



Executive Committee Meeting
Tuesday, January 23, 2024
Zoom Meeting – 8:00 a.m.

The Executive Committee of the Cabarrus County Partnership for Children met at their scheduled Zoom meeting on Tuesday, January 23, 2024 at 8:00 a.m. by Zoom Meeting. These members were present: Beth Street, Gil Small, Danielle Mauldin, and Marcella Beam. Beth Street led the meeting. Beth welcomed everyone. Staff: Ann Benfield, Ariel Ayers, Lauren Westin and Patricia Sehorn were present. Quorum was established.

Beth Street presented the minutes of the May 23, 2023 executive committee meeting and the committee reviewed. Gil Small moved to approve the minutes as presented, and Danielle Mauldin seconded and all were in favor.

Ann Benfield shared that the Cabarrus County Partnership for Children received an email from DCDEE-NCPK in late December about a plan and budget for the \$2 million state budget appropriation. She also shared she had been meeting with county & city governments and other community partners to make a list of programs the community needed to help the child care industry and young children. This is the list of what she shared:

1. Conscious Discipline **The methodology of Conscious Discipline is based in scientific and developmental research. It is recognized by the SAMHSA's** National Registry of Evidence-Based Programs and Practices (NREPP) Conscious Discipline creates a compassionate culture and facilitates an intentional shift in adult understanding of behavior via the Conscious Discipline Bran State Model. It then provides specific brain-friendly, research-backed strategies for responding to **each child's individual needs with wisdom**. This highly effective approach is proven to increase self-regulation, sense of safety, connection, empathy, and intrinsic motivation in both children and adults.

Conscious Discipline requires both a mindset shift and skill set change in adults. This transformational process typically requires a minimum of three years to complete to fidelity for most schools and agencies. Adults who have experienced trauma in early childhood may take longer to achieve fidelity. Transformational change is different from traditional change and requires a different process to be successful. This suggested plan is intended to help achieve the necessary change in three years while ensuring sustainability and fidelity.

Objective 1: Expose all teachers to Conscious Discipline training. You may elect to include all staff, especially family engagement staff in the training.

Objective 2: Create effective Conscious Discipline Action Teams (COAT) with in-depth skills and knowledge about Conscious Discipline: how to roll out the implementation, overcome resistance, and coach to fidelity.

Objective 3: Create 3-4 classrooms or sites that implement Conscious Discipline to fidelity. These classrooms or sites will be essential in years two and three to continue fidelity growth of Conscious Discipline.

2. Grants for Child Care Programs in Cabarrus County The Cabarrus County Partnership for Children (CCPC) is dedicated to halting the loss of qualified and experienced early childhood educators and building child care capacity in the community. CCPC wishes to grant funds to stabilize the early childhood providers and reverse the trend of diminishing capacity in child care over the next two years. CCPC understands that an approach to these issues must happen across multiple models of child care all at once. Through partnerships with existing child care programs and potential new child care program operators, both in out-of-home and in-home child care settings, CCPC will issue grants to providers to create a pathway to increase capacity and quality in early child care in Cabarrus County.

3. Cabarrus Teacher On-Call - Child Care Substitute Service Child Care Services: **will recruit, train, and equip a “job ready” pool of qualified substitute teachers** for partnering child care centers in Cabarrus County, NC

We will help child care centers stay fully staffed – covering employee vacations, doctor appointments, and sick leaves.

We will help early childhood educators find a great job in vetted, professional settings, while earning fair wages and state-recognized credentials. We also will help them find a permanent position with our child care partners.

For the Substitute: Flexible hours or part time employment makes working easier. Potential substitute will choose the child care programs and areas of the county where they want to work. Jobs are announced via text messages and they can choose to accept. Before someone accepts any assignments at a center, the recruiter speaks to the director about their expectations, and the substitute can observe the classrooms in a center for a short while before having to jump into an assignment. Pay is based on education and experience. Hours may vary from week to week. No minimum hours are guaranteed.

4. Tri Share in Cabarrus County Tri-Share is a public/private partnership that shares the cost of child care equally between employers, eligible employees, and CCPC.

Tri-Share Goals

- ✓ Make high-quality child care affordable and accessible for working families.
- ✓ Help employers retain and attract employees.
- ✓ Help stabilize the child care businesses.

