

NCPK Committee Meeting

Date: November 4, 2019 | Time: 11:00am | Location: Preschool Readiness Center | Meeting called to order by Kim Burns (Co-Chair, Smart Start) with a quorum present.

In Attendance

Members Present: Kim Burns (Co-Chair, Smart Start), Dr. Don Phipps (Co-Chair, Caldwell County Schools Superintendent), Shari Brown (Family Literacy, CCC&TI), Jessica Hall (Parent Representative), Shawn Corpening (Child Care Representative), Kristen Tufts (Caldwell County Department of Social Services), Geri Ward (Child Care Representative), Paula Arrowood (Caldwell County Schools, Exceptional Children)

Staff Present: Vickie Sproul (NCPK Contract Administrator), Helena Vanhorn (NCPK Coordinator), Sandra Beane (CCS Preschool Administrative Assistant)

Others Present: Teresa Branch (Executive Director, Caldwell County Smart Start)

Members Absent: Miranda Boughman (Parent Representative), Ashley Key (Parent Representative), Karen Harshman/Stephanie Ashley (Blue Ridge Community Action)

Call to Order 11:00 AM

Kim Burns (Co-Chair) was introduced as a new member of the NCPK Committee. She is the new Board Chair for Caldwell County Smart Start.

Approval of Agenda and Previous Minutes

Kim Burns called for a motion to approve the November 4, 2019 agenda.

Upon motion of Paula Arrowood, and a second by Shari Brown, the NCPK Committee unanimously approved the November 4, 2019, agenda.

No conflict of interest.

Kim Burns called for a motion to accept the minutes from the April 11, 2019 NCPK Committee meeting.

Upon motion of Paula Arrowood, and a second by Shawn Corpening, the Committee unanimously approved the April 11, 2019 minutes.

No conflict of interest.

Approval of New NCPK Committee Members

Action Item:

Dr. Don Phipps made introduction of Miranda Boughman and Jessica Hall as new parent representatives on the Committee.

Kim Burns called for a motion to accept the new parent representatives to the NCPK Committee.

Upon motion from Shari Brown and a second by Geri Ward the Committee voted unanimously to accept the new parent representatives.

Kim Burns welcomed the new parent representatives.

No conflict of interest.

Conflict of Interest Policy

The NCPK Conflict of Interest Policy was presented to the members present by Kim Burns. No questions or concerns were brought forward. Copies of the statement were made available to each member for their signature. Helena Vanhorn directed everyone to sign and leave their copy at the close of the meeting.

Public Comment

There were no public comments presented to the Committee.

New Business: Information

Helena Vanhorn presented the Committee with applications received so far versus prior years totals received, where we are, income information, and funding changes.

- 2015/2016 239
- 2016/2017 272
- 2017/2018 323
- 2018/2019 357
- 2019-2020 342 to date

At the present time NCPK has 22 open slots in the southern end of the county only. The School system and some community site classrooms accept tuition children on a limited basis. To date, 403 children are being served in Caldwell County NCPK classrooms through NCPK and other funds. Currently, placed children using NCPK/Smart Start funds total 247. Of those who applied, thirty eight children did not qualify, 9 moved out of county, 229 have never been in any kind of childcare, 26 are in foster/kinship care, 5 are homeless, and 24 speak little or no English in the home. In school system (LEA) classrooms, 5 referrals for special education are in process; However, 25 children failed the BOY (beginning of year) screening. Interventions and supports will be provided to those children to see if we can help them make progress to catch up. If not, the referral process will begin. Northside had 6 failed screenings and those children are in the referral process. Two children at other community sites were slightly below the score cutoff.

Committee members were informed that the site at Oak Hill School did not open for the 2019/20 school year due to a lack of family interest in that area.

A visual of current NCPK site locations were made available to Committee members. The members were also presented with a visual of applicant addresses vs. NCPK addresses.

Family income information was presented with a pie chart based on a family of four. The chart showed income 130% and below as the largest piece of the pie, the highest hourly income would be \$15.36 for two working adults at minimum wage. The majority of families in this category for Caldwell County is at \$0 income. The next lowest category, at 131-185% of the federal medium income equals a household income up to \$21.87 per hour for one adult or two adults making \$10.93 per hour. A comparison of income was also shown with a bar graph over the last 5 years. The graph showed a decrease in the number and percentage of families in the lowest income tier during the 2018-19 school year. However, this year, not only was there a significant increase in the number of applications in the lowest income category, but the increase exceeded the figures from 2 years ago.

Expansion funds increased by \$181,491, funding 29 children at NCPK rates. Smart Start funds continued at \$120,000 which partially funds 42 children. These combined funds are equal to a little more than 2 full classroom of children being funded.

No additional administrative funds were allocated.

No questions were voiced.

The RFP submitted in Spring 2019 for NCPK CCDF (Child Care Development Fund federal block grant) quality funds was awarded. The maximum amount of \$21,812 was awarded for implementation for the NC Preschool Pyramid Model Language and Communications modules. This includes training and classroom materials for all NCPK classrooms.

Helena briefly explained the NC Early Childhood Action Plan, DHHS/DPI Transition to Kindergarten Pilot, and the County/Region Plan.

