

MINUTES

Committee Members Present

Jasmine Beach-Ferrara, Robert Pressley, Al Whitesides

County Staff Present

Rasheeda McDaniels, Rachael Nygaard, Trish Wallin

Minutes

Jasmine Beach-Ferrara moved approval of the March 5 minutes, Al Whitesides seconded, and the minutes were accepted with unanimous approval. There was discussion about the general format for capturing public comment.

Discussion

- **Committee membership:** Committee members discussed the possibility of adjusting the membership structure for the committee. Because by-laws have not yet been approved, there is flexibility to change the membership makeup. Discussion emphasized the desire to include an array of cross-discipline perspectives from across geographic districts while ensuring transparency and open channels of dialog for community members as well as the desire to have a lean group size. There was no decision made; there was agreement to leave the option open to expand from 6 community members to 8, 10 or 12 once applications are in. The likely mechanism would be to use “at large” or general community seats. Committee members requested an update on committee applications as of March 10 to give time for additional recruitment if needed.
- **Community engagement:** Committee members reflected on the input and ideas shared at the previous community engagement sessions held on February 19 with the School Districts and representatives from Asheville-Buncombe Preschool Planning Collaborative. Members discuss the option of holding an open, public engagement session. The suggested timing is sometime before the funding application closes on April 19. The suggested format is a live meeting supplemented by technology such as Facebook Live and Let’s Talk. Staff to coordinate on potential event dates and bring to next committee meeting for discussion.
- **Funding application:** Staff reviewed the funding application components with members of the committee. There was some discussion about ideal timing and the application deadline. Al Whitesides moved approval of the funding application, with the change in application deadline to April 19. Jasmine Beach-Ferrara seconded, and the application was accepted with unanimous approval. Staff will post and distribute on Wednesday, February 20.
- **Staffing options:** There was discussion around opportunities to structure a staffing plan to coordinate the implementation of the Early Childhood Fund. Committee members discussed the need to ensure effective investment, which can include tasks such as planning, research, facilitation, monitoring, evaluation and reporting. No recommendation or decision was made.
- **Next meeting:** Committee members agreed to meet again shortly after the deadline for committee membership applications, March 15. A next meeting was set for March 19 from 9:30 to 11:00 and changed later that day to March 19 from 9:00 to 10:30.

Next Steps

- Committee membership applications due March 15

- Open public community engagement session to be scheduled
- Funding applications due April 19

Public Comment

- Amy Barry requested clarification around what early childhood projects are currently funded and how that funding will be handled going forward.
- Greg Borom shared about the NC Early Childhood Action Plan and emphasized the coordination role of Smart Start organizations such as Buncombe Partnership for Children.
- Leslie Anderson highlighted the opportunity to coordinate efforts at the County with planning in the community in order to ensure a unified vision and plan.
- Jerry Rice shared about the importance of connecting with the educational system as well as the need for a quality plan to address needs, including the needs of those not yet in the system. He also emphasized the need for public comment to be public and captured in the minutes for the record.
- Jennifer Bosworth thanked the committee for the open forum as well as this overall work and focus on early childhood.

Announcements

There were no announcements.

Meeting Materials

The following documents are included as attachments to these minutes:

- Early Childhood Education Funding application

Next meeting

March 19, 2019, 9:00-10:30 at 200 College Street, Room 310