Tri-Share Components

- ✓ CCPC will work with local municipalities and local businesses to help with the cost of child care for their employees by contributing 1/3 the cost of child care, while the employee contributes 1/3 the cost of care and CCPC contributes 1/3 the cost of child care for that employee.

- ✓ CCPC will work with the employer & qualifying families that are:
 - Employed by a participating local government or business.
 - Have a household income between 185% and 300% of the federal poverty level.
 - Otherwise be ineligible for other subsidized child care.

CPCC Responsibilities

- ✓ Ensuring payment for the cost of child care is divided equally between an employer, an eligible employee, and the CCPC.

- ✓ Coordinating payments between employers, families, and CCPC are made to the participating child care facility.
 - ✓ Recruiting participating employers and child care facilities.
 - ✓ Verifying that participating child care providers are licensed.
5. Expanding the WAGE\$ Program in Cabarrus County The Child Care WAGE\$® Project is a statewide education-based salary supplement initiative that provides financial awards to eligible teachers, directors, and family child care providers for each six-month commitment period that the provider stays in the same early care and education program. **We want to increase eligible provider's incentive to Tier III and also pull participants off the waitlist. Incentive amounts** will depend on their level of education. We are currently at Tier II with Smart Start funding and have a waitlist.

WAGE\$ can only be paid with Smart Start funds, they are not set up to accept other types of funding. We will need to decrease some of our current Smart Start funded activities in order to increase WAGE\$. We are proposing to use these new funds for the following activities:

- Public Education and Awareness: This activity will provide outreach and information to the community, serving as the Catalyst, Conduit and Convener, to increase awareness and knowledge of early childhood issues, identify needs of children ages 0 to 5 years and their families or caregivers, improve child well-being and advance the collective impact in the community. This activity will help strengthen leadership and relationships that will improve system of care services by serving on local and state committees. The activity will implement new messaging of the Partnership's mission and vision, specific services that may be provided, special events, editorials on specific issues, and community outreach to the business and faith community. The activity is also responsible for all public relations for the Partnership which may include: outreach materials, the production of news releases to local print and electronic media, photography of events, website maintenance, and a periodic newsletter.
 - Child Care Health Consultants: Child care health consultant activity provides training, on-site assistance and health/safety materials to 90+ child care providers to improve the health and safety of children and prevent the spread of communicable disease. Service provided by registered nurses with a degree in nursing.
6. Increasing NC Pre-K Smart Start Support Financial assistance will be paid on direct per child basis for the purpose of enhancing the NC Pre-K rate for the children enrolled in and being served through NC Pre-K. For FY23-24 there were not enough Smart Start funds in order to provide the Smart State rate enhancement to all public school NC Pre K slots. We are proposing to provide the rate enhancement for all public school NC Pre K slots. We will need to decrease some of our current Smart Start funded activities in order to increase NC Pre-K Smart Start Support.
- Public Education and Awareness: This activity will provide outreach and information to the community, serving as the Catalyst, Conduit and Convener, to increase awareness and knowledge of early childhood issues, identify needs of children ages 0 to 5 years and their families or caregivers, improve child well-being and advance the collective impact in the community. This activity will help strengthen leadership and relationships that will improve system of care services by serving on local and state committees. The activity will implement new messaging of the Partnership's mission and vision, specific services that may be provided, special events, editorials on specific issues, and community outreach to the business and faith community. The activity is also responsible for all public relations for the Partnership which may include: outreach materials, the production of news releases to local print and electronic media, photography of events, website maintenance, and a periodic newsletter.

- Child Care Health Consultants: Child care health consultant activity provides training, on-site assistance and health/safety materials to 90+ child care providers to improve the health and safety of children and prevent the spread of communicable disease. Service provided by registered nurses with a degree in nursing.
7. Bilingual dental patient navigator Establishes relationships and referral pathways with agencies currently providing services to children pre-kindergarten (libraries, in-home daycares, pediatrician offices, church daycares, church nurseries, etc.). At a pre-arranged date, a public health dental hygienist provides oral health **education for the agency's children and parents, free oral health supplies, and free screenings on site.** The dental patient navigator follows up with every patient without a dental home to schedule appointments for treatment and establish their dental home. Funds would cover salary and fringe, professional development, materials and supplies, local travel to sites and indirect costs.
 8. Reduce Exposure to Chemical Contaminants Reduce unknown exposure of pregnant women or pre-kindergarten children to inorganic chemical contaminants known to affect fetal/infant development. Higher levels of naturally-occurring inorganic chemicals such as arsenic and manganese have been found in well water in certain census tracts in Cabarrus County. Exposure to arsenic, for example, is associated with cardiovascular disease, developmental toxicity, neurotoxicity, and diabetes. High concentrations of total arsenic in pregnancy have been consistently associated with adverse maternal-child health outcomes including infant mortality, low birth. (Test kits and administrative cost environmental health. Funds would cover test kits, local travel, salary and fringe, indirect costs.
 9. Parent As Teachers (PAT) PAT is a voluntary early childhood development home visiting program offering research-based curricula that help families raise children to be healthy, safe, and ready to learn in school.
 10. Increase Preschool Capacity for Cabarrus County Increase capacity for preschool slots in Cabarrus County. For the 23-24 school year there is currently a waitlist of 115 children for the NCPK program. (\$2,876 per slot for the remaining 4 months of this school year & \$7,190 per slot for an entire school year)

