**Early Childhood Education & Development Committee**
June 2, 2026, 12:00 – 2:30 pm
200 College St, Room 310

# MEETING MINUTES

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

**Guest:** Dan Wuori, PhD

**Staff in attendance**: Rachael Sawyer, Amy Broughton, Samantha Kirk, Angelyn Johnson (virtual)

## Minutes

- Approval of minutes from May 5, 2026
    - Stacy Anderson made a motion to approve the minutes. Carol Steen seconded the motion. The minutes were unanimously approved.

## Old Business

- There was no old business.

## New Business

- Committee membership update & request for nomination group
    - Carol Steen and Pat Tuttle's terms end on June 30 and they were thanked for their service to the committee.
    - There are 3 members who are eligible to be reappointed, and they have submitted their applications to the Board of Commissioners: Adrian Sandler, Emily Nicholson, and Sara Lappe.
    - There are 3 vacant positions, and we have received 4 applications.
    - Stacy, Maia and Jo volunteered to serve on the nomination committee.

- Focused Investment Plan
    - Staff and Dan Wuori reviewed the committee survey related to the proposed goal & strategies and the potential funding priorities which were included in the meeting packet.
        - Goal Updates:
            - PROPOSED: Expand access to reliable, high-quality child care to promote healthy child development and support working families.
            - MODIFIED: Expand access to reliable, high-quality early care and education that:
                - optimizes children's learning and development;
                - is delivered by well-prepared and adequately compensated educators;
                - enables families to fully participate in the workforce; and
                - prioritizes those with the greatest needs.

- Committee members would like to change "reliable" to "accessible" to encompass affordability

- Three proposed strategies:
  - Provide grants to expand accessible, high-quality early care and education.
  - Partner with community leaders and other investors to build a coordinated, cohesive system.
  - Advocate for state and federal policy solutions to strengthen early childhood education and development.
- The committee discussed the highest ranked funding priorities:
  - Infant & Toddler Slots:
    - Could we look at other counties for examples of this? Would we pay providers?
    - Be sure to include geographic scope so that the impact can be countywide.
  - Teacher & Staff Supplements:
    - There is research that shows subsidization of educators leads to retention of that workforce.
    - NAEYC data states compensation is most important factor.
  - Grants for Workforce Programs
    - Could this be combined with Teacher & Staff Supplements and possibly the Pyramid Model to create integrated priorities?
  - NC Pre-K Enhancement
    - Committee member requested data about the salary difference between NC PreK teacher pay and general teacher pay
  - Pyramid Model
    - This could potentially be integrated into a combined workforce strategy.
    - Would this create extra work for staff without extra compensation?
  - Innovation Grants
    - Committee members voiced concerns over sustainability of innovative projects if continued funding isn't available through the fund.
    - Potential to water down funding availability for other strategies and limits results.
    - Consider funding one-time expenses such as classroom supplies.
    - Committee members voiced concerns that if there is no funding available for innovative ideas, there will be no new ideas.
    - Could this funding be used to collaborate with other funders?
- Focus Areas to Be Scoped:

- From July – December: design program scope for potential funding priorities including cost.
    - Committee discussed concerns that six priorities are too many. These may need to be narrowed down.
    - As these initiatives are scoped, there will be additional data, such as cost, to help guide the selected focus initiatives.
    - Committee members can reach out to staff with ideas and input.
- Grantee Engagement:
    - Purpose is to gain feedback from grantees on the current focus areas selected
    - June – July: applicants and grantees will complete a survey
    - August: virtual engagement at August committee meeting.

**Announcements**

- There will be no meeting in July. The August meeting will be virtual.

**Public Comment**

- Brian Repass participated in public comment.

**Next Meeting**

The next meeting is August 4, 2026, from 1:00-2:30. This will be a virtual meeting.