



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
DIVISION OF CHILD DEVELOPMENT AND EARLY EDUCATION

ROY COOPER
GOVERNOR

MANDY COHEN, MD, MPH
SECRETARY

ANNA CARTER
DIRECTOR

NC PRE-K STATE ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING

March 22, 2018

10:00am-1:00pm

NC Partnership for Children

Committee Member Attendees: Stacey Bailey (phone), Pam Dowdy, Zac Everhart, Renee' Harrell, Kelley Huff, Jessica Lowery, Karen McKnight, Perry Melton, Elizabeth Mitchell, Sharon Palsha (phone), Michele Rivest, Donna White (Diane Umstead), Henrietta Zalkind

Committee Members Absent: Julie Babb, Lorie Barnes, Angela Beacham, Smokie Brawley, Victoria Byrd, Shari Funkhouser, Carla Garrett, Kristen Guillory, Vivian James, Frances Mercer, Anna Mercer-McLean, John Pruette, Dana Ramsey, Patsy Reavis, Susan Robinson, Janet Singerman, Vance Thomas

DCDEE Staff: Jeanne Barnes, Robert Carr, Jenine Gatewood, Jennifer Griffith, Rachel Kaplan, Fran Minton, Kristi Snuggs, Sharon Spigner, Sharon Stukes,

NCPC: Mike Bailey

Welcome, Introductions & Roll Call

Jenine Gatewood welcomed the committee members and discussed the meeting agenda and the numbered documents that will be reviewed during the meeting. She thanked NCPC for allowing us the use of the space.

Rachel Kaplan conducted roll call.

Consensus on meeting minutes December 14, 2017.

Jessica Lowery asked for clarification of Ms. Zalkind's remark from "The chair should be non-conflicted" to "One of the co-chairs should be non-conflicted".

Ms. Gatewood reviewed the purpose statement.

DCDEE Updates

Staff Changes:

- Deputy Director – Dr. Kristi Snuggs
- Retirement of Cindy Wheeler, Early Education Branch Manager
- Retirement of Janice Fain, Assistant Director for Administration

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NC Pre-K Updates

- 2 new NC Pre-K Program Policy Consultants—Fran Minton & Jennifer Griffith
- NC Pre-K Regional Meetings
- NC Pre-K Monitoring
- NC Pre-K Program/EESLPD Hubs update (Item #6)

Site Visits with Fiscal Research

- Site visits were scheduled due to a great deal of interest in NC Pre-K at the legislature
- One rural and 1 urban site, with one being in a private child care and one being in a public school setting
- Visits occurred in October 2017
- Follow up visits to NC Pre-K classrooms from the fall:
 - Nash/Edgecombe 4/23
 - Guilford County 4/24

Ms. Snuggs asked for suggestions for the site visits, commenting that it has been suggested that children's growth should be documented in some way.

Ms. Zalkind stated that measuring "growth" at that age is not possible in the traditional sense, and Ms. Rivest suggested that to address the "growth" issue, a case study on a couple of children with hands-on illustrations of their changes over the course of the year would be valuable. A parent should also be present to discuss.

Ms. Zalkind and Ms. McKnight discussed the concept of summer programs for NC Pre-K children the address the problem of learning loss over the summer.

Ms. Umstead mentioned the attention towards kindergarten transition activities through the partnerships.

Ms. Huff stated they have 2 NC Pre-K classrooms in Stanly County that for the past three years have offered a Bridge to Kindergarten summer program.

Mr. Melton mentioned that he has observed that the difference between —mentioned that the difference between more and less privileged children is accessing programs during the summer, which act as enhancements to better prepare children for Kindergarten. They provide scholarships to at-risk children with private donations.

Ms. Zalkind suggested putting year-round and aftercare in the CCDF plan.

Ms. Umstead suggested that a work group should form around this issue.

Ms. Lowery stated that she would be interested in participating.

Ms. Zalkind stated that year-round and aftercare would also help with teacher retention, transition, reading programs.

Collaborative Activities

- Birth-3rd Grade Interagency Council <http://buildthefoundation.org/2018/02/birth-3rd-grade-interagency-council-holds-first-meeting/>

Ms. Snuggs mentioned the first two meetings focused on prioritizing the work of the Council.

- Early Childhood Advisory Council <https://governor.nc.gov/es/news/governor-cooper-names-early-childhood-advisory-council-0>

The council has been appointment, but there have been no meetings scheduled.

