

**Wake County Smart Start  
Board of Directors Meeting  
February 22, 2023**

A meeting of the Wake County Smart Start (WCSS) Board of Directors was held on Wednesday, Feb. 22, 2023, with WCSS Board Vice Chair, Katherine Williams presiding. The meeting was held via Zoom conference call.

Board members present: Nikia Coates, Veronica Creech, Heather Drennan, Susan Evans, Matt Glova, Mickey Holt, Tonya Kangkolo, Catty Moore, Barbara Morales Burke, Antonia Pedroza, Colleen Roache, Kimberly Shaw, Joe White and Katherine Williams

Board members absent: Christine Alvarado, Matthew Ellinwood, Liz Hamner, Sherry Heuser, Leslie Ann Jackson, Catherine Lassiter, Sharon Loza, Tonya Venable, Michael Wasilick

Staff members present: Gary Carr, Joan Crutchfield, Diana Fenves, Sasha Gomez, Gayle E. Headen, Alex Livas-Dlott, Jennifer MacPherson, Carol Orji and Nancy Peck

### **Call to Order/Announcements**

At 9:04 AM, Board Vice Chair, Katherine Williams recognized a quorum and called the meeting to order. She announced the meeting is being recorded and noted the presence of staff as non-board members in attendance. Executive Director, Gayle E. Headen announced the "Mission Moment" regularly presented at this point in the agenda, is focused on Building Bright Futures 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary and will be presented under the Advancement Committee portion of the agenda. Matt Glova moved to adopt the agenda. Barbara Morales Burke seconded the motion. Calling for a vote and with none opposed, the motion carried. (02-23-47)

The Board reviewed items on the consent agenda. Barbara Morales Burke moved to approve items on the consent agenda including minutes from the December 7, 2022 Board meeting, December 2022 and January 2023 financial reports. Veronica Creech seconded the motion. Calling for a vote and hearing no objection, the motion carried. (02-23-48)

### **Committee Reports**

#### **Advancement Committee**


Advancement Committee Chair, Nikia Coates introduced the "Mission Moment" presentation on the Building Bright Futures 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary event. She turned over the presentation to Community Relations and Development Director, Diana Fenves, who provided a brief event overview, goals for the event and the methods that will be used to raise funds. Communications Manager, Jennifer MacPherson, continued the presentation with a tour of Givebutter, the main event platform, used for ticketing and fundraising. Ms. MacPherson shared a list of opportunities for business engagement, event promotion and raffle item needs, asking the board to volunteer wherever they could offer help. Board members previewed the Building Bright Futures 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary video which will be screened at the event. Nikia Coates concluded the presentation with the following requests: share "Save the Date" information within personal networks; consider purchase of sponsorship or ticket blocks, use the promotional toolkit which will be distributed soon to share on personal social media platforms.

#### **Board Governance Committee**

Board Governance Committee Chair, Barbara Morales Burke presented a committee recommendation for several changes to the WCSS by-laws for the purpose of achieving and maintaining a balanced rotation of members, creating opportunities for a refreshment in perspective, balance of power in decision making, and conditions for continuity of Board leadership as necessary. She summarized several points of rationale supporting the recommended changes on Attachment C.1. Joe White moved to approve updates to Article V of the WCSS By-laws as detailed on Attachment C.2 relating to board composition and term limits. Mickey Holt seconded the motion. Calling for a vote and hearing no opposition, the motion carried. (02-23-49)

#### **Finance Committee**

Finance Committee Chair, Joe White introduced a recommendation to make a change in the Executive Director's annual vacation accrual to bring it into alignment with vacation accrual for the Executive Directors of other large Smart Start local partnerships. Mr. White noted the Executive Director's contract will be

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updated when a separate compensation study for this position is completed by Catapult Consulting, who will conduct the study. Veronica Creech made a motion to approve a change to the vacation accrual for the Executive Director from 3 weeks (15 workdays) per calendar year to 4 weeks (20 workdays) per calendar year effective March 1, 2023. Susan Evans seconded the motion. Calling for a vote, and hearing no objections, the vote was unanimous (02-23-50)

Joe White reported the Finance Team met earlier in February with 401K plan advisors for the annual review of the plan. He presented a committee recommendation to add an auto-enrollment provision to the plan as required by the Secure Act 2.0 passed into law by the federal government December 2022. Mr. White noted that staff will retain the right to opt out of auto-enrollment and the current 1% auto-escalation provision. Veronica Creech moved to approve an amendment of the WCSS 401(k) Plan to require auto-enrollment of all staff eligible to participate in the plan at a 5% employee contribution rate effective 7/1/2023. Kim Shaw seconded the motion. Calling for a vote and hearing all in favor, the vote to approve was passed. (02-23-51)


### **Chair's Report**

Vice Chair Katherine Williams offered her observation that the work being reported and board actions are indicative of the commitment to stated racial equity goals and moving forward toward these goals.

### **Executive Director's Report**

Executive Director, Gayle E. Headen Ms. Headen reported with the following updates:

- NCPC changes impacting Early Literacy initiatives:
  - State funding to continue expansion of the Dolly Parton Imagination Library (DPIL) program expires on June 30, 2023 and has not been increased. WCSS's DPIL program will continue to serve currently enrolled children until they age out at age five years but will be unable to serve new applicants after June 30. A waitlist will be developed for the program which will only be open to them if additional funding from the General Assembly is secured.
  - NCPC's relationship with Reach Out and Read (ROR) program has ended. Legislative requirements mandate signed agreements from anyone receiving Smart Start funding. The Reach Out and Read national office is in disagreement with requiring signed agreements from the partnering medical practices and as a resolution could not be reached, ROR as a Smart Start funded program has been dissolved.
- Wake County Board of Commissioners Education Committee: WCSS recently met with the Education Committee to present the status of the Wake Pre-K and Wake ThreeSchool programs. WCSS is not asking for increased funding for Wake Pre-K, but is requesting \$3.3 million for Wake ThreeSchool, inclusive of funding for an additional 100 slots to expand the program to 200 slots. WCSS continued discussion with the Education Committee on how to scale up expansion of Wake ThreeSchool through the exploration of private funding to diversify revenue sources.
- Funding Cycle Information Sessions: Ms. Headen said WCSS is receiving applications for the upcoming one-year funding cycle. Two information sessions for the FY23-24 funding cycle were held in January. The sessions referenced major themes identified from the Racial Equity Community Assessment and the changes that have begun to be implemented in response. Participants received an overview of the Strategic Framework, funding process and timeline, an introduction to entering information into the e-CImpact database and a fiscal overview. A number of new potential partners attended the sessions. Several organizations have met with Program Coordination and Evaluation and Fiscal team members to address follow-up questions. Seven new potential partners have begun applications, due March 6, 2023. WCSS is revising the evaluation rubric to reflect its current priorities.
- Strategic Priority Update -Data: WCSS Data Manager, Alex Setzer will start hosting "Lunch and Learn" sessions to move forward toward the goal of increasing data-driven decision making as an agency. The first Lunch and Learn, "Excel 101," in February, focuses on functions that can make working with data in Excel more approachable.

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Vice Chair, Katherine Williams reminded Board members to rejoin the Zoom call using the same link for an extended special session starting at 10:10 am. With no further business, Heather Drennan moved to adjourn the meeting. Matt Glova seconded the motion. Calling for a vote and hearing no objections, the meeting was adjourned at 10:01 am. (02-23-52)

DocuSigned by:

*Leslie Ann Jackson*

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Secretary

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Date