

Wake County Board of Commissioners
Special Work Session Pre-K
June 24, 2019
10:00 a.m.
Wake County Justice Center, Room 2800

Commissioners Present:

Chair Jessica Holmes
Vice Chair Greg Ford
Commissioner Vickie Adamson
Commissioner Matt Calabria
Commissioner Susan Evans
Commissioner James West

Commissioner Not Present:

Commissioner Hutchinson arrived at 10:30 a.m.

Wake County Staff Present:

David Ellis, County Manager; Chris Dillon, Assistant County Manager; Derwick Paige, Chief Community Vitality Officer; Scott Warren, County Attorney; Bill Greeves, Chief Information and Innovation Officer; Denise Foreman, Assistant County Manager; Lisa Provencher, Senior Executive Assistant; Dara Demi, Communications Director; Emily Lucas, Chief Financial Officer; Jason Horton, Strategic Performance Director; Michelle Venditto, Budget Director; Heather Drennan, Deputy Budget and Management Services Director; Paarth Mehta, Senior Budget and Management Analyst; Margaret Murphy, Senior Budget and Management Analyst ; Chris Dillon, Assistant County Manager; Regina Petteway, Director, Human Services; Yvonne Gilyard, Deputy Clerk to the Board; Denise Hogan, Clerk to the Board; Michelle Cerett, Executive Assistant to the Board; and Kelly Stratton, External Communications Manager.

Others Present:

Gail Headen, Executive Director, Wake County Smart Start; Pam Dowdy, former Director, Wake County Smart Start; Jim Hansen, PNC Financial Services; Susan Gates, SAS; Adrienne Cole, President and CEO, The Greater Raleigh Chamber of Commerce; Dawn Dawson, WCPSS; and Scott Hadley, SAS.

Meeting Called to Order:

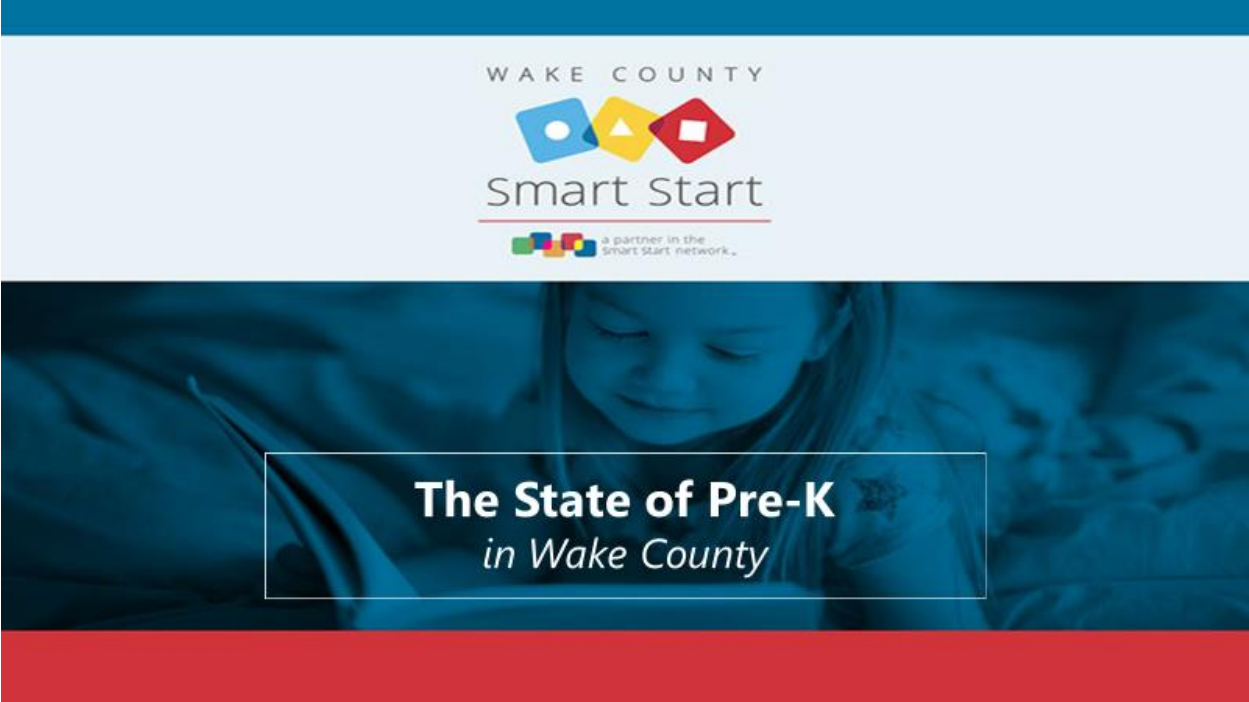
Chair Holmes called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m. and welcomed everyone to the meeting. She thanked Ms. Pam Dowdy, former Director, Smart Start, for being in attendance.

