AND FAMILIES ARE SUPPORTED BY A STRONG, DIVERSE, INTEGRATED EARLY CHILDHOOD SYSTEM

For the past 20 years, WCSS has been a leader in the early childhood system of care and education, seeking improvements for the youngest in our community. There has been progress, despite persistent challenges. For example, twice as many eligible infants and toddlers are being reached through early intervention today as compared to 2005, due to earlier screenings to identify concerns. There has been substantial evidence showing the value of early investments. The challenge now is expanding funding to meet the need.

Using data to highlight need and research showing the potential for investments, WCSS built a case for expanded support from new revenue sources. This year saw deliberate work building public-private partnerships with business and private donors, as well as innovative funding from the Wake County Board of Commissioners. For the first time, the Wake County Board of Commissioners offered a dollar to dollar match up to \$100,000 to extend the reach of NC Pre-K, in addition to continued supplemental funding provided in the county budget. This hybrid of funding from state, local, public, and private partners has garnered national attention and is an example of the public-private partnering necessary to support all children.



NC Pre-K is ranked #1 in the country for quality



95% of NC Pre-K graduates meet “ready for school” measures



NC Pre-K students



Partners, Programs and Collaborative Projects

CATHOLIC CHARITIES OF THE DIOCESE OF RALEIGH

- School Readiness Services for Hispanic Children & Families

CHILD CARE SERVICES ASSOCIATION

- Administrator/Quality Development

COMMUNITY CARE OF WAKE AND JOHNSTON COUNTIES

- Assuring Better Child Health & Development Program (ABCD)

FAMILY RESOURCE CENTER SOUTH ATLANTIC

- Home Instruction for Parents of Preschool Youngsters (HIPPY)

LUCY DANIELS CENTER FOR EARLY CHILDHOOD

- Social/Emotional Interventions for Young Children (SecurePath)

MOTHEREAD

- Literacy Invites and Nurtures Kids' Success (LINKS)

SAFECHILD

- The Nurturing Program for Spanish Speaking Families (Crianza Con Cariño)

WAKE COUNTY HUMAN SERVICES

- Child Care Health Consultant Program
- Child Care Subsidy Program
- Nurse-Family Partnership (NFP)

WAKE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOL SYSTEM OFFICE OF EARLY LEARNING

- Parents as Teachers Program (PAT)
- Supporting School Readiness
- WAKE Up and Read

WAKE COUNTY SMARTSTART

- Child Care Program Quality Supplements
- Community Outreach and Education
- Improving and Sustaining Quality Child Care
- Farm to Child Care*
- NC Pre-Kindergarten
- Program Coordination and Evaluation
- Reach Out and Read
- Wake Connections*



Collaborative Projects

NATURAL LEARNING INITIATIVE AT NC STATE UNIVERSITY COLLEGE OF DESIGN

- Preventing Obesity by Design - Wake County (POD)



*funded by John Rex Endowment

Aligning the work of WCSS within larger community efforts will help move our agenda forward with more impact. The NC Pathways to Grade-Level Reading Project, spurred by a mission to address low reading scores for third graders, is an example of state level work connected to our strategic plan. The initiative is creating partnerships across the state to define a common vision, measures of success, and coordinated strategies to support children's optimal development beginning at birth. Many of the goals at WCSS overlap with this state level initiative and confirm we are moving in the right direction.

Wake County is one of 14 local communities providing input to Pathways. WCSS and the Wake County Public School System will partner to host a

unique collection of pediatricians, K-3 teachers, child care providers, and others who serve young children to provide input on social and emotional health, access to high-quality early learning, and school attendance issues. Bringing county level expertise to shape state level early childhood policies and practice reflects just one way WCSS is offering input for positive change.

Reviewing data and research, tracking progress of programs, convening thought leaders and experts, and listening to the needs of young children and parents – these are the markers on our map that confirm the route, define the road taken, and help fix our gaze on a brighter horizon ahead.



