

**Wake County Smart Start
NC Pre-K Committee Meeting
April 26, 2023**

A meeting of the Wake County Smart Start (WCSS) NC Pre-K Committee was held on Wednesday, April 26, 2023 with Chair, Sherry Heuser presiding. The meeting was held via Zoom conference call.

Committee members present: Nikia Coates, Veronica Creech, Heather Drennan, Matt Ellinwood, Matt Glova, Sherry Heuser, Mickey Holt, Tonya Kangkolo, Leslie Ann Jackson, Catty Moore, Barbara Morales Burke, Joe White and Katherine Williams

Committee members absent: Christine Alvarado, Dawn Dawson, Susan Evans, Liz Hamner, Mickey Holt, Catherine Lassiter, Sharon Loza, Antonia Pedroza, Colleen Roache, Kimberly Shaw, Tonya Venable and Michael Wasilick

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

Call to Order/Announcements

At 8:35 am, Sherry Heuser, Chair, announced a quorum was present and officially called the meeting to order. She noted the meeting is being recorded and drew attention to the presence of staff attending the meeting as non-committee members.

Barbara Morales Burke moved to adopt the agenda. Leslie Ann Jackson seconded the motion. Calling for a vote and with none opposed, the vote was unanimous. (04-23-57)


NC Pre-K Committee members reviewed minutes from previous meeting. Katherine Williams moved to adopt the minutes from the NC Pre-K Committee meeting on February 22, 2023. Catty Moore seconded the motion. Calling for a vote and hearing no objection, the motion carried. (04-23-58)

Executive Director's Report

Executive Director, Gayle E. Headen reminded those present that the NC Pre-K Committee is the decision-making body for the local NC Pre-K Program before introducing a Site Selection Committee recommendation for additional Pre-K sites. Joan Crutchfield and Gary Carr addressed questions about follow up with programs submitting incomplete applications and communication to the programs not selected. Barbara Morales Burke moved to approve the addition of three new Pre-K sites scoring 74% or greater on the site selection rubric: Jeffreys Grove Elementary, Wake Forest Elementary, and Wakelon Elementary. Veronica Creech seconded the motion. A committee vote was called for with noted abstentions by Heather Drennan and Catty Moore. Hearing none opposed, the vote to approve was unanimous (04-23-59)

Ms. Headen provided the following NC Pre-K program updates:

- SY2022-23 enrollment status: Pre-K enrollment for the current school year across all site settings in Wake County is at 88% as of the end of December 2022 with all available classrooms at full capacity. 303 eligible children are waitlisted, a greater number than typical due to reduced classroom capacity.
- SY2023-24 application status: To date, more than 2600 applications have been submitted with 1700 of these identified through self-reported income as prioritized for the NC Pre-K program. 272 applications have been fully evaluated. WCSS staff is following up with families with missing documents. WCSS staff are also expanding recruitment activities to improve targeting families in greatest need. Examples of the activities include: Univision television spot, interview on Radio La Grande, distribution of fliers in high traffic areas such as grocery stores and hair salons, missing documents walk-in events, outreach through the Raleigh office of U.S. Committee for Refugees and Immigrants, organizing a Back-To-School application event and resource fair and direct communication to families of children currently in the Wake ThreeSchool program. NC Pre-K Committee members offered suggestions for additional targeted outreach activities:


○ Outreach at library story time or other free preschool age events
Initial 7/7/2023 | 9:22 AM EDT
Date

- Working with Wake County to share information through Wake County Human Services call center, regional centers, food distribution centers and Housing Department.
- Ms. Headen reviewed some of challenges and concerns voiced by child care providers about teacher shortages, current NC Pre-K program as a business model and geographical shift in the marketplace. She invited committee members to contact her with suggestions for solutions that WCSS could implement to reverse the trend of local provider dropout.
- Early Child Care apprenticeship program: More than 40 child care providers plan to attend an upcoming session to sign up as participants for the Wake Tech child care apprenticeship program.

There being no further business, Matt Glova moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:02 am. Joe White seconded the motion. Calling for a vote and hearing no objections, the motion passed. (04-23-60)

DocuSigned by:

Matthew Ellinwood

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Secretary

7/7/2023 | 9:22 AM EDT

Date