

**Wake County SmartStart
Executive Committee Meeting Minutes
March 22, 2017**

A regular meeting of the Wake County SmartStart (WCSS) Executive Committee was convened on Wednesday, March 22, 2017 with WCSS Board Chair, Angie Welsh presiding. The meeting took place in the conference room of the Wake County SmartStart office located at 4901 Waters Edge Drive, Suite 101 in Raleigh, North Carolina.

Executive Committee members present: Arvelis Byrd, Jim Greene, Liz Hamner, Mark Langford, Barbara Morales Burke, Mike Smith and Angie Welsh.

Executive Committee member absent and excused: Kelly Caldwell

Staff members present: Gary Carr, Phyllis Barbour, Pam Dowdy, Nancy Peck and Anna Troutman.

Welcome/Call to Order/Adoption of Agenda

At 8:30 AM, Board Chair, Angie Welsh recognized a quorum and called the meeting to order.

Mark Langford moved to adopt the agenda. Jim Greene seconded the motion. Calling for a vote and hearing no objections, the motion carried. (03-17-36)

Barbara Morales Burke moved to approve the consent agenda including: minutes from the previous meeting on January 25, 2017, February 2017 financial reports, and a checklist of legal compliance. Arvelis Byrd seconded the motion. Calling for a vote and hearing no objection, the motion carried. (03-17-37)

20th Anniversary Planning Committee

Committee Co-Chair, Liz Hamner provided updates on the 20th Anniversary celebratory events. Ms. Hamner reported pledged sponsorships currently amount to \$57,000. She announced sponsors currently include: PNC Bank, Blue Cross Blue Shield NC, Northwestern Mutual, Kaplan, Quail Ridge Books, Pool Professionals of the Carolinas, Retirement Plan Solutions, Inc., Paragon Bank and UNC-TV. Ms. Hamner gave a brief update on the status of the anniversary events. She reported that she and Co-Chair, Kristi Tally are continuing to encourage Board members to become involved in 20th Anniversary event preparation and have advised them of opportunities to volunteer as greeters at the Gala. Ms. Hamner responded to questions about individual Gala tickets sales and the raffle feature planned for the event.

Chair's Report

Chair, Angie Welsh began her report by drawing attention to Attachment B.1, the Shape NC grant contract from North Carolina Partnership for Children (NCPCC). Ms. Welsh pointed out that the grant has been expanded from the original amount to \$500,000 which will support related administration and evaluation staff time. Pam Dowdy said the grant will require a match of non-Smart Start funds over the next four years and there is already a commitment from John Rex Endowment to match the original \$402,449. Jim Greene made a motion to approve expansion of the Shape NC grant in the amount of \$500,000, from the initial amount of \$402,449. Mark Langford seconded the motion. Calling for a vote and hearing no objections, the vote was unanimous. (03-17-38)

Angie Welsh continued with a follow up on unfinished business from the February 22 Board meeting concerning the issue of potential participation in the NC Pre-K Design research study led by Frank Porter Graham Child Development Institute (FPG). Ms. Welsh informed the Executive Committee that WCSS staff and Board members, Benita Jones and Christine Alvarado met on March 13, 2017 by phone with research team representatives from Division of Child Development and Early Education (DCDEE) and FPG to pose questions about the study. She referred to a summary of the questions and responses on Attachment B.2. Benita Jones joined the Executive Committee via conference call to report on her perspective from the phone meeting. Members of the Executive Committee posed questions and discussed concerns for wait-listed children with greatest need who may be randomly assigned to the control group and not receiving priority for Pre-K placement versus the potential long term favorable impact of participation in the study. Following questions and discussion, Arvelis Byrd moved to approve Wake County SmartStart participation in the NC Pre-K Design Evaluation Study with exclusion of the option to assign 20% high priority applicants before random assignment process. Barbara Morales Burke seconded the motion. Calling for a vote, the recommendation was approved by a 6-1 vote. (03-17-39)

EWA Initial 5/24/17 Date

Angie Welsh concluded her report by reporting on the offer of a financial gift in the amount of \$10,000 to be given by Mary Martorella to WCSS in memory of her late husband, Rex Jarrell, Jr. Pam Dowdy provided background on Ms. Martorella, saying that her intention is to set up an opportunity for memorial gifts focused on providing scholarships for NC Pre-K.

Executive Director's Report

Executive Director, Pam Dowdy reported on her meeting with Wake County Manager, Jim Hartmann, Wake County Board of Commissioners Chair, Sig Hutchinson Commissioners Jessica Holmes and Erv Portman regarding an opportunity for a funding match from the County. She stated that verbal verification has been received that the Wake County Manager's budget includes up to \$100,000 on a match basis which may be used for NC Pre-K scholarships, in addition to the \$500,000 in County funding set aside for NC Pre-K. Ms. Dowdy said that Commissioner Holmes plans to make the match announcement at the Garden Party on April 1. She further said that WCSS may not use other government or Smart Start funds to fulfill match eligibility.

Pam Dowdy provided information on Senate Bill 280 with the purpose of appropriating funds for early literacy initiatives including increased statewide access to the Dolly Parton Imagination Library program and Family Connects, a nurse home-visiting program for parents of newborns. Ms. Dowdy said if passed, the legislation could be a potential complement to the ABCD and Reach Out and Read programs.

Ms. Dowdy also provided a legislative update on the Tier III Child Care Subsidy reimbursement rates issue. She said that she and her counterparts in other Tier III counties are working to get increases to childcare subsidy reimbursement rates in Tier III counties on the Legislative agenda as a priority. She further commented on support for this priority from Representatives Malone and Dollar as well as Senator Barringer.

Ms. Dowdy informed Executive Committee that WCSS is asking DCDEE for an extension from March 31st until the end of June to submit the approved NC Pre-K Plan requirements because the original deadline does not coincide with scheduled meetings by the WCSS Board who must approve the plan. She suggested a focus on NC Pre-K business at the June meeting of WCSS Board of Directors and asked the committee if they would support that idea.

With no further business to be addressed, Mark Langford moved to adjourn at 10:00 am. Mike Smith seconded the motion. Calling for a vote and hearing no objections, the motion carried. (03-17-40)


Secretary Signature

May 24, 2017
Date