Pathways Mission: Our vision is bold – all North Carolina children, regardless of race, ethnicity, or socioeconomic status, are reading on grade-level by the end of third grade, and all children with disabilities achieve expressive and receptive communication skills commensurate with their developmental ages, so that they have the greatest opportunity for life success.



Staff 2016-17

Pamela J. Dowdy
Executive Director
Phyllis Barbour
Gabrielle Barnard
Debi Bartholomew
Gary Carr
Sharon Clauss
Sue Consolatti

Jessie Drescher
Sasha Gomez
John Guenther
Joan Harris
Stephanie Jenkins
Susan Johns
Bryce McClamroch

Nikki McDougald
Carol Orji
Maggie Ortiz
Nora Ostler
Maria Padilla
Nancy Peck
Lynn Policastro

Melinda Schlesinger
Gina Soceanu
Anna Troutman
Noemi Vasquez
Taushau Wilkinson
Patty Williams
Liz Ziglar

Board of Directors 2016-17

Christine Alvarado
East Coast Migrant Head
Start Project

L'Teisha Curtis
Telamon Corporation

Susan McCullen
Wake County
Finance Department

Kimberly Shaw
A Safe Place Child
Enrichment Center

Gail Austin
Wake Technical
Community College

James S. Greene
City of Raleigh

Carol Mitchell
NC Cooperative Extension -
Wake County

Mike Smith
Western Wake Pediatrics

Lorie Barnes
NC Association for
the Education of
Young Children

Liz Hamner
SAS

Cathy Moore
Wake County Public
School System

Kristi Tally
KD7 Enterprises, Inc.

Ana Maria Bonell
Fox 50 - Capitol
Broadcasting

Jessica Holmes
Wake County Board
of Commissioners

Barbara Morales Burke
BlueCross BlueShield of NC

Charlotte Turpin
Community Volunteer

Arvelis Byrd
Telamon Corporation

Sherry Heuser
Capability Company

Regina Petteway
Wake County
Human Services

Michael Wasilick
Wake County
Public Libraries

Kelly Caldwell
Sonaya Properties

Benita Jones
North Carolina
Central University

Patricia Ruppert
Parent

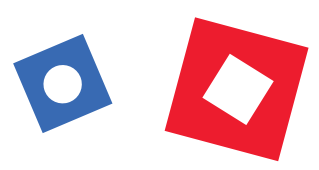
Angie Welsh, Chair
Marbles Kids Museum

Dale Cousins
Community Volunteer

Mark Langford
Cisco Systems

Camille Schaffer
Community Volunteer

Tyrone Williamson
City of Raleigh



QUALITY CHILD CARE
\$ 2,093,418 **11%**

11%
FAMILY SUPPORT/
HEALTH & SAFETY
\$ 2,155,689

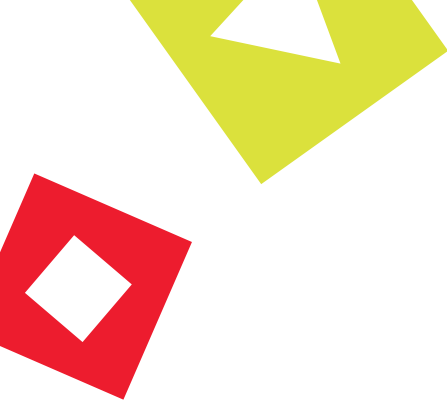
2% PROGRAM
COORDINATION
& EVALUATION
\$ 468,845

