Early Childhood Education & Development Committee
December 2, 2025, 1:00 – 2:30 pm
200 College St, Room 310

MEETING MINUTES

Attendees: Adrian Sandler, Al Whitesides, Beth Sherman, Carol Steen, Emily Nicholson (virtual), Heather Zanzig (virtual), Jennifer Horton, Jo Jamison, Maia Sloan, Martin Moore, Pat Tuttle, Sara Lappe, Sarah Kabourek, Stacy Anderson (virtual)

Staff in attendance: Rachael Sawyer, Amy Broughton, Angelica Tyler, Angelyn Johnson

Minutes

- Approval of minutes from November 18, 2025
    - Motion to approve by Adrian Sandler. Seconded by Jennifer Horton. The minutes were unanimously approved.

Old Business

- Revised project plan for focused investment
    - Staff briefly reviewed the revised project plan for focused investment

New Business

- Discuss Potential Focus Area(s)
    - Potential focus areas proposed include:
        - Continue funding NC PreK slot rate supplement for eligible 4-year-olds
        - Fund Pre-K slots for 4+ year olds from middle income families
        - Fund preschool slots for 3-year-olds from middle income families
        - Establish a program to support behavioral health needs across the EE system, in classrooms
        - Support teachers with training and mental health
        - A program to support infant and toddler slots
        - Support for Family Child Care Home (FCCH) programs
        - Teacher pay supplements
        - Supplement to subsidy rates
        - Support, encourage teacher development and education
        - Campaign to promote the profession of early education
        - More infant classrooms
        - Policy recommendations for county legislative agenda
        - Support our workforce (parents) with childcare
        - Tri-share type model
    - The committee also discussed:
        - The importance of recognizing these are all levers that impact each other.
        - Consider impacts to current grantees when switching to focused investment
        - Potentially group ideas into buckets (i.e. “Workforce”)
        - Need to identify current gaps in system and what other supports there are. Such as are there any funders looking at mental health for children?
        - During site visits, staff pay supplements were an issue across the board at all providers.

- Some of the proposed ideas could impact other areas as well. Such as supplementing subsidy could allow centers to raise staff wages.
- Importance of building in responsiveness to what happens legislatively.
- Consider creating a cost model estimate that considers environmental factors.
- Importance of looking at pay disparity between infant/toddler teachers and NC PreK teachers.
- Consider using rank choice voting to help reduce unintended consequences on other areas.

- FY27 Grant Guidelines
  - Committee members discussed sustainability and the fact that it isn't included in the scoring rubric. It was previously included but was removed a couple of years ago because the sustainability plan for most nonprofits is fundraising and grants.
  - The committee requested the reference to multi-year funding be removed from the grant guidelines.
  - Martin Moore made a motion to approve the Grant Guidelines with the reference to multi-year funding removed. Jennifer Horton seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.
- Request for Engagement Subgroup
  - Martin, Adrian, Maia, Sarah K and Jennifer volunteered to serve on the engagement subgroup. Heather is potentially interested in participating in the subgroup and will let staff know if she is able to join.
- Roundtable discussion with other NC Counties
  - Some topics to include in the conversation include:
    - What does execution look like in practice?
    - What roadblocks did they encounter?
    - Any recommended tools?
    - Do any of them have similar legislative priorities?
  - The committee would like to include someone with information about Tri-Share model on the panel
  - The committee would like to leave time for open discussion with the other counties.

Announcements

- To accommodate the out-of-town guests from other counties, the January committee meeting will be a virtual meeting via zoom.

Public Comment

- There were no public comments.

Next Meeting

Next meeting will be January 6, 2025, 1:00-2:30 pm, virtual (zoom).