BUNCOMBE COUNTY GOVERNMENT — NORTH CAROLINA —

Early Childhood Education & Development Committee
November 17, 2020, 1:00 – 2:30
Virtual Meeting

DRAFT MINUTES

Committee Members in attendance: Al Whitesides, Brandy Bowman, Chevaun Letman, Glenda Weinert, Jane Hatley, Jasmine Beach-Ferrara, Leslie Anderson, Mistie Reising-Cogbill, Philip Belcher, Rich Johnston, Robert Pressley, Susan Mims, Wendy Wieber

County support staff in attendance: Rachael Nygaard, Angelyn Johnson, Amanda Stratton, Heather Parkinson, Kimberly Fullerton, Michael Frue, Max Taintor, Burnett Walz

Welcome and agenda review by Jasmine Beach-Ferrara.

Virtual meeting reminder: Identify yourself when speaking. All votes will be conducted by roll call. This is a public meeting. If any community members are in attendance, there will be a time for public comment at the end of the meeting.

Meeting Minutes: Philip Belcher made a motion to approve the minutes from September 1, September 15 and October 6. Jane Hatley seconded motion. Vote by roll call vote was unanimous in approval.

Old Business

- Reflections on virtual site visits
    - Impressed with flexibility and how the organizations are adapting. Also impressed with how they have been able to revamp after being closed. The collaborations and support make it possible. The staff are in higher spirits than you would anticipate. Enrollment is decreased due to safety precautions. A positive outcome is an increase in parental involvement.
    - Committee members should complete feedback survey by the end of the week.

New Business

- Equity in Grant-making presentation & discussion – County staff, Amanda Stratton and Heather Parkinson, facilitated a process review of the Early Childhood Committee grant-making cycle through an equity lens.
    - Equity – just and fair inclusion in which all can participate and reach their full potential;
    - Diversity – presence of diverse and different participants and opinions;
    - Inclusion – authentic participation with a sense of belonging
    - Equity Lens – being deliberately inclusive in the decision making process
- The notes from this session is included as part of these mutes.
- Wendy, Brandy and Jane volunteered to evaluate the application and scoring criteria categories to consider a more equitable process for applicants.

Announcements - There were no announcements

Public Comment - There was no public comment

Next Meeting: December 1, 2020 Virtual Meeting from 1:00 – 2:30 pm

Equity in Grant Making Facilitator Notes:
- **Grant application opens**
  - Grant writer available to people who are applying, especially when the application is finished for review
  - Access to applications:
    - Make sure the word is out to everyone
    - Who is hearing about the grants
  - Access to technology (online portal)
    - Challenging to navigate
  - If you've never applied for a grant before, everything is intimidating, even a workshop to become familiar with it
  - Should we ask: is this your first time applying for a grant?
    - Yes
  - Communication: Does information go out to all childcare centers about the grants? While we're receiving a large amount of grants, there are other organizations that haven't been reached yet
    - Is it making it to the right people in the right places?
    - Make sure information goes to ALL child care centers
    - Could consider creating an early stage pipeline – grassroots campaign
  - Could fund mentoring for grant applicants - connect organizations who have done this before to new applicants
  - Goals from commissioners:
    - They don't necessarily enable some of the smaller scope projects - is that fair/just/inclusive?
    - How do you balance that power?
    - Could there be a small grant track and a larger grant track?
  - Who are we trying to serve/who benefits - is it the largest number of children, or is it individual centers in neighborhoods that might meet a need most effectively - philosophical question
    - Are we talking about representational equity in terms of organizations who receive grants, or those grants that have the largest reach?
    - What constitutes and equitable grant - leadership of the org that receives it, or the children who are impacted?
      - Representative staff at facilities is important
  - Project and strategy in application:
    - Add something that says "increase diversity"
  - Add question to application:
    - Can we collect info about the diversity of the organization?
    - Number of subsidized children served?
    - Led by people of color?
    - Equity strategy in place
    - Ask or identify how much time they put in to putting this grant together?

- **Community engagement session**
  - Get the word out at other events in the world of child care (Smart start conference, etc.) to have as wide of an audience as possible.
  - What is the community we're trying to engage?
    - Is it members of the community or is it providers?

- Intent was originally to hear from the public about needs, solutions in childcare/early learning
- It has evolved to be more provider-focused
  o Timing of when the events happen: make them more accessible
  o Communication: child care resource and referral process at the buncombe partnership for children
  o Consider Logistics: time of day; physical location of meeting; difficulty w/technology will affect this as long as we're dealing with the pandemic. MIght be able to target particular neighborhoods, e.g. a public housing setting for the meeting

time of day is critical: some nighttime sessions needed

- **Grant writing workshop**
  Technical staff support
  Grant writing support
  How do we make that offer more universal? Offer 1:1 for everyone?
  Language justice/access – maybe Spanish always offered, others upon request?
  Consider Logistics: Public transportation-accessible, Child care available, Translation and interpretation automatically available, Night time sessions
  Specialty languages available on request
  Technology issues: need some way to have an accessible technology - libraries?
  Webinar bandwidths are an issue – Partner with organizations to have some sufficient hotspots and communicate those to invitees

- **Applications due**
  Not enough time for establishing partnerships - sentiment expressed during some site visits
  Not enough time to put together the application
  Holidays might make that not enough time if they haven't done the pre-work
  Jane tried to compress the application last year - still too long, and too repetitious
  Is it feasible to reach out to individuals who have open applications that haven't been submitted? Or utilize Foundant's notification/reminder system?
  Provide a model or example of a completed application?
  Could someone have a different option for written applications or an application in Word?
  Educational achievement of the current staff - certifications/licensure/degrees
  Had some inconsistencies in how budgets were filled out - make it very clear how they were going to be using the grant funds

- **Applications reviewed by committee**
  Increase the participation of committee members
  Would be nice to pair it down - could be done with the work that is done on the application piece
  Are smaller businesses affected by a longer processing time?
  Do applicants see the scoring criteria? Yes
  Refine model to capture applicants that serve children of color or at risk
  Currently everything is weighted the same - does that work?
    Collaboration is nice, but not always essential
    Sustainability is important, but difficult
    History of organization might not be extensive for newer projects and shouldn't be counted against the grant if it fulfills a need.