

NC Pre-Kindergarten/Early Education Committee

Wednesday, February 20, 2019

10:00 am

The NC Pre-Kindergarten/Early Education Committee met on Wednesday February 20, 2019.

Committee Members Present: Ann Benfield, Lashonda Houston, Lora Lipe, Samelia Jones, Danielle Mauldin, Trina Wenzel, Kimberly Huchins, QuWayna Thompson, Waynett Taylor

Staff Members Present: Patricia Sehorn, Lyne Goode

Guest Present: Mark Eashardt, Valerie Belk, Teresa Aldridge, Heather Beal for Carmen Brown , Jessica Helms

Ann Benfield opened the meeting and asked everyone to go around and introduce themselves.

Action Items

Minutes – Ann presented the minutes for the January 16, 2019 meeting. Quwanyana moved to accept the minutes and Lashonda second the motion, all were in favor.

Information Only-

The Partnership was informed that after 20 years in the business, Elite CDC would be closing its doors on February 28th, 2019. They will be having an auction on March 8, at noon, on Oakdale Ave to clear out their building. The Sunshine House has the capacity to house all 18 slots. With the approval of the committee Co-Chairs, these 18 slots will be moved to The Sunshine House effective March 1. The current teacher has been hired by Sunshine House and will move with the children. All 18 families have confirmed they accept the transfer. Thank you Kimberly and Jessica for welcoming them.

Ann shared that a bill was presented to The General Assembly to give \$20 million dollars to Smart Start Programs. If you have any contacts, please share the need for this Bill to be passed.

She also reminded the committee, that all training opportunities are linked to our website to make it easier to sign up for them. Please reach out if there are any you would like to see offered.

Ann is working on a five-year strategic plan, with a main focus being on the quality of teachers employed by sites.

Updates:

NC-Pre-K – Trisha shared that the site monitoring was complete, and there are four active Action Plans in place. A detailed report will be given to the committee in May.

Trisha and Lashonda are actively involved with helping centers with their transition planning.

Trisha and Lyne attended the NC Pre-K winter meeting in Greensboro yesterday, and learned that:

After June 30th 2019, no lateral entry licenses will be granted.

The Transition to Kindergarten Pilot plan will eventually be mandatory for all NC Pre-K classrooms. Trisha is asking all teachers to fill out the Pre-School to K transition form, in an effort to familiarize themselves with it.

The Public Schools Waiver for Background checks will expire in September of 2019. All sites will be required to go through DCDEE to conduct their Background Checks, and could suffer a licensing violation after January 1, 2020 if they don't comply.

Application and Outreach- Lyne stated that the Partnership opened the NC Pre-K 2019-2020 application process on January 4th.

As of February 20, 2019:

There have been 97 appointments set up for NC Pre-K applications

42 applications were completed

19 no shows

18 parents called and cancelled appointments

10 families were over income

8 families came without the required paperwork and had to re-schedule

The question was asked if sites could offer an open house to entice new families. Yes, but remember your site privacy rules, and remind the parents that a visit does not constitute a slot, or spot.

Samelia asked how many applications we would require to fill slots for the 2019-2020 school year. Ann estimated over 400.

Sites were encouraged to share what they were doing for outreach, there was no response.

Trisha reminded the committee that it was the sites responsibility to recruit for their sites, and they needed to get out in the community to advertise. Unfortunately, the result could be the loss of spots, because there were not families in their area applying.

Valerie offered staff to help with screening.

Smart Start Scholarship Program- Ann shared that we are still placing families, and would be doing a count to access if we have the availability of more slots to fill.

DHS Subsidy- Lora reported that they are still working through their waiting list. Notices for 45 children have gone out for the March 4th deadline, and they are awaiting responses. They have served 176 children in the past 3 months, 219 families are on the list, 334 children.

They received news that with their budget allocations, they will be able to maintain slots for next year.

Lora reminded providers that the provider agreement (not in NC Fast) is due, please send it in.

Finally, she shared that Belinda will be retiring after 20 years of service on March 14, 2019. Please send her your well wishes as they send her off in celebration of all she has done in her career.

Family Update: Lashonda shared that she and Trisha are working with sites helping them plan their transition plans. Please reach out to her if you have families in need.

Waynett was asked to give an update on how the students were progressing through their education at Rowan Community College. She said steady, but slow. However, beginning in the fall, a fast track semester program will be in place allowing students to graduate in a year and a half, instead of two years.

She said the students were interested in working while they go to school for experience.

Providers asked her to send students their way, as they could use them as substitutes at their sites.

Our next meeting will be at 10:00 on March 20, (place to be determined).

With no other agency reports the meeting was adjourned at 10:48