Proposed Allocation of State Directed Grant

Tri-Share	\$900,000
Increase WAGES	\$248,750
Increase Preschool Capacity	\$200,000
Grants for Child Care Programs	\$200,000
Cabarrus Teacher On-Call	\$100,000
Conscious Discipline	\$106,250
CPC Indirect to Implement	\$100,000
PAT	\$50,000
Bilingual Dental Navigator	\$50,000
Reduce Chemical Exposure	\$25,000
Increase NC Pre-K SS Support	\$20,000
Total	\$2,000,000

Each idea/program was discussed and the committee agreed with the funding estimates for all, but understand we may not be able to fund all of them. Most of the programs **will have to be bid out and RFP's will be accepted with the true cost of the programs**. The board can then reallocate the funds and the budget can be revised with the state. Gil Small moved to accept the recommendation of programs and budget with an understanding when we have more information, the funding may need to be reallocated to the programs that will be funded once we know how much they all cost. Danielle Mauldin moved to approve and all programs and estimations.

Updated Cost Allocation Plan

Ariel Ayers **also submitted a new Cost Allocation Plan with changes to the allocation to salaries and benefit for Tu'Nicquia Bradley & Starla Hatley**. The new contract with Safe Kids requires Starla Hatley **to be employed 50% of her time in Safe Kids, so we have adjusted her hours and responsibilities**. **Tu'Nicquia Bradley has been** providing outreach for Safe Kids, Public Education and Awareness and Dolly Parton Imagination Library, so we have adjusted the cost allocation plan.

Beth Street moved to approve the revision Cost Allocation Plan and Danielle Mauldin seconded and all were in favor.

Allocation of Salaries & Benefits:

Staff FTE Position Percentages

Ann Benfield 1.00 Executive Director 80% SS Admin; 10% Program Management; 5% Public Education; 5% The SUN Project

Ariel Ayers 0.75 Finance Manager 90% SS Admin; 5% The SUN Project; 5% NCPK Admin

Lauren Westin 1.00 Program Manager 75% PM; 10% DPIL; 5% Public Ed; 5% SS Admin; 5% The SUN Project

Patricia Sehorn 0.80 NCPK Prog Man 100% NCPK Admin

Tu'Nicquia Bradley 1.00 NCPK Coordinator 85% NCPK Admin; 5% SK; 5% DPIL; 5% Public Ed

Lissy Rios 0.80 Admin Assistant 80% NCPK Admin; 20% SS Admin

Debra Pless 1.00 CCHC 100% CCHC

Melissa Jones 1.00 CCHC 60% Cabarrus CCHC; 40% Stanly CCHC

Starla Hatley 1.00 SS Programs 50% Safe Kids; 20% ABCD; 20% Public Ed; 10% DPIL Total 8.35

FY 23-24 Reallocation of Smart Start Funds

Ariel Ayers then submitted a recommendation for reallocation of Smart Start funds to make sure all carry forward funds are in contact by February 15, 2024 as required by NCPC. Ariel explained the recommendation to reduce Smart Start funding for Child Care Health Consultants and Public Education & Awareness so that we can increase Smart Start funding for WAGE\$ and NC Pre-K Support based on the feedback received from the community as far as how to use the additional \$2 million. These activities can only be paid through Smart Start and not directly with the \$2 million. Ariel also explained that Safe Kids, DPIL Program Management are increasing due to increased staff time as noted in the updated cost allocation plan and also due to the initial Smart Start allocation reducing all **budgets**. **DSP's were** asked to submit updated budget projections and their budget needs are reflected in the reallocation. These are the recommendations that were presented:

