

**Wake County SmartStart
Board of Directors Meeting
June 24, 2009**

A regular meeting of the Wake County SmartStart Board of Directors occurred on Wednesday, June 24, 2009 in the conference room of the Wake County SmartStart offices located at 1121 Situs Court, Suite 250 in Raleigh, North Carolina.

Board members in attendance were Mary Ellen Anderson, Dale Cousins, Randy Innes, Giang Le, Shanté Martin, Carol Mitchell, Peter Morris, Hannah Poteat, Gemimah Rodriguez, Donna Rutowski, Mike Smith, Norris L. Thurston, Michael Weisel and Jerraé Williams.

Board members absent and excused were Nell Barnes, Arvelis Byrd, Kevin Cain, Sandy Dietrich, Donna Hargens, Shirley Herndon, Michele Miller-Cox, Louise Orr, Camille Schaffer and David Zonderman.

Board member absent and unexcused was Harold Webb.

Guest in attendance was Dawn Dawson from the Wake County Public School System.

Staff members present were Gary Carr, Pat Clements, Nichelle Cole, Pamela Dowdy, Executive Director, John Guenther, Amy Hall, Helen Horne, Richelle Johnson, Marie Maguire, Elizabeth Santana, Melinda Schlesinger and Anna Troutman.

Welcome/Call to Order/Adoption of Agenda and Consent Agenda:

In the absence of Board Chair, David Zonderman, Vice-Chair, Shanté Martin recognized a quorum and called the meeting to order at 8:36am. Ms. Martin recognized a guest Dawn Dawson from the Wake County Public School System.

Donna Rutowski moved to adopt the agenda, Dale Cousins seconded. Calling for a vote and hearing no objections, the motion carried. (06-09-81)

Dale Cousins moved to adopt the consent agenda which included minutes from the April 22, 2009 Board of Directors Meeting, the May 2009 Financial Reports, the Administration/More at Four Operating Budget and a list of WCSS/DSP decommissioned fixed assets. Donna Rutowski seconded. Calling for a vote and hearing no objections, the motion carried. (06-09-82)

Committee Reports:

- **Allocations Committee:** WCSS Program Coordination and Evaluation Director, Anna Troutman, brought forth the Allocations Committee recommendations to:
 - 1) Sustain the recommendation of the Allocations Committee and the subsequent Board decision to de-fund Project Enlightenment's Child Screening, Referral and Support Program. Ms. Troutman noted that the Allocations Committee met on June 19, 2009 to review appeal materials submitted by Project Enlightenment, including the FY08-09 logic model, FY09-10 application and appeal letter. The committee determined that the factors leading to the decision to defund the program have not changed and do not support a case to override the original funding decision. Shanté Martin moved to accept the Allocations Committee Recommendation to sustain the de-funding of Project Enlightenment's Child Screening, Referral and Support Program. Calling for a vote and hearing no objections, the motion carried. (06-09-83)


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2) The Allocations Committee requests that the Board examine systemic issues contributing to the downward trend in the saturation rate of children (3-5 years old) receiving Pre-School Services and determine what, if any, factors are present that would affect future funding decisions or have service implications. The Board requested the Program Planning Committee examine the issue and bring a report back to the full Board by the December meeting. Hannah Poteat moved acceptance of the recommendation to review the systemic issues contributing to the downward trend in the saturation rate of children receiving Pre-School Services. Peter Morris seconded. Calling for a vote and hearing no objection, the motion carried. (06-09-84) The action was referred to the Program Planning Committee with a report due back at the December Board Meeting.

