

Wake County Smart Start Executive Committee Meeting Minutes March 22, 2023

A regular meeting of the Wake County Smart Start (WCSS) Executive Committee was convened via Zoom on Wednesday, March 22, 2023, with WCSS Board Chair, Sherry Heuser presiding.

Executive Committee members present: Nikia Coates, Sherry Heuser, Leslie Ann Jackson, Barbara Morales Burke, Joe White and Katherine Williams

Staff members present: Gary Carr, Diana Fenves, Gayle E. Headen, Alex Livas-Dlott, Carol Orji and Nancy Peck

Call to Order

At 8:34 AM, Board Chair, Sherry Heuser called the meeting to order. She informed committee members of staff members in attendance as non-committee members and reported the meeting was being recorded for the purpose of ensuring accurate meeting minutes.

Joe White moved to adopt the agenda. Leslie Ann Jackson seconded the motion. Calling for a vote and hearing no objections, the vote passed. (03-23-53)

Barbara Morales Burke moved to approve the minutes from the Executive Committee meeting on January 25, 2023. Katherine Williams seconded the motion. Calling for a vote and hearing no objection, the motion carried. (03-23-54)

Advancement Committee

Advancement Committee Chair, Nikia Coates reported the Building Bright Futures Host Committee met on March 21 and will meet one more time prior to the event to square away loose ends for the raffle and open tasks they have volunteered for. She encouraged Executive Committee members to continue sharing invitations to the event within their personal network and social media accounts. Gayle Headen commented on the goal to sell 400 tickets and emphasized the need for Board members to personally extend invitations.

Board Governance Committee

Board Governance Committee Chair, Barbara Morales Burke reported the committee met in February to begin discussion of new board recruitment. To meet the approved objective of improved balance in rotation of seasoned and new board members, the committee may recommend filling fewer than the number of vacant seats pending at the end of June. The committee has begun identifying potential candidates and moving forward with the vetting process to present a recommendation of nominees at the June meeting.


Finance Committee

Finance Committee Chair, Joe White reported Finance Committee did not meet in March but have received and reviewed February financial statements. He reviewed highlights of expenditures in the February financial statements, noting spending by Direct Service Providers (DSPs) is somewhat increased from the same period last fiscal year. Gary Carr commented that WCSS will send year end close out information to the DSPs in early April with a request for reverting funds they aren't projecting to spend before the close of the fiscal year.

Katherine Williams moved to approve February 2023 financial statements. Leslie Ann Jackson seconded the motion. Calling for a vote and hearing no opposition, the motion carried. (03-23-55)

Chair's Report

Chair, Sherry Heuser reported WCSS has contracted with Catapult to conduct an Executive compensation study as the next step of the process in developing a new Executive Director performance evaluation and compensation plan.

 Initial 5/31/2023 | 10:29 PM EDT
Date

Executive Director's Report

Gayle E. Headen provided an update on the following topics:

- Funding Application Cycle:
 - 25 proposals have been received, including 8 from new agencies.
 - Staff and Allocations Committee members are in process of reviewing applications using a revised rubric to identify partners making greatest impact in serving marginalized families and to align funding recommendations with Board priorities.
 - Executive Committee members discussed and supported offering some form of compensation for Allocations Committee community volunteers. WCSS staff will follow up to see how this may be arranged.
 - A copy of both the new and previous rubric will be sent to Executive Committee members for their comparison.
 - The pilot rubric will undergo refinement before next year's application cycle, based on feedback from Allocations Committee and WCSS staff observations.
- Early Education Caucus: Ms. Headen shared highlights from the recent Early Education Caucus meeting and press conference at the General Assembly.
 - Representatives Ball and Cervania inquired about bills they might sponsor to benefit WCSS. WCSS staff responded within 24 hours by submitting the requested information.
 - A potential bill is under consideration to pilot a program of mental health supports for parents delivered by community health workers in Wake County and one rural county elsewhere in the state.
- Leandro Case: Ms. Headen shared that the N.C. Supreme Court has granted a motion filed by the state controller to initiate a re-hearing of the Leandro case by the Supreme Court and reinstate an order to halt the transfer of funding, which will result in the undoing of settled law. Early childhood education advocates are calling on the state controller to withdraw the motion and plan to address the issue in the courtroom.
- Expulsion/Suspension study early results: Ms. Headen reported early results from the Pre-K Suspension & Expulsion study on the experiences of families were received on March 1. She commented that although the results are not ready to be publicly shared, there is sufficient confidence in the validity of the study that there is no need to expand it statewide. A meeting is scheduled in the next few weeks with the full research community advisory board to share the results and plan for next steps to be taken after the results are released.

In response to a request for further details of a potential bill for a pilot mental health support program for parents using community health workers, Alex Livas-Dlott provided a brief overview of the *Strong Minds* model program, which she said would be adapted as a program for parents of children, birth-five years old.

With no further business to discuss, Katherine Williams moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:15 AM. Joe White seconded the motion. Calling for a vote and hearing no objections, the motion carried. (03-23-56)

DocuSigned by:

Leslie Ann Jackson

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Secretary

5/31/2023 | 10:29 PM EDT

Date