Ms. Emily Lucas, Chief Financial Officer, opened with information about today's meeting regarding Pre-K. She announced the presenters for the day. She thanked Ms. Margaret Murphy, Senior Budget and Management Analyst, for her assistance on this project.

Today's Agenda

1. Pre-K Overview – Wake County Smart Start
2. Pre-K Research – Jim Hansen, PNC and Susan Gates, SAS
3. SAS Dashboard Demo - SAS
4. Legislative Update – Chris Dillon, Wake County

Ms. Gayle Headen, Executive Director, Wake County Smart Start, thanked the Board of Commissioners and County Manager David Ellis for their commitment and investment to children and support of the Smart Start initiative. She thanked Chair Holmes for the vision to bring all the partners together today. She also thanked the partners, WCPSS, Human Services, legislators and the business community.



She shared the Wake County Smart Start initiative.

Wake County Smart Start

Recognized leader in early childhood development since formation in 1996.

Convener, collaborator and funder – working with Wake’s key agencies that serve young children.

Along with investments in early education, health, and family support services, works to improve our early childhood system.

Provides expertise, guidance, and infrastructure so that children receive the care and nurturing they need to thrive.



She shared the Smart Start mission.



Each Child. Every Community. Ready for School and Life.

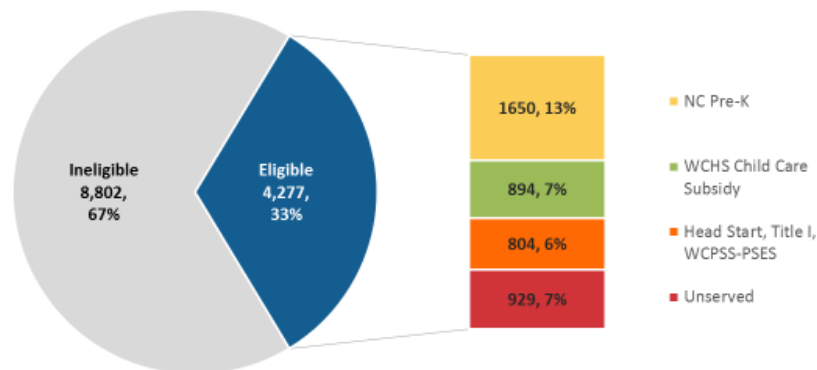
Our mission is to build the capacity of families and the community to prepare children for success in school and in life.

- With a prioritization of resources for children and families with the "greatest need".



She shared the NC Pre-K Need analysis.

NC Pre-K Need

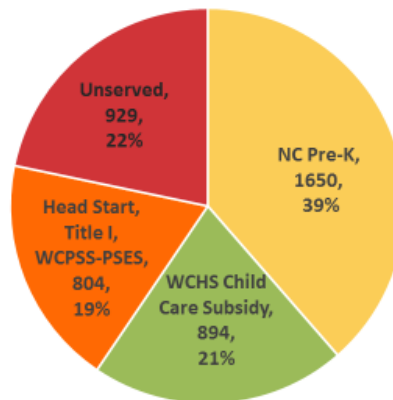


Number of 4 year olds: 13,079



She shared the NC Pre-K eligible 4-year-old diagram that denotes where children may or may not be served.