4%
ADMINISTRATION
\$ 742,499

25%
CHILD CARE SUBSIDY
\$ 4,894,672

47%
NC PRE-KINDERGARTEN
\$ 9,386,249

Wake County
SmartStart
Functional
Expenditures
FY 16/17



Wake County SmartStart FY2017 Financial Statements

Statements of Receipts, Expenditures, and Net Assets Modified Cash Basis

	Unrestricted Funds		Temporarily Restricted Funds	Total Funds
	Smart Start Funds	Other Funds		
Receipts				
State Awards and Contracts	\$ 7,723,785	\$ 6,000,461	\$ 0	\$ 13,724,246
Local Government	0	405,994	82,598	488,592
Private Contributions	0	92,444	285,201	377,645
Special Fund Raising Events	0	16,976	0	16,976
Interest and Investment Earnings	0	10,382	0	10,382
Sales Tax Refunds	0	5,559	0	5,559
Other Receipts	0	103,846	0	103,846
Total Receipts	\$ 7,723,785	\$ 6,635,662	\$ 367,799	\$ 14,727,246
Net Assets Released from Restrictions:				
Satisfaction of Program Restrictions	0	583,784	(583,784)	0
Total Receipts	\$ 7,723,785	\$ 7,219,446	\$ (215,985)	\$ 14,727,246
Expenditures				
<i>Programs:</i>				
Child Care and Education Quality	1,892,266	201,152	0	2,093,418
Family Support	1,363,031	25,366	0	1,388,397
Health and Safety	761,028	6,264	0	767,292
NC PreKindergarten	3,022,468	6,363,781	0	9,386,249
<i>Support:</i>				
Management and General	394,868	347,631	0	742,499
Program Coordination and Evaluation	290,124	178,721	0	468,845
Total Programs and Support	\$ 7,723,785	\$ 7,122,915	\$ 0	\$ 14,846,700
<i>Other:</i>				
Sales Tax Paid	0	6,594	0	6,594
Total Expenditures	\$ 7,723,785	\$ 7,129,509	\$ 0	\$ 14,853,294
Excess of Receipts Over Expenditures	0	89,937	(215,985)	(126,048)
Net Assets at Beginning of Year	0	1,845,964	640,988	2,486,952
Net Assets at End of Year	\$ 0	\$ 1,935,901	\$ 425,003	\$ 2,360,904
Net Assets Consisted of:				
Cash and Cash Equivalents	9,603	1,686,603	425,003	2,121,209
Investments	0	250,000	0	250,000
Refunds Due from Contractors	11,391	0	0	11,391
Total:	\$ 20,994	\$ 1,936,603	\$ 425,003	\$ 2,382,600
Less: Due to State	15,543	0	0	15,543
Funds Held for Others	5,451	702	0	6,153
Net Assets at End of Year	\$ 0	\$ 1,935,901	\$ 425,003	\$ 2,360,904

Note: During FY2017, the NC Partnership for Children and the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) entered into a contract with and made payments to a service provider selected by Wake County SmartStart. This service provider contract is not reflected on this statement. However, a summary of the service provider contract entered into by the NC Partnership for Children and DHHS is presented here:

**Schedule of State Level Service Providers Contracts
For the Year Ended June 30, 2017**

Wake County Human Services Child Care Subsidy.....	\$ 4,894,672
Total Expenditures – Wake County SmartStart (See above).....	\$ 14,846,700
Grand Total Expenditures by and through Wake County SmartStart	\$ 19,741,372

Volunteers 2016-17

A

Amelia Abrams
Sandra Aguilar
Rachel Aiken
Christine Alvarado
Mina Amine
Nannette Ausby
Gail Austin

B

Sanford Bailey
Jan Baker
Stacey Barbee
Krista Barbour
Lorie Barnes
Mamta Batra
Connie Batten
Ashley Beam
Cheryl Bell
Kimberly Belmares
Corina Belonga
Claudia Beltre
Dianne Binda
Ana Maria Bonell
Freda Bonilla
Mycal Brickhouse
Kristin McCullough
Brickhouse
Cassandra Brooks
Loleta Brown
Tracy Brown
Corinne Brylski
Terri Burris
Summylin Burton
Melissa Butler
Arvelis Byrd

C

Kelly Caldwell
Peter Caldwell
Sonora Caldwell
Anna Carter
Bruce Clarke
Dashieka Renee Clay
John Coggin
Nichelle Cole
Dale Cousins

Taylor Crowder
L'Teisha Curtis

D

Elaina Datcher
Dawn Dawson
Titania Delgado
Carolyn Dickens
Lorraine Dixon
Robert Dowdy