- **Executive Committee:** Vice Chair, Shanté Martin reported to the board on the Executive Committee approval of five furlough days for all WCSS staff beginning with the new fiscal year on July 1, 2009. It was determined, that with budget cuts, all in-house program and administration budgets would have approximately a 2% reduction in the personnel line, which equates to 5 unpaid workdays. These furlough days have been scheduled to coincide with current WCSS holidays on July 4th, Labor Day, Thanksgiving, Christmas and Memorial Day. Should funds be available at the end of the fiscal year, a process would be determined to allow staff to cash in vacation days and receive compensation for the furlough days taken. Due to the budgetary implications, the Finance Committee would review the proposal.
- **Finance Committee:** Committee Chair, Donna Rutowski brought the following updates to the Board:
 - 1) **Board Disclosures:** Attachment C.1 outlines revisions to the Board Conflict of Interest Disclosure statement. Ms. Rutowski noted that the current Conflict of Interest Policy was in the review process. Vice Chair, Shanté Martin has agreed to look over the current policy to suggest new language that would make the policy more concise and relevant to the current Boards needs.
 - 2) **Managing 2009-10 Budget:** Ms. Rutowski shared with the Board discussion from the June 11, 2009 Finance Committee Meeting regarding the FY2009-10 budget. The Finance Committee spent time in thorough discussion and forecasting of what the next fiscal year would bring. The committee recommends a conservative approach be adopted throughout the course of the fiscal year and reassess after the first quarter of the year.

Legislative Update:

Vice Chair, Shanté Martin provided the Board with a brief update on the state of the budget. She noted that proposed allocations changed late last night and that there is still considerably uncertainty in both the revenue and expense sides of the budget debate. Executive Director, Pam Dowdy informed the Board that the House and Senate are now in negotiations to find a compromise between the two budgets.

Ms. Dowdy shared the outcome of our Tuesdays for Tots. We had great support from Kaplan, who provided breakfast for our volunteers and from Child Care Networks who provided transportation to and from the legislature. Three teams of volunteers met with Wake County's Representatives and Senators. Ms. Dowdy and Board Chair, David Zonderman made another visit the following week to meet with those who were unavailable on June 2.

Executive Director's Report:

Executive Director, Pam Dowdy began her update by directing the Board to attachment D.1. The attachment is an application to become a co-sponsor of the Step Up for Kids '09 event. This event, sponsored by the Every Child Matters Education Fund (ECMEF), is a nationwide, non-partisan event to highlight the status of our nation's children. This year's event will bring thousands together the week of October 5-9, 2009 at state capitols and in Washington, DC. NCPC has signed on as a co-sponsor. Other local organizations involved include Action for Children North Carolina, The Child Care Coalition and The Covenant with North Carolina's Children.

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There is no formal commitment or obligation on our part to participate but we would be welcome to gather a group of volunteers to attend should the interest be strong enough. Giang Le motioned to approve the submission of the application for Wake County SmartStart to co-sponsor the Step Up for Kids '09 event, Randy Innes seconded. Calling for a vote and hearing no objection the motion carried. (06-09-85)

Other items on Ms. Dowdy's report included:

- NCPC has not yet made a formal notification, but we expect that the reversion penalties for FY2009-10 will be suspended. NCPC also approved the process for LP cuts using a two-fold strategy of across the board cuts and tiered cuts depending on the percentage of need funded.
- Because of the Board Retreat, a chart of acronyms was developed to help with organizational references. These charts will be accessible at every Board meeting.
- As part of the Board Governance process staff have been working on Succession Planning and Dashboards. Updates on these processes will be shared with the Executive Committee in July.
- The newly revised Wake County SmartStart website was launched. It will include a new feature for board members; with access to an online version of Board Resource Manual materials as well as a place to view meeting agendas and other materials specifically for board information. Additional information will be forthcoming.
- WCSS is proud of their involvement with Head Start expansion applications that includes additional slots and an Early Head Start component.
- There has been an expansion in WCPSS Title One program of over 600 slots.
- WCSS has been experiencing year-end cash flow issues. The state has been slow to pay out on contracts. Finance staff is working with the Office of School Readiness to track availability of these funds.
- WCSS has received a clean audit for FY2007-08, the first under new Controller, Gary Carr.

With no other business to address Vice Chair, Shanté Martin entertained a motion to adjourn at 9:33 am from Hannah Poteat, Donna Rutowski seconded. Calling for a vote and hearing no objections, the motion carried. (06-09-86)



Board Secretary Signature

8-28-09

Date