Activity	Current FY23-24 Budget	Requested Allocation Adjust.	Proposed Allocation Adjust.	Proposed FY23-24 Reallocation	Comments
FY23-24 Smart Start Services Funds	2,235,263.00			2,263,419	Includes Carryforward
SUBSIDY					
Subsidy	595,000			595,000	
NC Pre-K Program	271,700	35,150	35,150	306,850	Change in TANF vs non TANF & increase to all public school slo
TOTAL SUBSIDY	866,700			901,850	Required Subsidy 41.3% = \$877,600.63
ADDITIONAL CHILD CARE RELATED					
Subsidy Administration	59,500			59,500	
NC Pre-K Non TANF	64,600	-15,150	-15,150	49,450	Change in TANF vs non TANF & increase to all public school slo
Child Care Health Consultants	184,441	-160,000	-160,000	24,441	Move to new funding in order to increase WAGE\$/SS NCPK
WAGE\$	187,575	142,425	142,425	330,000	Move to Tier 3 & take off waitlist
Early Education Liaison	214,077	30,689	30,689	244,766	Additional funding requested by DSP
Inclusive Childcare	254,717	1,137	1,137	255,854	Additional funding requested by DSP
Social Emotional Intervention	141,399	-7,680	-7,680	133,719	Funding reduction requested by DSP
TOTAL ADDITIONAL CHILD CARE RELATED	1,106,309			1,097,730	
TOTAL SUBSIDY & ADD'L CHILD CARE RELATED	1,973,009			1,999,580	Required Subsidy & Additional Child Care Related 70% = \$1,487,458.70
FAMILY, HEALTH AND OTHER PROGRAMS					
ABCD	59,787	-25,000	-25,000	34,787	Decreased staff time spent in activity & change to cost alloc pla
DPIL	17,516	1,585	1,585	19,101	Increased staff time & cost alloc plan/initial budget short
Emergency Dental	25,549			25,549	
Safe Kids	20,059	32,000	32,000	52,059	Increased staff time & cost alloc plan/initial budget short
Program Management/Evaluation	93,298	23,000	23,000	116,298	Increased staff time & cost alloc plan/initial budget short
Public Education & Outreach	44,768	-30,000	-30,000	14,768	Move to new funding in order to increase WAGE\$/SS NCPK
SUN Project	1,277			1,277	
	2,235,263			2,263,419	
UNALLOCATED SERVICES	0			0	
ADMINISTRATION	85			233,167	
UNALLOCATED ADMIN	0			0	

After a discussion of each line, the committee decide to vote on all the programs that did have conflicted board members. So Gil Small move to approve these new funding amounts, Beth Street second and all were in favor. Danielle Mauldin abstained.

	Proposed Adjustment
NC PreK	\$35,150
NC PreK (non TANF)	-\$15,150
Child Care Health Consultant	-\$160,000
WAGE\$	\$142,425
Early Education Liaison	\$30,689
Inclusive Child Care	\$1,137

Danielle Mauldin move to approve these new funding amounts, Gil Small seconded and all were in favor.

Social Emotional Intervention	-7,680
ABCD	-\$25,000
DPIL	\$1,585
Safe Kids	\$32,000
Program Management/Evaluation	\$23,000
Public Education/Awareness	-\$30,000

With this new Smart Start allocation, we have all Smart Start funding in contract with the totals:

\$2,235,263 in services

\$221,885 in administration

Ann Benfield provided an update on the SUN Project:

She said that the SUDA Institute has opened and we are working to spend down on the SUN State Appropriation by May 31, 2024 and they will operate their system work through the SUDA Institute and the Partnership will keep them in our Smart Start Plan, but will not be funding unless request would be approved by the board.

We wish them much luck and success in the future. We will give you monthly financial report until all the State Appropriation is spent. Thank you so much for allowing us to build this amazing program for our county and also in Stanly and Rowan!

Updates from Committees:

Governance Committee – Has not met

Development Committee – Has not met

Program Oversight Committee – Update of the November 21, 2023 meeting.

The next Board Meeting is February 27, 2024 in Partnership Conference Room at 1:00 pm. The meeting will also be available on Zoom.

The next Executive committee meeting will be Tuesday, March 26, 2024 on Zoom at 8:00 am.

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned 9:12 am.

Respectfully submitted,

Ann Benfield