E

Gail Eluwa
Michele Ezzell

F

Maty Ferrer
Joyce Ford
Alberta Forney
Regina Frangos
Shoshana Funk

G

Tammy Gatling
Jennifer Graves
Tara Green
Simone Green
James S. Greene
Monnie Griggs

H

Allison Hall
Liz Hamner
Katina Hanks
Sara Hansen
Lorrie Hargreaves
Corthesia Harrington
Kisa Harris
Jessica Hawkins
Nikki Haywood
Holli Hemby
Kamika Henderson
Cesiah Hernandez
Sherry Heuser
Michelle Hirsch
Charlotte Holliday
Jessica Holmes
Pam Holt
Kevin Hooper
Valerie Horton
Katherine Hutchens

I

Kabira Ifekran
Asmaa Ifkiren

J

Aisha Jenkins
Robin Johnson
Benita Jones
David Juarez

K

Jacqueline Kehinde
Julie Kennedy
Connie Kennedy
Sharon Klingenmaier
Shobha Kamath
Shamora Koonce
Amanda Kowski

L

Shirley Lacy
Sherri Lambeth
Mark Langford
Debi LaVine
Tancie Leak
Marshea Lewis Gould
Diana Lloyd
Gay Lytton

M

Jennifer MacPherson
Jelly Ann Magpantay
Sharika Marable
Amanda Mateus
Rodriguez
Lisa McCoy
Susan McCullen
Beckie McGee
C. Neill McLeod
Shana Meadows
Debbie Medlin
Carol Mitchell
Sherri Mobley
Cathy Moore
Christa Moore
Barbara Morales Burke
Peter Morris
Bettie Edwards
Murchison
Shaunta Murff

N

Jack Nichols
Heather Noe

O

Elizabeth Oxley

P

Tulia Pascht
Kaila Patel
Ronetta Pearsall
Kimberly Peebles
Amy Peterson
Cam Petrovich
Heather Petrovich
Regina Petteway
Taiwana Pettiford
Gorsha Pierre Louis
Hannah Poteat
Ferali Puerta
Michelle Putterman

R

Aron Randle
Deanna Randle
Waltye Rasulala
Karen Ray
Max Rodden
Wendy Rodriguez
Patricia Ruppert

S

Lina Said
Gladys Santiago
Camille Schaffer
Erin Joyce Scoggins
Stephannie Senegal
Cooper Shannon
Phylis Sharpe
Kimberly Shaw
Chianti Sheantrease
Muhammad
Alison Silver
Mike Smith
Nancy Spencer
Carol Spruill
Cheryl Stephenson
Sarah Stevens
Suzanne Stroud



Volunteers 2016-17 CONTINUED

T
 Kristi Tally
 Gizem Templeton
 Lisa Terry
 Valarie Thayer
 Karla Theobald
 Florianna Thompson

Ellen Thorne
 Lydia Tiller
 Emily Tinney
 Joy Turner
 Charlotte Turpin
V
 Carol Vercellino

W
 Lisa Ware
 Kristina Washington
 Michael Wasilick
 Michael Weisel
 Angie Welsh
 Joe White

Beverly Williams
 Tyrone Williamson
 Kim Wimberly
 Shante Winborne
Z
 Hilda Zimmer
 David Zonderman



Raleigh Chamber's Young Professional Network Outdoor Learning Dream Team Volunteers



All 19 programs funded by WCSS during FY2016-17 represent services, support, and assistance given to individual children and families here in Wake County. We are proud to work alongside so many dedicated partners and skilled professionals who believe in each child's potential. As we envision a system of opportunity for the future, we are grateful for our community partners, volunteers, donors, and supporters. They have helped draw the map, walked beside families, and held the hands of young children along the way.



2016-2017 ANNUAL REPORT

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Raleigh, NC 27606

Phone: 919-851-9550

Website: wakesmartstart.org

*Wake County SmartStart is a 501(c)(3)
nonprofit organization.*

*Writing/Editing: **Elizabeth Weichel**
Design: **Top Shelf Design***

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