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

MINUTES

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

Staff in attendance: Rachael Sawyer, Amy Broughton, Ben Atkins, Tim Love, Angelyn Johnson (virtual)

Welcome

- Welcome four new members: Beth Sherman, Jo Jamison, Sarah Kabourek, and Stacey Anderson

Minutes

- Approval of minutes from August 5, 2025
    - Motion to approve by Al Whitesides. Seconded by Adrian Sandler. The minutes were unanimously approved.

Old Business

- There was no old business.

New Business

- Funding Strategy
    - Staff reviewed the goal of the funding strategy series.
    - Staff presentation included steps for determining a funding strategy for Buncombe's Early Childhood Committee:
        - Revisiting authorizing resolution from 2018
        - Reviewing results to date: program-level and system-level
        - Considering various investment approaches and the impacts associated with each
        - Discussing how local government can be most impactful as an investor in this system
    - Committee discussion and requests:
        - Explore the discrepancy between our data and data included in State of Childcare report.
        - Request additional information about models from other counties investing in early childhood education.
        - Seek input from third parties during the October committee meeting.
            - Consider including Samantha Cole (Child Care Business Liaison at NC Dept of Commerce), SMART Start (Buncombe Partnership for Children), and others
        - Gather more information on what other investments are being made into Early Childhood Education.
        - Consider how to engage the business industry.
            - Explore how to partner with Dogwood Health Trust who is also investing in Early Childhood Education and large employers in the area.

- Review the NC Tri-Share pilot and assess its applicability or scalability in our area.
- Aim for a long-term goal of implementing universal pre-k in local public schools.
- Collect feedback from families to better understand their needs and priorities.
- Build on existing initiatives in the community, such as the system level work being done by Buncombe Partnership for Children.
- Review additional historical data beyond the 2019 baseline data provided.

Announcements

- There were no announcements.

Public Comment

- Kellana Capers participated in public comment.

Next Meeting

Next meeting will be October 7, 2025, 1:00-2:30 pm, 200 College St.