Early Childhood Education & Development Committee
November 18, 2025, 1:00 – 2:30 pm
200 College St, Room 310

SPECIAL MEETING
MINUTES

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

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

Minutes

- Approval of minutes from November 4, 2025
    - Motion to approve by Al Whitesides. Seconded by Stacy Anderson. The minutes were unanimously approved.

Old Business

- Site visits
    - Staff compiled the committee members' feedback from each site visit and the document was included in the meeting packet.
    - Committee members found the site visits beneficial and appreciated seeing the operations firsthand. There was a suggestion to consider scheduling site visits outside of nap time in the future so the committee can observe staff-child interactions.
    - Recurring themes identified during site visits include:
        - One year funding cycles create instability and hinder long-term planning
        - Staffing shortages is a persistent issue affecting enrollment and quality
        - Significantly increasing levels of trauma, challenging behaviors and behavioral health needs.
        - Under-enrollment and empty classrooms due to staff shortages
        - Contemporary (post-pandemic) workforce drivers

New Business

- Draft project plan for focused investment
    - Staff reviewed the draft plan that was included in the meeting packet, which includes:
        - Overview
        - Project Purpose
        - Project Objectives
        - Project Background
            - Committee Formation & Grantmaking
            - Focus on Pre-K Expansion
            - Consideration of Additional Focused Investment(s)
        - Project Schedule
        - Project Roles
    - The committee suggested the following edits:
        - Include an evaluation component outlining project evaluation metrics, how success will be measured, and how the committee will know if the strategy is working.

- Add Resource/Cost Section and provide an estimate of the cost associated with the project and potential contracts.
- Clarify "Why Now" by strengthening the background section to explicitly explain why a shift to focused investments is needed now, including current operational challenges, results to date, system pressures such as staffing, trauma, under-enrollment, etc.
- Specify current conditions and provide brief context on workforce shortages, mental health/trauma indicators, under-enrollment, cost of care variations, etc.
- Consider compressing timeline where feasible.
    - Consider hosting other counties in December, then use January and February to discuss focus areas to be scoped.
    - Gather community input throughout process, possibly in December/January and then again July–December.
        - The committee discussed balancing survey fatigue with the need for meaningful input. Alternatives to surveys, such as listening session, were discussed.

- Martin Moore made a motion to approve the project plan for focused investment with the edits suggested by the committee. Seconded by Stacy Anderson. The project plan was unanimously approved.
- Follow-up Steps include:
    - Staff will revise the project plan to incorporate the committee's requested edits.
    - Staff will prepare grant guidelines for the upcoming FY2027 cycle, maintaining continuity.
    - Create committee subgroups to handle intensive topics throughout the process.

Announcements

- There were no announcements.

Public Comment

- There were no public comments.

Next Meeting

Next meeting will be December 2, 2025, 1:00-2:30 pm, 200 College St, Room 310.