- Child Well-Being Transformation Council https://www.ncga.state.nc.us/gascripts/Committees/Committees.asp?sAction=ViewCommittee&sActionDetails=Non-Standing_6687

Ms. Zalkind said that this is an important Council to follow because it will impact the Subsidy system.

- Governor's Commission on Access to Sound, Basic Education—Leandro Commission

Ms. Zalkind stated that they have met twice and have another meeting scheduled April 10th. The meetings focused on team building, providing a history of the lawsuit and the charge of this Commission, and the issue of the lack of flexibility with the financing and the disparities that result. The parties have agreed to hire a consultant to work

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with the Commission on a Remedy plan and the Judge has approved the appointment of the consultant. The plan will be focused on the whole child and will include mental health/social emotional needs of children.

- Institute for Emerging Issues – *kidonomics* Conference <https://iei.ncsu.edu/kidoNomiCs/>
Ms. Zalkind stated that the focus of the conference was educating the business community on the importance of focusing on the early childhood model.
She mentioned Jim Hansen, PNC, mentioned NC Pre-K on the Blue Ribbon Commission, stating that there needs to be a shift in strategy from using a wait list to using a population-based strategy of identifying children in need.
Ms. Lowery mentioned attending a session on the Family Forward model that outlined family friendly benefits in private businesses.
- Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) <http://www.dpi.state.nc.us/succeeds/>
Ms. McKnight discussed that DPI and the Early Childhood Foundation held 80 local district ESSA meetings, 5 of which were chosen to provide more intensive technical assistance to continue the work on the ESSA Plan, which is due at the end of June. The plans were encouraged to include transition plans and KEA.
Ms. Zalkind stated that local NC Pre-K Committee would like presentation of the local CCIT plans.
Ms. McKnight indicated that this work should be mentioned to the B-3 Interagency Council.

Other Committees/Coalitions

- Early Childhood Action Plan Committee—just staff
- Think Babies Coalition—NC Early Ed Coalition—0-3 Think Babies campaign; partnership with Dept and EC Foundation—Ms. Rivest—focus on goal of improving public policy. Event on April 4th

Week of the Young Child™

- April 16-20, 2018
- NCDHHS and DCDEE staff will read in NC Pre-K and other early childhood classrooms.

Legislative Update

State Budget called for five legislative reports from DCDEE –

- Division, with DPI, submitted Pre-K to Kindergarten Transition report and State Early Childhood Vision reports in January 2018.
- Division staff is continuing to work with local NCPK programs and schools on implementing a standardized transition process from Pre-K to Kindergarten.

The Committee members asked for a copy of the Pre-K to K Transition Report; Ms. Kaplan emailed the report to the members.

CCDF State Plan

The Division is currently beginning work to plan for and create its 2019-21 Child Care Development Fund (CCDF) State Block Grant Plan.

- Plan will be due to Administration for Children and Families by end of June 2017
- DCDEE is planning to once again hold focus groups in March for comment and input into the plan in:
 - Raleigh - March 12
 - Greenville – March 21
 - Asheville – March 27
 - Charlotte – March 29
- The focus areas include:
 - 9:30 – 10:30 Subsidized Child Care
 - 10:30 – 11:30 Program Standards and Quality Improvement
 - 11:30 – 12:30 Improving the Supply and Quality of Services for Infants and Toddlers
 - 12:30 – 1:30 Professional Development Framework

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- For more information contact: Heather Laffler – Policy/Legislation Liaison at Heather.Laffler@dhhs.nc.gov or Laura Hewitt--CCDF Grants Coordinator at laura.hewitt@dhhs.nc.gov

Ms. Rivest thanked the Division for these opportunities to have these discussions.

2018 General Assembly Short Session

- Short Session begins May 16, 2018
- Department is considering priorities to submit related to changes needed fiscally or from a policy perspective
 - Serving all eligible 4-year old children
 - Subsidy market rates
 - NIEER and SAS NC Pre-K cost data analysis
 - Ms. Kaplan stated that, to Jim Hansen’s point earlier about population based analysis of at-risk children to be served, this analysis starts with the same premise; the number of children that should receive NC Pre-K should be determined by the number of at-risk children in the population.
 - SAS has gathered data from the DCDEE including NC Pre-K budget allocation, expansion, enrollment, and site type at the county level. They are also utilizing the findings from the child care cost study. Data also included the number of child care facilities across the state, including the number that already meet the 4-5 Star requirement.
 - DCDEE conducted a survey of selected counties of NC Pre-K contractors and sites to get a better understanding of the barriers to expanding the program that extend beyond more funding for slots, such as access to facilities, classrooms, qualified teachers and transportation among the most prevalent. These results are also being used to inform the analyses.
 - The findings will be presented at the short session in May.

