

President's Report
Executive Committee (Acting on Behalf of Board)
Charles Morris Room/ Hybrid
Thursday, March 28, 2024

A. NCPC/DCDEE Updates / Legislative Updates

1. NCPC

- The Partnership is in the Allocation cycle for local funds for the next three years (FY 25, 26, & 27). **The Allocation Committee** has finalized its recommendations for activities and budgets to go the Board of Directors at their April meeting. The budgets are for FY25. Funding is contingent of state funding for each year of the three-year cycle.
- **Smart Start Reversions/Reallocations:** General Smart Start Funds Voluntary Reversion/Reallocation. We requested Reallocation funds for WAGES but withdrew our request. There were more requests than reversions from the network. After assessing internal budgets, it was determined that PFC could decrease internal funds and provide additional funds to WAGES to give a percentage increase for the second half of the year. This budget amendment has been executed.
- **Tri-Share Pilots** – NCPC and the three pilot hubs are finalizing processes with a timeline for services to begin in June 2024. Partners for Children & Families of Moore County has provided tools to begin assessing interest from employers in the region. Their flyer with information is included with the President's Report.
- **NCPC's 2024 Smart Start Legislative One Pager** is attached.

2. DCDEE

- **Region 5** reimbursements continue to be in arrears. We continue to be in touch with Southwestern Child Development Commission and DCDEE regarding delays in payment. This is the second consecutive year that payments have been significantly in arrears from Southwestern Child Development Commission for the Region 5 grants. The amount in arrears is currently close to \$300,000.
- **NC Pre-K:** Notice has been received that the waiver for Teaching Assistants to get their CDA (Child Development Associate certification) and for the use of Long-Term Substitutes for longer than twelve weeks will not be in place for school year 24-25.

3. State Level

- Short Session of the General Assembly begins Wednesday, April 24th.

4. Federal Level

- The final budget package was passed by the House and Senate and then signed by President Biden on March 23rd, averting a federal shutdown. This completes the budget cycle for FY24. There was a \$1 billion increase in funding for child care and early childhood programs, including an additional \$725 million (a 9% increase) for the Child Care and Development Block Grant. Additionally, the bill maintained funding for the Preschool Development Grant B-5 program.
- The Administration for Children and Families, Office of Child Care announce a new rule that will lower costs for families that receive child care subsidies, improve payment practices to child care providers, and increase families' child care options. The rule limits the amount that families pay to no more than 7 percent of their household income and makes it easier for Lead Agencies to eliminate co-payments for may more families. Lead agencies can request temporary transitional waivers for up

to two years to ensure there is enough time to execute steps necessary to be in compliance with the full rule.

5. Local Level

- We are watching the local elections and keeping up with the topics they bring to light.
- We will be seeking new tenants for Tower I (Smart Start) in the next few months.

B. Grant Opportunities/Updates/RFPs

- Staff continues to explore additional grant funding to sustain the Family Connects Program.

C. Staff Updates

- **Farewell Von McNeill, NC Pre-K Case worker.** We wish Von well as she settles into retirement
- **Welcome Shaun Savarese, Visual Communications Designer in Community Engagement.** Shaun started on March 25th.
- **Open positions are on the PFC website with a link to Indeed.** If you have any questions, please get in touch with Anthony Ramos (aramos@ccpfc.org).

D. Events/Community Outreach

- **NC Pre-K Let's Get Enrolled** launched January 17, 2024 for applications for the 2024-2025 school year. Please share the URL: ccpfc.org/letsgetenrolled
- **Kindness Awards event is slated for November 2024.**
- **SAVE THE DATE for Little Land, Saturday, February 15, 2025.**

Becoming a Tri-Share Business

Recruit, Retain, and Support Your Employees for a Thriving Business

Partners for Children & Families of Moore County is implementing Tri-Share in Moore, Chatham, Cumberland, Hoke, Montgomery, Richmond, Scotland, and Union Counties.

Through this innovative new approach, child care expenses are shared by the employer, the employee, and the State to assist qualifying employees with child care costs.

Benefits of Tri-Share

- ✓ Helps with employee recruitment
- ✓ Helps with employee retention
- ✓ Enhances the benefits to employees

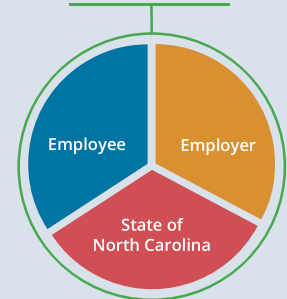
Employers must commit to provide a new benefit to their employees by covering a 3rd of the cost of child care and a 9% administration fee. Employees must also pay a 9% administration fee.

Employee Eligibility Salary Levels

To qualify, employees must have a household income between 185%-300% of the Federal Poverty Level and be otherwise ineligible for other subsidized child care. Levels are calculated each year.