NC Pre-K Eligible 4 Year Olds



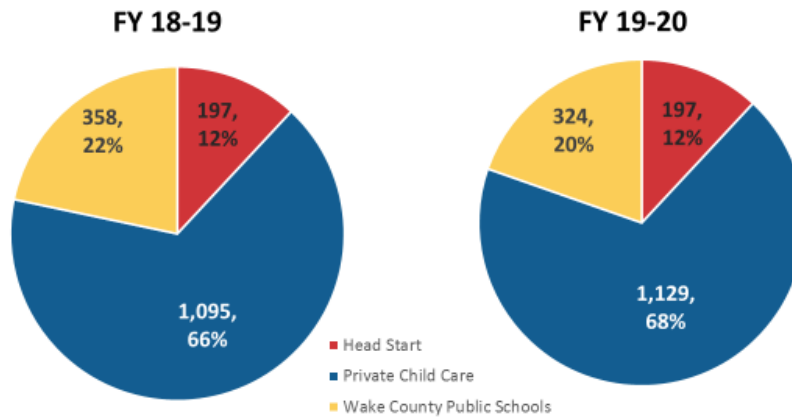
Number of Eligible 4 year olds: 4,277



She shared the diagram of Pre-K children being served by setting and by the year.

Commissioner West asked about the 1,000 children that are not being served. Ms. Headen said this is because the lack of funding and the lack of capacity to serve them.

NC Pre-K Children Being Served By Setting and Year

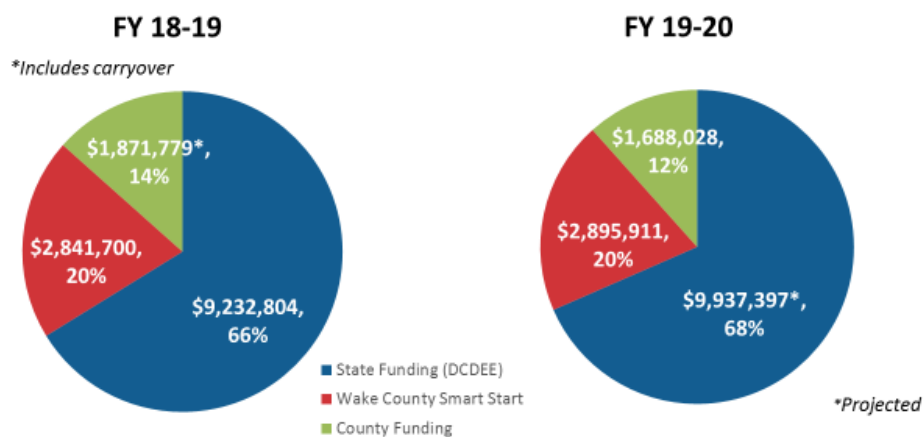


Chair Holmes asked about FY 18-19 chart and asked if there was a systematic change that is attributable for the increase of NC Pre-K children being served.

Ms. Headen said the adjustment is so that WCPSS can plan a budget at the beginning of the school year.

She shared the Pre-K children being served by funding source and year chart.

