

## NC Pre-Kindergarten/Early Education Committee

Tuesday, July, 17, 2019

10:05 am

The NC Pre-Kindergarten/Early Education Committee met on July, 17, 2019.

**Committee Members Present:** Ann Benfield, Lashonda Houston, Samelia Jones, Lora Lipe, Waynett Taylor, Trina Wenzel, Danielle Mauldin, Sue Ribich, Kimberly Hutchins, Annie Parker, QuWanya Thompson, Mark Eberhardt,

**Staff Members Present:** Patricia Sehorn, Ariel Ayers and Lyne Goode

**Guest Present:** *Aurora Swain, Valerie Belk, Jessica Helms*

Ann Benfield opened the meeting and asked everyone to go around and introduce themselves. Ann also shared that Jamie Clark is retiring at the end of August to be a full time mom.

### Action Items

**Minutes** – Ann presented the minutes for the June 11, 2019 meeting. Samelia moved to accept the minutes and Lora seconded the motion, all were in favor.

**Slot Allocation/NC Pre-K Budget Proposals** Patricia shared with the group that we were awarded \$46,408.00 in expansion money. While we are thankful for the funds, it is not enough money to award a full classroom of slots. We had hoped the Cabarrus Head Start program would be up and running so we could support them with some dual slots. However, that will not be able to happen this school year. Handouts for 2 proposals were given out and explained to all. After the first round of screening and placements, most all of the slots allocated in June have been filled. Overall, applications have been down the waitlist is below normal. We currently have enough apps to consider awarding Woodrow Wilson 22 more slots, putting them at 40. That is down 5 slots from last year. With the remaining funds and based on the completed applications we have, we could possibly add a few more slots to Cabarrus Bilingual, though it would not be enough to support a full class. Discussion was had regarding current rates. Both Annie and Trina expressed their concerns about rate increases, and that it becomes financially draining. Cabarrus County Schools NCPK classrooms finished the year in the red. There was also a concern that it is hard to obtain and keep NC Pre-K sites because it does not benefit the sites financially. Patricia asked Lora about the current market rates in Cabarrus County and she said it is \$979 for a 5 Star Center. The partnership expressed its eagerness to choose an option that is fair to all, and reminded the committee that any money not spent to fill slots, has to be given back to the state at the end of each year.

Ann suggested that everyone attending the meeting reach out to our state legislature reps and share their concerns.

Patricia explained to the group that a rate increase would be dependent on receiving a rate exception from DCDEE. The Partnership can request the rate exception, but we need a backup plan if it is not approved.

Mark motioned to approve option #2 to award an additional 22 slots to Woodrow Wilson and use the remaining funds to give a \$20 slot rate increase across the board to support all sites. Waynett second the motion. All non-conflicted members voted in favor, Lora Lipe, Samelia Jones, Mark Eberhardt, Waynett Taylor and, Sue Ribich.

## **Information Only**

**Cabarrus Head Start** – Ann shared that Save the Children Alliance is the new Head Start grantee for Cabarrus County. This will officially be announced by the director of Head Start in July. The address will be 310 Kerr Street, and they are renovating the space. The projected start date is the day after Labor Day, and Arvelis Byrd is The Deputy Director currently on site. On August 1<sup>st</sup>, there is going to be a huge community event to kick start the program, and Ann will update us with times as soon as they are received.

**NC Pre-K Update-** Patricia passed out a handout outlining the current slot placements. With just a few openings, she anticipates all slots will be filled during our 2<sup>nd</sup> round of placements the last week of July. The next screening event is tomorrow at RCCC Research campus. Patricia thanked Cabarrus County Schools for the success of the June screening event and thanked Waynett for partnering on tomorrows screening event. She also shared that she attended a meeting about a universal application process. A universal application process would make it easier for parents as there would only be 1 application to apply for all programs. This will be explored more this coming year.

**Outreach-** Lyne shared that she has attended several Village Park outdoor concerts, and the Harrisburg July 4<sup>th</sup> Parade to pass out NC Pre-K information. She has also become a regular at the Libraries for story hour.

**DHS Subsidy-** Lora stated that the Smart Start Conversion Process is complete, and 35 children were given vouchers (5 were from DHS waiting list).

They are still trying to clean up their waiting list as there are 300 families on it with 469 children.

They have over spent this year and have asked for funds back from the state.

Lora also shared that some centers still have not completed #33 and #34 forms. Both forms are due to continue receiving payment. A December deadline has been set, and any non-compliance will result in the site becoming inactive.

**Family Update:** Lashonda didn't have any updates at this time.

### **Other Information:**

Ann shared that she finally had the opportunity to meet with Cabarrus County judges to discuss childhood trauma. They have asked her to speak to The Barr Association to share the same information.

RCCC has been awarded a contract to begin a teacher liaison and incentive program.

Ann also shared the launch of the WHALE (we have a little emergency) car seat information program, and will have stickers and information cards for everyone soon.

QuWanya announced that she was the new director of Little Learners.

Trina and Danielle expressed concerns about their hardships finding First aid and CPR training classes for staff. They are going to be penalized by licensing consultants, and need help. RCCC offered to help set some trainers up for the sites, and Ann will post a training calendar on CPFC's website.

With no other agency reports the meeting was adjourned at 11:07

Respectfully Submitted by Lyne Goode

**Next NCPK Early Education Meeting**

**Wednesday, September 18, 10:00**

**DHS Auditorium**