

NC Pre-K Directors Meeting
Thursday, May 25, 2023
President's Report

A. NCPC/DCDEE Updates / Legislative Updates

1. DCDEE

- DCDEE released the guidance for the \$20M for NC Pre-K and child care start-up, quality and capital expenses. These Child Care Expansion and Access Grants are one-time awards (up to \$125,000) to assist with new or expanded high-quality child care initiatives. Funding was set at \$10M for each round so that awards can be made for each Round. The application cycle for Round 1 counties closed May 1. Cumberland County was not in Round 1. Round 2 opened May 22 for licensed child care facilities in or planned for any county in North Carolina.
- **NC Pre-K**
 - a. Final processing is continuing for the last retro-payments,
 - b. **LETRS** – Documentation for **completion** of the LETRS training has been gathered by NC Pre-K staff for Lead Teachers in private sites and Head Start. This is part of contract compliance monitoring. This training was legislatively mandated for PreK – fifth grade. The documentation for completion of the LETRS training was also needed to determine eligibility for stipends that DCDEE received from DPI. These stipends have very specific guidelines and can only be used for Lead Teachers in private sites and Head Start who completed the LETRS training based on documentation received. Amendments are being prepared for those who submitted completed documentation by May 12. Information regarding make-up training and training sessions for new Lead Teachers has been shared.
 - c. The **2023-2024 Additional Guidance for NC Pre-K Programs** was published May 16, 2023.
 - Site Level Staff Flexibilities will continue for Long-term Substitutes and Interim Site Administrators
 - Additional flexibilities will apply to NC Pre-K Teacher Assistant education and credentials.
 - The \$4895 classroom rate to go towards teacher salaries has been converted to an increase of the standard rate. **The new rate for private sites will now be \$719. This was done with existing funding.**
 - At this time the state budget has not been finalized and there are no new rate increases.
 - d. DCDEE Monitoring for NC Pre-K is complete. There were no issues indicated in the items reviewed.
 - e. The Building Bright Futures Early Childhood Apprenticeship Program has been announced.
 - f. QRIS reassessments will be staggered in designated cohorts. Preparation will occur in FY 23-24 with cohorts beginning reassessments in FY 24-25.

- g. **Child Care Quality Ratings Modernization Outreach Meeting** (DCDEE)– June 15, 2023, 6:30-8:00 pm, Fayetteville Technical Community College, Tony Rand Student Center/Multipurpose Room.

2. NCPC

- **Funding for Family Connects Program** – This is the final year of the Federal PDG Grant for Regional Pilots for Family Connects. The Community Foundation funding for the Community Alignment Specialist position ends December 2024. Discussions are occurring around continued funding to sustain the pilots. Funding sources include carry-forward funds, potential new Smart Start funds, Medicaid revenue and collaboration with local partnerships in the pilot region.
- **CCHC Expansion Funds end June 30, 2023** – The new RFA from DCDEE provides limited funds; NCPC will not be submitting a proposal. Our CCHCs through the contract with the Health Department will continue to receive support from the NC Child Care Health and Safety Resource Center at UNC. The Board of Directors approved funding both CCHC positions utilizing Smart Start funding for FY 23-24.

3. State Level

- The Senate budget was released and voted on last week. Conferees will be appointed by the House and Senate and negotiations will occur within the Conference Committee.
- The NC Chamber Survey is attached.
- There are a number of bills related to early childhood initiatives that were filed by the May 4th cross-over date. While there is bipartisan support of early childhood initiatives, there have not been significant allocations in the House and/or Senate budgets.
- Medicaid Expansion was signed into law, but it will not become effective until the appropriations bill is signed and becomes law.
- On May 13, Governor Cooper vetoed the *Care for Women, Children, and Families Act*. The House and Senate voted on and passed a veto override.
- Leandro – No new updates.

4. Federal Level

- **Community Mental Wellness and Resilience Act** of 2023 will soon be reintroduced by US Representatives Paul Tonko (D-NY), Brian Fitzpatrick (R-PA) and co-sponsors in the House, and Senator Ed Markey (D-MA) and co-sponsors in the US Senate.
- **The Child Care for Working Families Act** was reintroduced on April 27, 2023 by both Congressman Robert Scott (D-VA) and Senator Patty Murray (D-WA).

B. Events/Community Outreach

1. **Little Land Saturday, February 10, 2024 – Save the Date.** There will be opportunities for providers to participate. Over 1,000 children and families participated in 2023.
2. **30th Anniversary for Partnership for Children of Cumberland County** – December 2023. The celebration will occur on Thursday, December 14 at the Partnership’s Family Resource Center. More details to come. Contact Sharon Moyer (smoyer@ccpfc.org) if you are interested in being on the planning committee.