

Executive Committee (Acting as Board)
(Virtual Meeting)
Thursday, December 16, 2021
President's Report

A. North Carolina Partnership for Children (NCPC) Updates / DCDEE Updates / Legislative Updates

1. NCPC

- **Carry-forward funds & New State funds** – Recommendations were approved at the November Board meeting. Waiting on amendment for carry-forward from NCPC; expect in December. Smart Start is receiving \$10M each year of the biennium in recurring funds. New State funds anticipated to be released to NCPC in January.
- **State Expansion of Child Care Health Consultants** – Our current contract was extended to June 30, 2022 as a no-cost extension. Funds were reduced due to lapsed salaries. Health Department has filled their two positions for the expansion grant.
- **PDG Grant for Regional Pilots for Family Connects** – All nurses are trained. 4C has several nurse vacancies and is recruiting. Recruitment of families and home visits continue. Over 700 babies who qualify for the pilot have been born since recruitment started October 4. The declined rate continues to be around 14%. Those births at Cape Fear outside the current catchment area are receiving follow-up from PFC staff. This will provide us valuable data as the pilot continues and we look at scaling up the program. Currently the three counties with births outside the catchment area are Harnett, Bladen and Sampson Counties.

2. DCDEE – Continue to monitor updated guidance for child care programs and NC Pre-K operation.

- **Region 5 Contracts** – All contracts have been executed. Fiscal and programmatic monitoring are in process.
- Enrollment continues to be down in child care programs and impacted by the ability to hire staff in child care programs.
- We continue to follow guidance from DCDEE and follow the ChildCareStrongNC Public Health Toolkit. We are closely monitoring conditions in child care programs and contact the facility administrators prior to visits to gauge comfort levels and ensure priorities are met during the visit.
- All licensing requirements are back to pre-pandemic standards and applicable during monitoring visits by the DCDEE Consultants.
- **NC Pre-K site monitoring and state monitoring reports** are in process.
- **NC Pre-K** – the State Budget included 2% rate increases for NC Pre-K as well as \$20M for NC Pre-K start-up, quality and capital expenditures. More information to come from DCDEE on how this funding will come.
- **HB 366, Section 2: NC Pre-K School Options** – requires DCDEE to post educational opportunities for kindergarten offered by local school districts, charter schools and scholarships for enrollment in nonpublic schools. This information shall be indexed or searchable by county and the Division shall update the information on June 1 of each year. NC Pre-K programs will be required to provide all families with the address of the website where the information is available.
- **NC Pre-K Winter Meeting** provided additional timelines and required information that contracting agencies must provide. We will be working on this information for January and February NC Pre-K Committee meetings.

- Vaccines are widely available with active campaigns to increase vaccination rates. Children 5-11 years are now eligible for vaccines.
 - **Approved Stabilization Grants (November 1, 2021):** Eligible, approved providers from the first round have received their payments. Their first reports are now due. Programs who have not applied may still apply for Stabilization Grants and can apply at any time and will be reviewed on a rolling basis.
 - Parent fees for subsidy are waived through January. Our dual-subsidy programs follows suit with waiving parent fees.
3. *Leandro* Case - Judge Lee issued an order on November 10 for \$1.7B to be transferred from the state's General Fund to fund the first two years of the *Leandro* comprehensive remedial plan. The order was initially stayed for 30 days. It has been challenged in the courts and has not gone into effect.
 4. NC General Assembly – The State Budget passed and Governor Cooper signed it. The budget did not fully move us to the Leandro mandates.
 5. Federal Level
 - The CDC continues to recommend wearing of masks, regardless of vaccination status, indoors in areas where rates are substantial. Boosters are now available for all COVID-19 vaccines and the Pfizer vaccine booster has now been approved for 16-17-year olds. The Pfizer vaccine been approved for 5-11 year olds. OSHA guidance for vaccine mandate implementation has been released. Due to legal challenges, implementation of vaccine mandates and OSHA Guidance at the federal level is on hold at this time. This does not prohibit businesses from implementing vaccine mandates.
 - **American Family Plan** – Build Back Better would fund universal Pre-K (3 & 4-year olds), expand child care subsidies, workforce support, extend expanded child care tax credit to 2025. The House passed the bill. The Senate has yet to vote on the bill. States will have to opt in if passed.

B. Grant Opportunities/Updates/RFPs

1. Continue to research capital grant opportunities. Submitted a request for a consultation with Golden Leaf for possible submission for their next cycle.
2. Presented to Cumberland County Commissioners on November 15 and the Fayetteville City Council on November 22. The presentation included updates as well as challenges we have in meeting the needs in the community. Both entities are still working on their plans for ARP funds.