Household Size	Yearly Income (185%-300% of federal poverty level)
Two Person	\$36,482- \$59,160
Three Person	\$45,991-\$74,580
Four Person	\$55,500-\$90,000
Five Person	\$65,009-\$105,420
Six Person	\$74,518- \$120,840
Seven Person	\$84,027- \$136,260
Eight Person	\$93,536- \$151,680

Cost of Child Care Shared Three Ways



Timeline

- March 2024
Recruitment Begins
- ↓
- April 2024
Enrollment Begins
- ↓
- June 2024
Service Begins



**Tri-Share is being developed now.
Express your interest early to provide employee benefits this summer!**

Business name _____ Contact person _____

Contact number & email address _____

Indication that the employer is interested in Tri-Share (without making a commitment at this time) _____



Smart Start 2024 Legislative Priorities

Smart Start provides critical infrastructure for NC’s early childhood system by ensuring each community has the resources needed for young children, families, and providers to thrive. Smart Start’s innovative programs prepare children for kindergarten and equip families for success. Through investment in the early childhood education workforce and partnerships with businesses and the state of NC, Smart Start is addressing the child care crisis and helping to boost the economy.

To continue meeting the needs of NC’s young children, their families, those who care for and educate them, and the business community, Smart Start requests the following:

- ✓ Increase funding with an **additional \$10 million** in unrestricted recurring funds to maximize impact.
- ✓ Change \$1.5 million, **nonrecurring** funding for Dolly Parton’s Imagination Library (DPIL) in the 2023-2025 fiscal biennium to **recurring** to enhance investments in early literacy.

Increase funding with an additional \$10 million in unrestricted recurring funds.



NC’s Investment:

Smart Start’s state appropriation has remained at \$157 million since 2022—even as NC passed a \$30 billion state budget for SFY 2023-2024. In fact, Smart Start’s current appropriation is only 68% of its SFY 2000-2001 budget – despite greater needs – especially as the early childhood education system continues to recover from the ongoing challenges of COVID-19.



Smart Start’s Current Impact:

Quality Early Education & Workforce Development and Compensation

- ✓ 4,100+ child care teachers received compensation support statewide in 2023. Of these, 85% remained in their positions throughout the year.
- ✓ 21,000+ teachers received support with higher education and training statewide in 2023. This contributed to 55% of children enrolled in 1-5 star centers having at least 75% of lead teachers with a college degree.

Family Support and Resource Referrals

- ✓ 29 Smart Start Local Partnerships provided family support programming in community settings to 1,900+ families, thereby enhancing child and parent interactions.
- ✓ 16 Smart Start Local Partnerships implemented family support programs for 1,698 participants, referring parents and guardians to needed resources. Over 67% of participants used at least one referral service.

Advancing Health Activities in Early Care and Education Settings

- ✓ 50% of Smart Start Local Partnerships supported their communities with programs to improve various health outcomes, such as administering early intervention screenings for children.
- ✓ 413 child care facilities received technical assistance, child care health consultation, and other supports, improving knowledge, practices, and policies of nutrition and physical health for providers.



Future Impact:

In SFY 2021-2022, a \$10 million increase provided 12% more funding for family support; 10% more funding for prenatal, newborn, and early health services; and 7% more for early care and education services. **Additional funding will continue this trend.**

Change \$1.5 million, nonrecurring funding for DPIL to recurring funding to enhance investments in early literacy.



NC's Investment:

- ✓ In 2017, Smart Start received \$7 million recurring funds to increase access to DPIL.
- ✓ During the 2023-2025 fiscal biennium, Smart Start received \$1.5 million nonrecurring funds for each state fiscal year of the biennium only.



Smart Start's Current Impact:

- ✓ 50% of North Carolina's children aged 0-5 participate in DPIL, increasing from 8% in 2017.
- ✓ DPIL surveys reveal positive outcomes:
 - Parents who participated in DPIL for any length of time reported an increase in reading to their children daily from 39% before they began receiving books to nearly 62% after participating in DPIL.
 - 47% of families reported receiving books they would have been unable to purchase without DPIL.
 - 86% of families reported receiving books they were unaware existed before access to DPIL.



Future Impact:

An additional \$1.5 million will help Smart Start continue to provide program support, pay for books and postage costs, and decrease waitlist totals for communities. For example:

- ✓ Approximately 300,000 children will continue to receive books monthly with book expenses averaging \$630,000 monthly and \$2.10 per book (\$7,565,000).
- ✓ 68% of Smart Start Local Partnerships need continued funding for program support such as hiring staff and increasing outreach for program expansion to support families by making them aware of the opportunity to help with their child's development. (\$850,000).
- ✓ Additional funding is needed for NCPC to manage and evaluate DPIL (\$85,000).



Smart Start Collaborative Priorities

Smart Start is also working collaboratively to improve NC's early childhood education system and boost NC's economy. Smart Start aims to support the "Workforce Behind the Workforce" by:

- ✓ Expanding Child Care WAGE\$ for early care and education providers to all 100 NC counties, making it statewide.
- ✓ Extending the stabilization grants for compensation to child care providers through June 2025.

Investing in Smart Start means investing in North Carolina.



For over thirty years, Smart Start has been a critical part of NC's early childhood system and has worked to improve outcomes for children, families, teachers, and child care providers—leading to a better future for NC's businesses, our economy, and our state's youngest.

The North Carolina Partnership for Children

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