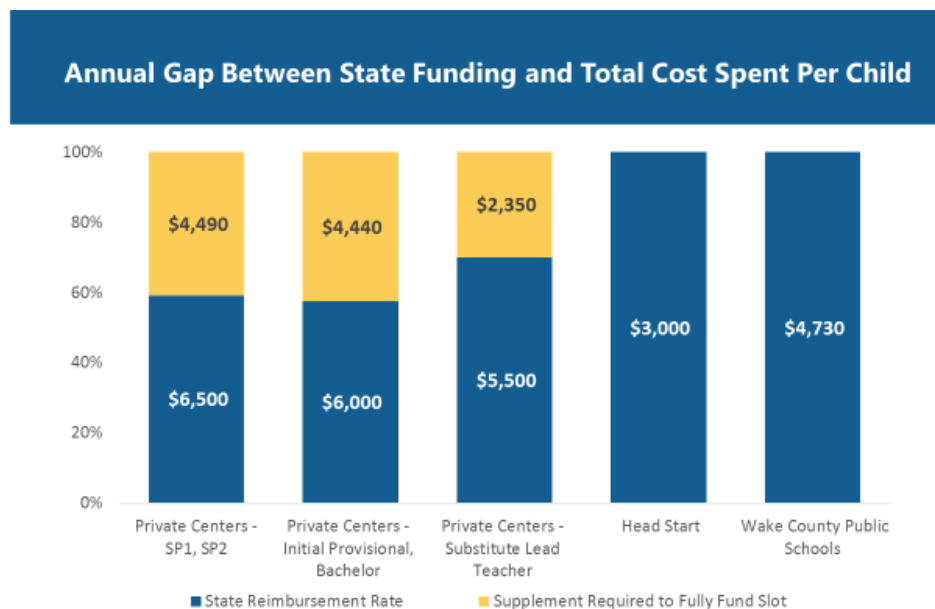
NC Pre-K Children Being Served By Funding Source and Year



Commissioner West asked about the rural versus urban divide and the competition regarding funding. Ms. Headen said that there has not been a funding increase since 2012.

Chair Holmes asked if the carryover funds available would allow Smart Start to maximize as many state slots as possible. Ms. Headen said that this is correct. Ms. Headen said that the funds from Wake County help make the difference based on the number of children being served which is 50 percent. She said that Smart Start has received \$1.5 million from the county and this allows Smart Start to serve an additional 100 more children. She said that currently state funds are not being used.

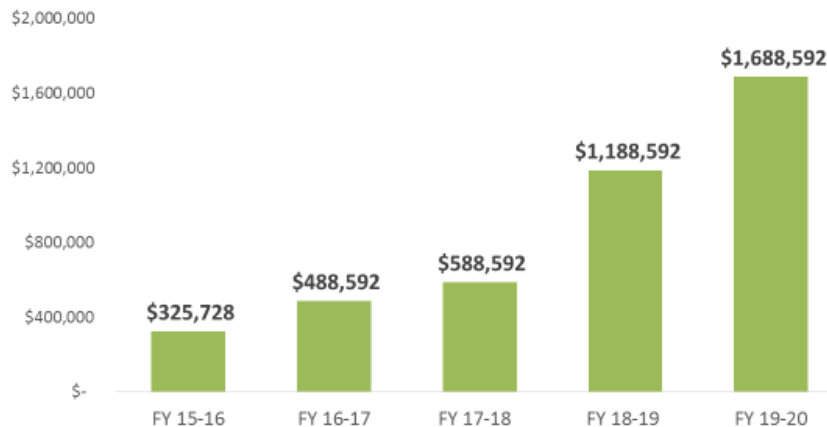
She shared the annual gap between state funding and total cost spent per child.



Commissioner Hutchinson arrived at 10:30 a.m.

Ms. Headen shared the county funding.

County Funding



Chair Holmes asked where the funding was prior to FY15-FY16. Ms. Headen shared that there was no available funding from the county. Ms. Headen said that the information provided indicates that Wake County is a model.

Commissioner West asked if many of the Pre-K students are from vulnerable communities. Ms. Headen agreed. He shared that there is a program called Social and Economic Vitality and Vulnerable Communities and the children do not receive wrap around services. He asked if there was additional support available. He said that the program should look at the whole child.

Ms. Headen said that 60 children in NC Pre-K are being served by childcare subsidies. She shared the Wake Connections program and the purpose of the program and how it serves children and families.

Commissioner Adamson asked about the underserved children (929 children) and how many could be served and how many are not being served based on parent's decisions.

