

**Wake County Smart Start
NC Pre-K Committee Meeting
August 24, 2022**

A meeting of the Wake County Smart Start (WCSS) NC Pre-K Committee was held on Wednesday, August 24, 2022 with Chair, Sherry Heuser presiding. The meeting was held via Zoom conference

Committee members present: Christine Alvarado, Nikia Coates, Veronica Creech, Dawn Dawson, Heather Drennan, Matt Ellinwood, Matt Glova, Liz Hamner, Sherry Heuser, Mickey Holt, Leslie Ann Jackson, Tonya Kangkolo, Cathy Moore, Barbara Morales Burke, Colleen Roache, Kimberly Shaw, Tonya Venable, Michael Wasilick, Joe White and Katherine Williams

Committee members absent: Maria Cervania, Catherine Lassiter, Antonia Pedroza and Sharon Loza

Staff members present: Carol Orji, Diana Fenves, Alex Livas-Dlott, Gary Carr, Sasha Gomez, Bryce McClamroch, Jennifer MacPherson, Nancy Peck and Taylor Young

Call to Order/Announcements

At 8:32 am, Chair, Sherry Heuser, recognized a quorum and called the meeting to order. She introduced new board members: Matt Ellinwood, Mickey Holt, Colleen Roache, Tonya Venable and new Director of Community Relations and Development, Diana Fenves before asking for a round of introductions. Ms. Heuser announced the meeting is being recorded for note taking purposes only and noted the presence of staff attending the call as non-committee members. Barbara Morales Burke moved to adopt the agenda. Katherine Williams seconded the motion. Calling for a vote and with none opposed, the vote was unanimous. (08-22-01)

NC Pre-K Committee members reviewed minutes from previous meeting. Matt Glova moved to adopt the minutes from the NC Pre-K Committee meeting on June 22, 2022. Kim Shaw seconded the motion. Calling for a vote and hearing no objection, the motion carried. (08-22-02)


Executive Director's Report

In the absence of Executive Director, Gayle E. Headen, Director of Early Childhood Initiatives, Carol Orji introduced a staff recommendation and supporting information to establish the NC Pre-K Committee meeting schedule for the upcoming fiscal year in compliance with NC Pre-K plan requirements. Veronica Creech made a motion to adopt the WCSS NC Pre-K Committee meeting calendar for FY22-23 as detailed on Attachment B.2. Heather Drennan seconded the motion. Calling for a committee vote and hearing none opposed, the vote to approve was unanimous (08-22-03)

Ms. Orji summarized the purpose of the NC Pre-K Plan Requirements and Assurances required by the Division of Child Development and Early Education (DCDEE) and reminded committee members of their role as the decision-making body for the Pre-K program. She informed committee members Section I. of the document will be circulated to each committee member for signature through DocuSign. Barbara Morales Burke moved to acknowledge and approve by signature NC Pre-K Plan Requirements and Assurances for contracting in FY22-23 and confirmation of WCSS as the contracting agency. Matt Glova seconded the motion. Calling for a vote and hearing no objections, the vote was unanimous. (08-22-04)

Carol Orji presented a staff recommendation and supporting information for annual NC Pre-K plans requirements as described on Attachments D.1-D.7. She listed the various plans submitted for approval, noting no significant changes from the prior year. Katherine Williams made a motion to adopt the NC Pre-K plan requirements for: Children with Unique Needs, Transportation, Transition, Family Engagement, Communication with Children and Families Who are Dual Language Learners and Inclement Weather Policy. Nikia Coates seconded the motion. Calling for a vote and hearing none opposed, the vote was unanimous. (08-22-05)

Ms. Orji presented a staff recommendation for NC Pre-K slot placement and transportation fees as referenced on the charts on Attachment E. 1 and E.2. In response to a question about the number of slots, she remarked that

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Date

the total number of slots covering the three programs remains unchanged. Following questions, Veronica Creech moved to approve reimbursement rates for the 2022-23 school year as indicated on Attachment E.2; placement of 1,532 NC Pre-K slots for the 2022-2023 school year in selected sites as listed on Attachment E.2 with authorization of WCSS staff to reallocate vacant slots as needed based on the geographic location of applying families most eligible for services; and transportation fees where applicable also detailed on Attachment D.2. Leslie Ann Jackson seconded the motion. Calling for a vote and noting abstentions by Dawn Dawson, Heather Drennan, Cathy Moore, Kimberly Shaw and Tonya Venable, the vote for approval passed. (08-22-06)

Carol Orji issued a Call to Action to committee members, inviting them to help recruit eligible families to fill available Pre-K slots.

Cathy Moore commented that the Wake County Public School System (WCPSS) is providing temp workers to process applications and asked if there was anything else the Board could do to help support expediting the processing of applications. Carol Orji thanked WCPSS and encouraged anyone with connections to other nonprofit agencies serving low-income families to help WCSS connect with those families. Tonya Venable provided feedback about difficulty some families are having in navigating the online application tool. Carol Orji responded that WCSS is offering walk-in application events and appointments for families needing assistance.

In response to a question, Carol Orji remarked WCSS is working with BridgeCare, the application platform developer to re-structure the Pre-K application by isolating income levels in such a way that the various programs can quickly pull applicants fitting their eligibility requirements.

There being no further business, Leslie Ann Jackson made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:56 am. Mickey Holt seconded the motion. Calling for a vote and hearing no objections, the vote passed. (08-22-07)

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Secretary

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