How does Wake County SmartStart make funding decisions?

Each year, with the support of community workgroups, Wake County SmartStart's Program Planning Committee studies Wake County's needs and assesses the gaps in services for children birth to 5. These workgroups, representing early care and education and special needs and health, are comprised of community leaders, childcare professionals, nonprofit agency representatives and staff. The workgroups identify services that would fill an existing gap in service, or modify and strengthen existing programs.

Next, a series of community information sessions are held in which Wake County SmartStart's values, guiding principles and bidding requirements are presented. Organizations are invited to submit a proposal which outlines a creative, competitive solution to the community issues previously identified by the Program Planning Committee and community workgroups. The community organization which submits a proposal is essentially saying it will manage a program that would fill an existing gap in services or strengthen an existing program.

Wake County SmartStart staff reviews all submitted proposals and budget materials, develops a recommendation and organizes the information for the Allocation Committee chairperson. The Allocation Committee reviews the information and develops a funding recommendation for each service and agency. The Allocation Committee chair presents this information to Wake County SmartStart's Board of Directors. When funding recommendations are approved by the Board of Directors, WCSS goes into contract with the funded agencies.