BUNCOMBE COUNTY GOVERNMENT
—NORTH CAROLINA—

Early Childhood Education & Development Committee
March 1, 2022, 12:30 – 2:30
Virtual Meeting

MINUTES

Committee Members in attendance: Al Whitesides, Brandy Bowman, Jasmine Beach-Ferrara, Kidada Wynn, Kit Cramer, Leslie Anderson, Linda McDaniel, Mark Taft, Mistie Reising-Cogbill, Philip Belcher, Rich Johnston, Robert Pressley, Susan Mims, Wendy Wieber

County support staff in attendance: Rachael Nygaard, Matt Baker, Angelyn Johnson, Kimberly Fullerton, Michael Frue, DK Wesley

Others in attendance: Caroline Rodier, Susanna Smith, Deanna LaMotte, Sarah Cain, Brian Repass, Kaitlyn Guyer, 828-776-4828, Sunshine Request

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.

Minutes
Kit Cramer made a motion to approve the minutes from February 1. Linda McDaniel seconded the motion. Minutes were unanimously approved by roll call vote

Old Business

- P20 Council:
  - Staff provided a handout with details about the P-20 Council in the meeting packet. Rachael went over the information from that handout and provided links for more information:
    - www.landofskycollaborative.org
    - P20 Council AIM Grants: https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSeKPwIQk4U0u5QFtS3-Hu0er_ZOenUqWqiGc-BrZX8MIsxDkg/viewform
- Grant timeline overview:
  - 3/11 at 5:00 pm – deadline to submit questions for applicants
  - 3/18 at 5:00 pm – deadline for applicants to submit answers to committee questions
  - 4/1 at 5:00 pm – deadline for scoring applications
  - 4/5 at 12:00 pm – Committee meeting
  - 4/19 at 12:00 pm – Committee meeting
  - 4/26 at 12:00 pm – Committee meeting (if needed)

New Business

- Pre-K expansion
  - Positive reception by BOC for expansion report that the committee endorsed. Considering 2 year pilot out of ARPA funding.

- o Also considering opening RFP later in 2022 to use some ARPA to support capital and non-capital costs of bringing new NC Pre-K classrooms online. Very early stage conversation. Up to $4.5M
- o Rachael shared presentation that was shared with BOC. ARPA RFP currently open and receiving applications until 4/12. Pre-K expansion is a priority category within the RFP. If anyone would like to follow along with the ARPA funding process, visit www.buncombecounty.org/recoveryfunding
- o Pilot will include all 6 strategies as well as admin cost for the 2 year pilot. Total is $3.2M
- o Communicating with partners about timelines. BPFC believes we can launch the expansion pilot as of July 1.

- IMPACT of NC Pre-K Expansion on Grant Requests:
  - o So far, we know that if the NC Pre-K Expansion pilot is funded with ARPA funding, Buncombe Partnership for Children's Systems Coordination/Single Portal of Entry application will be reduced from $177,331 to $56,000.
  - o 9 project proposals were submitted from 6 organizations that are current NC Pre-K providers:
    - o Asheville City Schools
    - o Community Action Opportunities
    - o Eliada Homes
    - o Irene Wortham Center
    - o The Christine Avery Learning Center
    - o YWCA
  - o These 6 organizations will be asked a follow-up question regarding the impact the NC Pre-K expansion pilot would have on their current application(s).

- Grant Requests for Slots and Multi-Year Grants
  - o An updated spreadsheet was included in the meeting packet that includes all applications received, the number of slots included in the project proposal, whether they are an NC Pre-K provider and the details of the projects that have already been awarded funds this year through multi-year funding contract.
    - o Buncombe Partnership for Children - Childcare Resources $153,000
      - ▪ Professional and Systems Development Project that provides training opportunities and technical assistance to early childhood staff
    - o Colaborativa La Milpa $30,000
      - ▪ Early Childhood coop in the Emma community
    - o YWCA $150,000
      - ▪ Early Learning Center
    - o Buncombe County Schools $792,657
      - ▪ Verner/Emma project

- Questions for Applicants
  - o All NC Pre-K providers who submitted an application for funding will be asked:
    "Buncombe County is exploring the possibility of funding a NC Pre-K Expansion project starting in FY2023, which would include increased reimbursement rates for current NC Pre-K providers. Please review the proposal at www.buncombecounty.org/prekreport If

that expansion were to be funded, how much if any, would you reduce your grant request for the project proposed to the Early Childhood Fund?
o The committee discussed if there other standard questions to ask all applicants. No other standard questions were identified.

- Proposed Process
  o Staff discussed the process outline that was included with the meeting documents.
  o This year, in the online grant portal, there is a new question for committee members to answer during their review: "Do you recommend this project for funding?" which will capture the number of committee members recommending funding.
  o After the first meeting in April when staff reviews the data with committee members, a question will be added to the online grant portal for committee members "What funding amount do you recommend for this project?" Committee members will be provided a spreadsheet for their own reference, but their funding recommendations will be entered online.

- Conflict of Interest
  o Each year, committee members are tasked with disclosing any conflicts of interest or perceived conflicts of interest. The bylaws state, "The affiliation of any Committee Member to any applicant shall be reported and noted by staff for the information of other Committee Members and the public."
  o Angelyn will send out an online form to all committee members for disclosing any conflicts of interest or potential conflicts of interest.
  o Committee members have the initial responsibility for recusal of scoring on grant applications. If a committee member does not recuse themselves, other committee members can bring it for a committee vote.

Announcements
- There were no announcements

Public Comment
- There were no public comments.

Next Meeting: Next meeting is April 5 at 12:30 pm.