

**Wake County Smart Start
NC Pre-K Committee Meeting
February 28, 2024**

A meeting of the Wake County Smart Start (WCSS) NC Pre-K Committee was held on Wednesday, February 28, 2024 with Chair Katherine Williams presiding. The meeting was held at the North Carolina State University Club, Hillsborough St., Raleigh, NC.

Committee members present: Nikia Coates, Susan Evans, Matt Glova, Sherry Heuser, Mickey Holt, Ronetta Pearsall, Joe White and Katherine Williams

Committee members absent: Christine Alvarado, Dawn Dawson, Heather Drennan, Matt Ellinwood, Leslie Ann Jackson, Tonya Kangkolo, Catherine Lassiter, Amelia Muse, Antonia Pedroza, Colleen Roache, Tonya Venable and Stacey Wilson-Norman

Staff members present: Alex Livas-Dlott, Bryce McClamroch, Carol Orji, Gayle E. Headen, Emily Diaz, Jennifer MacPherson, Lynn Policastro, Nancy Peck, Sasha Gomez and Taylor Young

Call to Order/Announcements

At 8:39 am, Chair Katherine Williams, 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.

Sherry Heuser moved to adopt the agenda. Susan Evans seconded the motion. Calling for a vote and with none opposed, the vote was unanimous. (2-24-52)

NC Pre-K Committee members reviewed minutes from previous meeting. Sherry Heuser moved to adopt the minutes from the NC Pre-K Committee meeting on December 6, 2023. Nikia Coates seconded the motion. Calling for a vote and hearing no objection, the motion carried. (2-24-53)

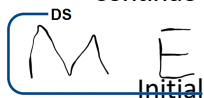
Executive Director's Report

Executive Director, Gayle E. Headen introduced a staff recommendation to formally approve WCSS as the contract agency for the NC Pre-K program for the upcoming school year as required by NC Pre-K Program Requirements and Guidance. She reaffirmed the NC Pre-K Committee is the decision-making body for the local NC Pre-K Program. Susan Evans made a motion to approve Wake County Smart Start as the contracting agency for the NC Pre-K program for the 24-25SY. Mickey Holt seconded the motion. Calling for a vote, with an abstention by Ronetta Pearsall, the vote to approve was unanimous (2-24-54)

Ms. Headen reported that as of January 31, 2024, site visits were made by NC Pre-K Specialist, Sabrina McKennies to each Wake NC Pre-K program site/classroom in compliance with NC Pre-K Program Requirements. She drew attention to a chart on Attachment C.1 outlining the concerns that were identified at a handful of sites and the follow-up action that has been undertaken for these concerns to be resolved.

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

- SY2023-24 enrollment: total enrollment is 1472, representing 96% of current capacity across all settings and just above the state average.
 - The only vacancies in enrollment are in Head Start which continues to be challenged by teacher shortages. Progress is being made but capacity issues may continue for Head Start into the next school year.
- SY2024-25 applications: Currently 1200 applications have been received, an amount on pace with the same period last year and more than double than in previous years.
- Federal funding for child care: The North Carolina General Assembly has authorized the Division of Child Development and Early Education (DCDEE) to expend remaining federal ARPA supplemental funds to continue compensation grants to child care programs through June 2024.


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Date

- Site Selection:

- Currently there are 919 slots allocated to private sites. Full private slot allocation is 999, leaving 80 slots un-allocated for upcoming school year. The expectation is to return to 999 slots, to achieve this will require at least 5 additional sites.
- Sixteen complete applications were received by the deadline and are being reviewed by members of the NC Pre-K Site Selection Sub-Committee in accordance with the DCDEE procedure using a standardized rubric.
 - WCSS is following up with sites who failed to submit complete applications and has also reached out to sites that struggled last year to offer Technical Assistance.
 - The Sub-Committee is still working to obtain needed information from sites to make an informed decision and will be ready to make a recommendation at the next NC Pre-K Committee meeting on April 24, 2024.
 - The slot allocation recommendation is contingent upon the approved NC Pre-K sites and match to geographic need.

With no further agenda items, Matt Glova moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:59 am. Ronetta Pearsall seconded the motion. Calling for a vote and hearing no objections, the motion passed. (2-24-55)

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Secretary

4/26/2024 | 6:42 PM EDT

Date