C. COVID-19 Updates

PFC implemented its HR 110 Communicable Disease Policy on Monday, March 16, 2020. Building closed to general public March 30 and this status continues. Clients may be served by appointment only. As COVID-19 numbers increase with the Delta variant (or decrease) and federal, state and local health and safety guidelines are updated, we continue to review PFC operations. Policies have been reviewed and updated through our Board Committee process.

1. **Executive Orders:** We have implemented procedures and protocols following federal and state health and safety guidelines throughout the pandemic and in planning for work in the field and building. The state continues to be under a state of emergency.
2. **PFC Guidelines: A summary of operational guidelines was presented to Executive Committee and approved at the August meeting.**
 - a. We continue to review additional guidance from CDC, OSHA, DCDEE as well as local government mandates as we provide services to families and children through PFC and tenants. This has been and will continue to be an evolving process. Cumberland County continues to operate under a mask mandate.
 - b. Department heads developed “return to work” plans. Staff has been working throughout the pandemic. Staggered schedules and teleworking are part of the “return to work” plans as we adjust for the needs of employees and business operations. Telework agreements are in the process of being updated for any staff whose work plan continues to include teleworking.
 - c. Vaccination for PFC staff: The Board of Directors adopted a vaccine mandate for staff. Those staff who requested exemptions (either religious or medical) have submitted those and accommodation plans have been developed. We continue to monitor requirements as they come down from OSHA, EEOC as well as

funders and partners. Staff who are vaccinated have been asked to provide documentation to HR of their vaccine status. We have extended our compliance deadline from December 1 to January 4.

- d. Virtual options for contact with families and providers continue, with face-to-face contact with families and providers available per DCDEE guidance. Purchases have been made to enhance health and safety in offices and for work in the field.
- e. A tenant meeting was held on December 9 to review procedures, hours of operation and opening to the public.
- f. With our front desk being fully staffed, we will open to the public effective January 3. COVID precautions, including masking in all common areas and cleaning of high touch areas, will continue. The focus continues to be on services by appointment. Current hours remain in place and meet the needs of tenants at this time.
- g. Per Policy HR 110, President maintains regular contact with Board Chair for review and continuation of services. Regular communication has gone out to Board and staff. Decisions are made based on federal, state and local government guidance and mandates.

D. PFC Updates & Highlights

1. **New Staff:** Welcome to Maggie Jenkins, Parent Educator with the ACE program, Jana Stakeley, Community Support Specialist with Family Connects and Amanda Hamilton, Information Assistant for the Front Desk. They have officially started.
2. **Farewell** to Toni Gross, Coach with NC Pre-K. Toni will be taking a position as a State Consultant in the Statesville area. Her last day will be January 7. We wish her well in her new endeavor.
3. **Position openings posted: website link** (<https://www.indeed.com/cmp/Partnership-For-Children-of-Cumberland-County>)
 - Case Worker, Family Services
 - Program Specialist (2), Family Services
 - Parent Educator (1), ACE Program
 - Library Program Specialist, Provider Services
 - Program Support Specialist, Family Connects
4. **Infrastructure Project:** We have received Steve Fleming's design and engagement letter for the next phase.
5. **Audit** – We have received and reviewed the final draft of the audit and expect our final copies shortly. It was a clean audit. The final step will be submitting it to the Federal Clearinghouse once we receive the final report.

E. Events

1. **Board and Committee Meetings:** Meetings have been conducted virtually through the duration of the COVID emergency. Equipment to upgrade the Charles Morris Room for hybrid meetings has been installed. We have had a few small hybrid meetings and continue to tweak the system. We will continue to monitor rates of COVID cases to determine when Board is in person with a hybrid option can begin.
2. **All Staff meetings:** We continue monthly virtual meetings due to the size of our staff. We had our holiday celebration virtually at the All Staff meeting on December 15.
3. **NC Pre-K Recruitment continues. Applications for School year 21-22 are online.** There is a drop box outside the front door for families to drop off applications. **We are continuing to recruit children. The workgroup formed to work on a Universal Application for Pre-K services continues to meet to get this system in place for recruitment for the 22-23 school year.**
4. **Drive-Through Truckload of Hope Diaper Bank: January 8, February 12, March 12, April 9, May 14 and June 11** from 8:30-10:30 am. Volunteers needed. Contact Daniele Malvesti (dmalvesti@ccpfc.org) if you can assist. We are working on a new check in system using Eventbrite.
5. **Little Land** (a family outreach event and fundraiser): **Now scheduled for May 14, 2022, 10:00 am-2:00 pm at the Crown Arena. More details to come.** For information or sponsorships, contact Sharon Moyer (smoyer@ccpfc.org).
6. Community Engagement planned Letters to Santa and virtual visits with Santa in December.