



Executive Committee – September 23, 2025

Zoom Meeting – 8:00 a.m.

The Executive Committee of the Cabarrus County Partnership for Children met at their regularly scheduled Executive Committee meeting on Tuesday, September 23, 2025, at 8:00 a.m. by Zoom Meeting. These members were present: Pam Smith, Gil Small, Lora Lipe & Aalece Pugh. Staff: Ann Benfield, Lauren Westin and Ariel Ayers were present. **Quorum was established.**

Minutes for May 27, 2025 – There was no meeting in July, because we did not have business to report

Pam Smith reviewed the minutes of May 27, 2025, executive committee meeting and Gil Small moved to accept the minutes as presented and Lora Lipe seconded the motion, and all were in favor.

Financial Reports

Ariel Ayers presented the financial reports and discussed the Smart Start Expenditure Report and stated since the change in payroll to Workday at Atrium Health we were unable to get the invoices to pay the hospital for payroll. We are working to get the invoices and hoping to get them paid by the end of September. She also shared and reviewed the Other Funds Report, the NCPK Expenditures and the State Directed Grant Funds Report.

Review of Changes to the Contract Activity Description for P.U.R.E. Excellence

Lauren discussed the needed changes to the P.U.R.E. Excellence Training and Technical Assistance Program. Lauren stated that the needs in the early childhood classrooms have changed, and the directors are asking for other training and assistance. The change would include adding: another program to their current contract – TA: Other Support to ECE: TA: Other Supports to ECE provides limited, short-term, targeted TA focused on the resolution of a specific issue. Examples include but are not limited to social-emotional learning support, inclusive classroom practices, health and safety protocols, family engagement strategies, and staff wellness. Note: To be selected only when another TA Solution is assigned to the activity. TA-Consultation and Coaching provide targeted and customized support for ECE professionals that help them to develop or strengthen their processes, knowledge, and/or implementation, while building relationships with professionals in the field. Consultation specifically facilitates the assessment and resolution of an issue-specific concern—a program-/organizational-, staff-, or child-/family-related issue. Coaching is designed to build capacity for specific professional dispositions, skills, and behaviors and is focused on goal setting and achievement for an individual or group.

This addition to their contract would not allow for an increase in funding, but it would be very helpful in tracking the work they are doing in the community to meet the needs of our early childhood professionals. If there are any additional changes to this program it will go before Program Oversight before coming to the board of directors.

After a discussion, Lora Lipe moved to recommend the change and Gil Small seconded, and all were in favor.

FY 25-28 Strategic Plan Update

Ann Benfield shared at the last board meeting in August we did not have a quorum so she is very hopeful that at the October meeting we will be able to review the FY 25 – 28 Strategic Plan for approval.

Executive Director (ED) Search Committee Update

Ariel Ayers and Gil Small gave an update on the ED search committee. The committee has selected a contractor to complete the job search: Sherry Heuser is the contractor that will be working with the Search Committee. They are hoping to post the position by the first of October so they will be on track with the selection. We are currently working on the contract. Sherri has experience with Smart Start and connections and has been willing to provide accommodation for us. We did receive three proposals, so we meet the bidding requirements for this contract. The ED search committee will make recommendations for the full board of directors, and the board of directors will select the new executive director.

Cabarrus Share Grant and other State Funded Programs

Ann Benfield reported that all our other State Directed Grant Programs are doing well and Ariel reported we should spend all the funding by the June 30, 2026.

Early Childhood Endowment to be named at the Greater Cabarrus Foundation

Ann Benfield reported she has been working with the Greater Cabarrus Foundation to form an Endowment for Early Childhood in Cabarrus County that will be named in her honor and should be announced soon. They are in the process of setting up the funding and then will start to raise funding for the endowment. Four percent of the funds will be used annually to assist with the needs of early childhood in Cabarrus County.

NC Episcopal Dioceses Grant Program: <https://share.google/k6aaRqNyA6JO1eJKU>

Gil Small reported that he learned about a grant program with the Episcopal Church and wanted us to take advantage of the funding next year. Ann has reviewed and will watch for the release of funding application in 2026.

Next Board Meeting will be Tuesday, October 28th at the office from 1:00 – 2:00 pm or on Zoom. Lunch will be provided.

Next Executive Committee Meeting will be January 27, 2025 at 8:00 am on Zoom.

With no further business the meeting was adjourned at 8:45 am.

Respectfully submitted, Ann Benfield Executive Director