

**Wake County Smart Start
Executive Committee Meeting Minutes
May 24, 2023**

A regular meeting of the Wake County Smart Start (WCSS) Executive Committee was convened via Zoom on Wednesday, May 24, 2023, with WCSS Board Chair, Sherry Heuser presiding.

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

Executive committee member absent: Barbara Morales Burke

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

Call to Order

At 8:33 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.

Leslie Ann Jackson moved to adopt the agenda. Joe White seconded the motion. Calling for a vote and hearing no objections, the vote passed. (05-23-67)

Katherine Williams moved to approve the minutes from the Executive Committee meeting on March 22, 2023. Nikia Coates seconded the motion. Calling for a vote and hearing no objection, the motion carried. (05-23-68)

Advancement Committee

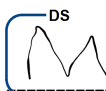

Advancement Committee Chair, Nikia Coates reported with highlights from the Building Bright Futures celebration on May 13. 157 people attended the event which raised just over \$80,000 from sponsorships, tickets, donations and raffle sales. Advancement Committee will meet on June 13 for an event debrief. Ms. Coates expressed her appreciation to the Executive Committee and Host Committee members and staff for their efforts in making the celebration a success.

Board Governance Committee

Chair, Sherry Heuser drew attention to the written Board Governance Committee report on the agenda in the absence of Committee Chair, Barbara Morales Burke. Katherine Williams commented on positive and fruitful interactions during interviews that she, along with Matt Glova and Matt Ellinwood had with the new board member candidates.

Finance Committee

Finance Committee Chair, Joe White reported Finance Committee did not meet in May but have received and reviewed April financial statements. He summarized highlights of the April financial statements, noting anticipation of a large carry forward amount into the next fiscal year, in part due to late receipt of Smart Start funds. Mr. White commented that the North Carolina Partnership for Children (NCPC) plans to allow earlier access to Smart Start funds in FY23-24 which should reduce the amount of carry forward funds. Mr. White acknowledged Finance Director, Gary Carr and Finance Committee member, Matt Glova for their negotiation with Truist Bank to increase the agency's money market account interest rate to just under 4%, adding an additional \$12,000 in income per month. Katherine Williams moved to approve April 2023 financial statements. Nikia Coates seconded the motion. Calling for a vote and hearing no opposition, the motion carried. (05-23-69)

 
Initial _____ Date 8/29/2023 | 5:03 PM EDT

Chair's Report

Chair, Sherry Heuser expressed appreciation to all who donated, attended or otherwise supported the Building Bright Futures celebration on May 13.

Executive Director's Report

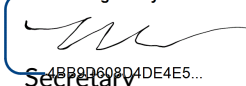
Executive Director, Gayle E. Headen provided background for a staff recommendation for Wake ThreeSchool (WTS) site selection. In anticipation of the additional funding for the program included in Wake County's proposed budget, staff and the community advisory committee identified and reviewed eight new sites as an addition to the existing eight sites to double program capacity from 100 slots to 200. All sites under consideration are current Pre-K program sites. Katherine Williams moved to approve the Wake ThreeSchool sites selection for 2023-2024 school year as recommended on Attachment C.1. Leslie Ann seconded the motion. A vote was called for and with none opposed, the vote to approve was unanimous. (05-23-70)

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

- Building Bright Futures apprenticeship program: Ms. Headen reported that Governor Cooper held a press conference on May 14 at the Little People Preschool in Raleigh to announce the Building Bright Futures (BBF) program to supplement apprenticeships for early childhood education (ECE). The program will be state funded through the North Carolina Business Committee for Education (NCBCE). Ms. Headen remarked the pipeline for ECE is a significant issue locally, state-wide and nationally and summarized the efforts WCSS has made over the last year to address local teacher shortage and develop an ECE pipeline through the WakeWorks apprenticeship program in partnership with Wake County, Wake Tech and Wake County Public School System (WCPSS). She reported 14 child care providers have signed up so far to participate as employers in the apprenticeship program which will begin with students from WCPSS entering pre-apprenticeships during the summer of 2023 and expand in the fall to include adults.
- Wake County budget public hearing: Ms. Headen reported on a large contingent of staff, providers, teachers and parents attending the Wake County Board of Commissioners' budget public hearing at the Wake Commons Building on May 15 in support of the proposed budget which includes continued funding for NC Pre-K and increased funding for Wake ThreeSchool. Two directors and a teacher from Method Development Center and Wanda's Little Hands as well as two parents spoke before the county commissioners to attest to the positive impact of these two programs. WCSS also coordinated submission of written comments to the Board of Commissioners. Ms. Headen shared appreciation expressed by Commissioner Calabria for the WCSS contingent's attendance at the public hearing.
- Leandro Day press conference: Ms. Headen reported on attending a press conference on May 16 led by Representative Julie von Haefen and Senator Rachel Hunt in support of reaction to the release of the NC Senate's budget released the evening of May 15. Ms. Headen remarked that despite overwhelming bipartisan support for greater investment by the state in early childhood, the amount of funding allocated for public education and early childhood does not meet pay needs sufficient for teacher retention and recruitment, but increases funding for private school vouchers, giving families with the least need greater access to public funding for private education.
- Healthy Minds program bill: Ms. Headen reminded committee members of her announcement at the March Executive Committee meeting of WCSS's work with Representative Cynthia Ball to sponsor a bill for a pilot program of mental health support for parents of young children using community health workers in Wake County. She said the bill remains a possibility and further updates will be provided as they become available.

With no further business to discuss, Leslie Ann Jackson moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:22 AM. Katherine Williams seconded the motion. Calling for a vote and hearing no objections, the motion carried. (05-23-71)

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8/29/2023 | 5:03 PM EDT

Date