Ms. Anna Troutman, Director of Programs, said the goal is to have children ready for kindergarten. She said that they will have the emotional and social support. She spoke about the Parents as Teachers program. She said that it is important to remember other factors and supports that are available.

Commissioner West said that this is a paradox. Ms. Headen said that of the 929 children that are eligible and not being served; this is 25 percent of the total number represented.

Commissioner Calabria said that even where there is Universal Breakfast for Pre-K, there are still children not being served. He shared his thoughts on establishing a multi-year plan to produce greater numbers for enrollment. He asked if this could be used as a model.

Ms. Headen said that this could be used as a model.

Chair Holmes asked for an exact number of children that are eligible and want to be served. She said that Ms. Dowdy shared with her that there is no exact number because there is no wait list once slots have been filled. Ms. Headen said that there is not a wait list because it is a one-year program.

Ms. Dowdy said that staff is shifting to a statistical projection using economical statistics to get qualifiable numbers.

Mr. David Ellis, County Manager, asked when the county could expect state increased funding. Ms. Headen said that she participates on weekly calls and there is conversation between the state and the senate.

Commissioner Hutchinson said that he has an interest in the program for 3-yr. old children. He asked for an update on the 3 - year old and preparedness.

Ms. Headen said that Smart Start has started following this age group by doing home visits. She said that the state puts their money toward 4-year-old programs. She said that Smart Start will begin looking at a program for the 0-3-year old age group.

Commissioner Hutchinson asked about the home visits and how many children are being served. Ms. Headen shared the programs that are available. Ms. Troutman said that there are about 500 children being served, ages 0-3 years of age.

Chair Holmes asked about the Dolly Parton Imagination Library program. Ms. Headen said that all the books are age appropriate. She said that 25,000 children are being served through the Dolly Parton Imagination Book program.

Ms. Headen said that 95 percent of the children that graduate are being measured on readiness.

Ms. Headen shared the summary.

Summary

- **95% of NC Pre-K graduates measure ready for kindergarten** using literacy measures.
- **The #1 way we can affect Wake County graduation rates** and have a ready workforce **is to invest in high quality preschool.**
- The **state reimbursement rate has not increased** since 2012.
- **When the state appropriates for dollars for Pre-K, it is for more slots, but it does not increase the reimbursement rate.**
- If we want **to advance Pre-K** in Wake County, **we must lead locally.**



Commissioner West asked about emotional intelligence and nurturing and asked if it is incorporated in the Pre-K program. Ms. Headen shared that Smart Start looks at the whole child.

Ms. Headen acknowledged the Head Start staff that was present.

Vice Chair Ford asked about Title I programs as it relates to eligibility and expanding programs. He asked if there is expansion for federal Title I funding based on demographics.

Ms. Dawn Dawson, WCPSS, said that Title I funding does increase based on academic needs and has been in effect for the last 7-8 years.

THANK YOU!

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

Contact:

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Chair Holmes thanked Mr. Jim Hansen, PNC, for their support of Pre-K research.

Mr. Jim Hansen said that there is quality access to Pre-K. He said that there are 120,000 Pre-K students in NC and only 30,000 are being served. He said that other states have higher numbers as it relates to assisting Pre-K students.

Ms. Susan Gates, SAS, shared the information from a study completed in February 2017. The study was about why the business community should care about Pre-K children.



Ms. shared the highlighted research.

1. May 2019 General Assembly evaluation of high performing schools and value of NC Pre-K (packet includes 34-page study and one-page summary)
2. December 2016 Business Roundtable study on improving literacy rates (packet includes 40-page study and one-page summary)
3. 2018 NIEER report on barriers to Pre-K expansion in NC
4. December 2018 one-page summary on impact of NC Pre-K by Duke University

She shared the General Assembly report.