NC Pre-K Administrative Recommendations

- Unspent Direct Services Funds – FY 2017-18
 - As of March 2018, 7 requests received by DCDEE
 - Deadline May 1st
 - Reverting approximately \$2.5-3 mil
 - Administrative Rate – Restore 8% FY 2018-19
- 2% CCDF Quality Funds – FY 2018-19 (see Item #5)

Ms. Dowdy stated that as the number of children being served increases, the administrative costs increase. It costs more to find the at-risk children, so the children who receive the program are not the most in need.

Ms. Zalkind stated that the resources are not there to serve more children because it necessitates administrative funds to set up sites, hire teachers and provide transportation.

Ms. Snuggs stated that she understands the need for an increase in administrative funds and it is constantly on the table.

Ms. Zalkind stated that running the NC Pre-K model with fidelity is at risk

Ms. Rivest stated that the Coalition has this as a top issue to bring to the legislature; she provided a fact sheet on NC Pre-K expansion and a map illustrating the requests for expansion over the past two years.

Ms. Dowdy brought up the importance of wrap-around care; that more children could be served by NC Pre-K if wrap-around was provided.

Discussion Topic: Governance—Local Advisory Committee

NC Pre-K Program Requirements Section 2: The County/Region NC Pre-K Committee

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Co-chairs: school superintendent (or designee) for the local education agency (LEA) and the board chair (or designee) for the local Smart Start Partnership

- Licensed child care center (4- or 5-star license) representative,
- Head Start program representative,
- Parent of preschool-age child(ren) representative (especially a child who is at-risk),
- Child care resource and referral agency or another child-serving agency representative,
- Department of Social Services or another child care subsidy funding agency representative, and
- Public school exceptional children's preschool program representative.

Local Committee Membership Proposed Recommendations

- Add: Licensed child care center (4- or 5-star license) representative for-profit
- Add: Licensed child care center (4- or 5-star license) representative non-profit

Ms. Zalkind stated that she is against separating out the required representative into two representatives. She stated that it is a hard-enough task already to fill the committee slots, and they need more flexibility, not less. This suggestion would increase the administrative burden of populating the committee.

Ms. Dowdy and Mr. Melton both expressed that having a non-profit and for-profit representative would not offer a difference in perspective.

Ms. Dowdy stated that it is important when the Division receives complaints from the community to gauge whether it is an issue that is structural or unique to that community.

Ms. Gatewood and Ms. Snuggs concluded that the consensus of the committee appears to be to leave the language as it is, requiring a licensed child care representative, but not specifying both a for-profit and a non-profit.

Ms. Gatewood asked if there were any other potential changes suggested by the Committee.

Ms. Dowdy spoke about the problem of having multiple people filling different roles from the same agency because a hierarchy would most likely lead to the lower rungs deferring to the higher-up's opinions.

Ms. Lowery-public school exceptional children's preschool program representative could be optional. Ms. Zalkind didn't want to make it optional

Ms. Zalkind suggested that, because of the difficulty of procuring committee members, the language be changed surround who may act as the contract administrator designee. Currently, the designee for the Smart Start Director must be a board member, but she would like it to be changed to include former board members.

Committee Members' Announcements

Ms. Umstead reminded the group that the Smart Start National Conference will be held on April 30-May 3.

<http://www.event.com/events/2018-national-smart-start-conference/event-summary-c15f7e7ae4f8411fbc8b34e5f0610a43.aspx>

Extended-year, wrap-around and summer programs workgroup.

Ms. Kaplan will be sending out a survey about who would like to participate in a work group surrounding these issues. Sharon Spigner will head up the work group, which will meet in April, with the goal of preparing language to include in the CCDF plan due in June.

Wrap-up

Future Meeting Dates-Rachel will send out dates for September, December and March.

Ms. Snuggs stated that the link to provide comments for the CCDF plan will be sent out to the Committee dcdee.ccdfplan@dhhs.nc.gov. Ms. Kaplan sent the link to the Committee.

12:45 Adjourn

Thank you for your time and commitment to this work

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