Under the direction of Gov. Roy Cooper and by legislative action, the Birth through 3rd Grade Interagency Council was created. The purpose of the Council is to establish a vision and accountability for a birth-third grade system for early education for North Carolina. Gov. Cooper would like to see every component of the Action Plan have a plan implemented by the year 2022.

Working separately, but collaboratively, DHHS is working with early childhood stakeholders to focus on a B-3 statewide action plan. The North Carolina Early Childhood Action Plan was created and outlines a cohesive vision, sets benchmarks for impact by the year 2025, and establishes shared stakeholder accountability to achieve statewide goals for young children birth through age 8.

The plan centers on 3 themes: North Carolina's young children are healthy, grow up safe and nurtured, and are well supported to be learning and ready to succeed.

Caldwell County School is one of 16 counties participating in a pilot program for a Transition to Kindergarten project. This is a federal and state mandate requires that all children who are in childcare and receiving federal and/or state funds are part of the Transition to Kindergarten project by 2022-2023. The Committee was presented with a copy of the North Carolina Preschool to Kindergarten Transition Child Development Information sheet. They were asked for input and questions.

The question of how this information is to be collected was asked. Information will come from parent/teacher conference and teacher data, already collected as a part of the program. The completed form will be given to the kindergarten school prior to the beginning of school in the fall for the kindergarten teacher to review and contact the preschool teacher with questions as needed.

Several Committee members expressed concern that parents may not understand the language/jargon on the document. The form was created by the stakeholders including teachers but, we can make recommendations before the document is finalized.

Committee members were asked to go over the form and email back any input they might have.

County/Region Plan was signed in April of 2019. Four new representatives have been made. Following review, the full Committee was asked to sign an updated document rather than having just new members sign. The Committee read Exhibit 4 before signing.

New Business: For Action

Action Item: Community Site Increase Recommendation: Currently the rate is \$625/child each month. The last increase was in 2014. The state's recommendation for qualified teachers is \$650. This could start now or be retroactive to August 2019.

Discussion: The question was asked if we know what site teachers are currently earning. This information is not available but, it was stated that it is considerably less than teachers in the school system. This makes it hard for community sites to find teachers. Because community sites are private businesses, NCPK cannot require a minimum compensation package, only make recommendations.

The question was asked how many counties are already up to the \$650 rate. Every county but Caldwell and 1 other is already at this rate.

The recommendation was made for the change to go into effect in November, which aligns to the rate increases for childcare subsidy. After discussion, Kim Burns called for a motion to accept the increase in pay rate for site teachers.

Upon motion of Paula Arrowood and a second by Kristen Tufts, the motion passed.

Shawn Corpening recused himself from voting.

Kim Burns called for a motion to start the increase in November.

Upon motion of Paula Arrowood and a second by Kristen Tufts, the motion passed.

Shawn Corpening recused himself from voting.

Action Item: The Committee Site Selection process changed in 2018/19 with Committee action. Previously, Site Selection was conducted annually, but was changed to biennial to align with the recommendation from NCPK. No new site applications have been submitted by any community sites in the past 3 years and the LEA does not plan to add sites at this time. It was noted that only Lower Creek Elementary and West Lenoir Elementary do not have approved application on file. There is no room at Lower Creek and West Lenoir is a 3-5 school. Exhibit 5, the state template for NCPK Site Selection Application, was reviewed by committee members. It was noted that the Committee could add one item for 10 points, but there are no recommendations to do so since there has been no interest and no one has inquired about NCPK. All 4 and 5 star licensed centers and homes will receive an invitation and copy of the template.

Kim Burns called for a motion to accept the state template as presented.

Upon motion by Shawn Corpening and a second by Paula Arrowood the motion passed unanimously.

No conflict of interest.

Action Item: 2020/21 Child NCPK Application: The question, Did you attend here last year? Has been added to the NCPK/Head Start application.

Discussion: Is there a need for more private sites in the southern end of the county? We always welcome sites to apply. As to, is there a need, it depends on the year and how many children apply. The trend seems to go back and forth from north and south each year.

Is there a place to check on the application if a child's parents request exemption from immunizations? Parent can fill out a form stating their reason for not having their child immunized. The approved form is on the NC DHHS website and is used.

Is it possible to add a question about Dolly Parton's Imagination Library? Also, how frequently do you read to your child?

Kim Burns called for a motion to accept the NCPK/Head Start application with the question added about Dolly Parton's Imagination Library and parent reading frequency to their child.

Upon motion by Geri Ward and a second by Shari Brown the motion passes unanimously.

No conflict of interest.

Additional Discussion

If we have sites to apply for the 2020/21 school year, the Committee will need to meet in January to review and accept/decline prior to the February release of applications. If there are no applicants, the next meeting will be in April.

Next Meeting and Adjournment

January 16, 2020 | 11:00am at the Preschool Readiness Center

There being no further business to come before the NCPK Committee and upon the motion of Paula Arrowood, and the second by Shawn Corpening, the NCPK Committee unanimously approved to adjourn.

Meeting was adjourned at 12:20pm.