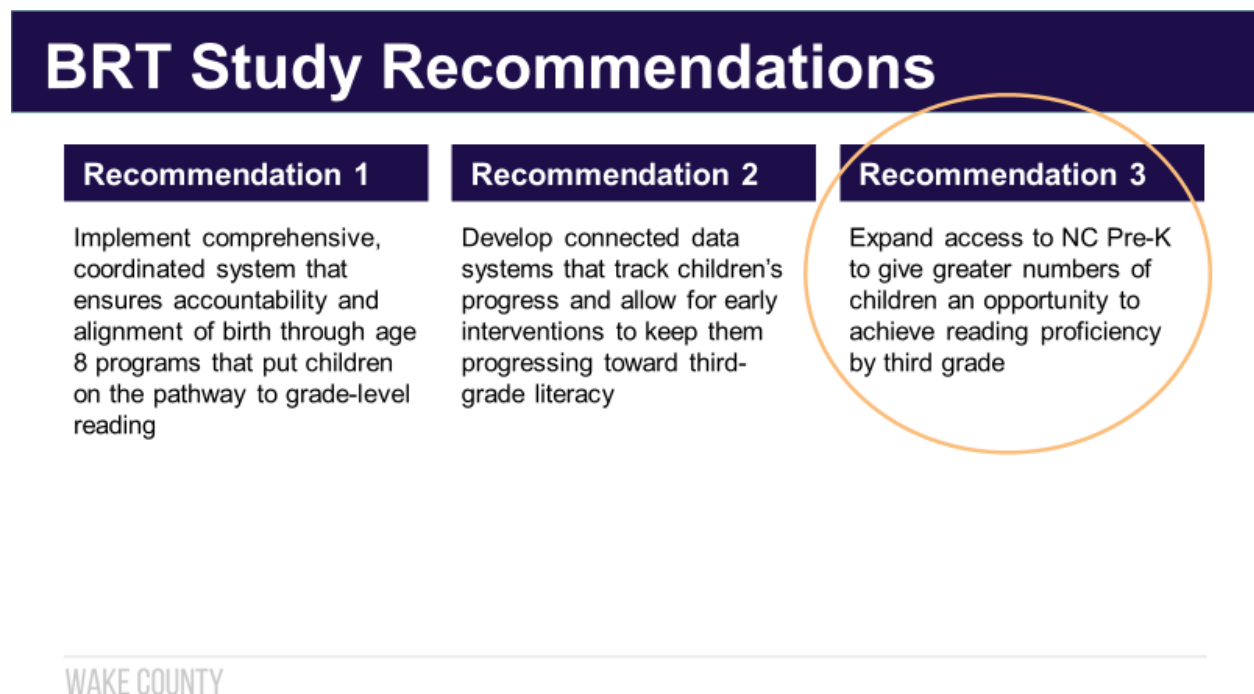
- Evaluated economically disadvantaged districts performing at grade level (7 out of 45 economically disadvantaged districts)
- High performing school districts separate themselves by 3rd grade
- Main pathway to high performance in disadvantaged districts is achievement before 3rd grade
- In 2017, four of the five North Carolina counties evaluated had 75 percent or more of their eligible children participating in NC Pre-K

She shared the NIEER report findings.

Number of children eligible for NC Pre-K exceeds capacity

- Resources available often do not cover costs
- Recommends modifying NC Pre-K funding structure by:
 - o Developing target for expansion
 - o Increasing reimbursement rates
 - o Providing supplemental funding for teacher compensation and allowing more administrative costs
 - o Exploring better use of child care subsidy funding

She shared the BRT study recommendations.

A graphic titled "BRT Study Recommendations" in white text on a dark blue background. Below the title are three white boxes, each with a dark blue header. The first box is titled "Recommendation 1" and contains the text "Implement comprehensive, coordinated system that ensures accountability and alignment of birth through age 8 programs that put children on the pathway to grade-level reading". The second box is titled "Recommendation 2" and contains the text "Develop connected data systems that track children's progress and allow for early interventions to keep them progressing toward third-grade literacy". The third box is titled "Recommendation 3" and contains the text "Expand access to NC Pre-K to give greater numbers of children an opportunity to achieve reading proficiency by third grade". This third box is circled in orange.

BRT Study Recommendations

Recommendation 1	Recommendation 2	Recommendation 3
Implement comprehensive, coordinated system that ensures accountability and alignment of birth through age 8 programs that put children on the pathway to grade-level reading	Develop connected data systems that track children's progress and allow for early interventions to keep them progressing toward third-grade literacy	Expand access to NC Pre-K to give greater numbers of children an opportunity to achieve reading proficiency by third grade

WAKE COUNTY

Chair Holmes asked how Wake County is doing versus other counties with Pre-K. Ms. Gates said that their numbers came from the census and DHHS. She said that there are 36 percent of children who are eligible for services.

Mr. Hansen shared the dashboard for Wake County.



Commissioner West asked why low-income white children are not being served. Ms. Gates said that it can be an outreach question, but this happens across the state. She said that some counties do not have children of color.

Commissioner Calabria asked if these numbers could be measured on the census tract. Ms. Gates shared a slide of the eligible children not being served in NC. She shared the comparisons by counties.

There was discussion about the various counties and the disparities for Pre-K students.

Ms. Dowdy said that the challenge is the lack of capacity or knowledge about what is going to happen to Pre-K services. She said that there is no definite start date and Smart Start is asked to act quickly when funding from the state is available and slots are available.

Commissioner Hutchinson thanked staff for their work. He also thanked Ms. Adrienne Cole, The Greater Raleigh Chamber of Commerce, President & CEO.

Commissioner Evans thanked the business community. She thanked them for the first steps.

Chair Holmes said that Pre-K is a workforce development issue.

Legislative Update

Mr. Dillon, Assistant County Manager, shared the Legislative Funding.

- Fiscal Year 2019 Budget Included
 - \$9.35 million increase in FY 2020 (base budget)
 - \$9.35 million increase in FY 2021 (base budget)
 - Governor's FY 2020 Proposed Budget
 - 8% increase in reimbursement rate
 - 2% increase in administrative support
- House Budget FY 2020 Proposed Budget
 - 2% increase in reimbursement rate (child care centers only)
- Senate Budget FY 2020 Proposed Budget
 - 2% increase in reimbursement rate (child care centers only)

He shared the community partners.

- Adrienne Cole, President & CEO, Greater Raleigh Chamber of Commerce
- L'Teisha Curtis, Head Start Director, Telamon Corporation
- Dawn Dawson, Senior Director for Early Learning, Wake County Public School System
- Pam Dowdy, *Former* Executive Director, Wake County Smart Start
- Susan Gates, Special Advisor on Education, SAS Institute Inc.
- Jim Hansen, Regional President, PNC
- Gayle Headen, Executive Director, Wake County Smart Start
- Scott Huntley, System Design Engineer, SAS Institute Inc.
- Paul Koh, Assistant Superintendent for Student Support Services, Wake County Public School System
- Suzanne Orozco, Executive Director, Telamon Corporation
- Rebecca Quinn-Wolf, SVP, Director, Client & Community Relations, PNC
- Anna Troutman, Program Director, Wake County Smart Start

Discussion:

Ms. Headen shared that information from the local level has not been shared with Smart Start.

Commissioner Calabria asked if staff can begin the work on multi-year plans or rubric.

Chair Holmes said that barriers are within the election cycles. She said that she would like to continue the conversation with the board and the legislature.

Ms. Headen said that Smart Start can provide budget modeling for the next three years.

Commissioner West asked if this would overlap with the BOC budget.

Chair Holmes said that this presentation helps arrive to the end goal and is not an allocation outside of the board's budget cycle. She said that this budget assist with the board's goals.

Commissioner Calabria said that he is not convinced that Pre-K needs to be on this list and asked whether the Board of Commissioners could find a way to work it into Wake County's budget.

Commissioner West said integrate accountability and value.

Adjourn

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 12:47 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Yvonne Gilyard, NCCC
Deputy Clerk to the Board
Wake County Board of Commissioners