



Graham County Smart Start / Local Interagency Coordinating Council Team
Meeting Minutes
Date: 3/13/25
Minutes completed by Jody Miller

Welcome and Introductions

Syvella Symonds (Maximus); Cecilia Estremera (Vaya); Chrystal Mimbs (Catholic Charities); Jamie Bryant (LANC); Sunny Pringle (Schools); Brittany Sellers (NFP); Jenni Irwin (Vaya); Lori Baker (LANC); Mark Pilon (Mtn Projects); Desiree During (AmeriHealth Caritas); and Jody Miller (RAPC/FSN)

Presentations

Barbara provided the group with information on NC PreK. The application is in the process of being translated to Spanish as soon as it is ready will be up on the website. Free program to qualified children in all counties. It is a 6.5 or more hour per day program, 5 days a week through 10 months. Gets the children ready for kindergarten. A family needs to go to the provider where they would like to enroll the child and complete the NC PreK application and enrollment paperwork. Need a birth certificate and a way to verify income such as a W2, tax return, or pay stubs. If you receive any type of public assistance, complete page 5 and no other income verification is needed. There are other ways to qualify if over income such as the child having an IEP, homeless, medical condition, or military family. Besides being income eligible, the child needs to be 4 by 8/31 of the year. Sites have their own requirements in which the lead teacher needs to have a bachelors degree in Birth through K, be a 4 or 5 star site, a 5.0 or higher on the ECERS, and use an approved curriculum. Currently serving 47 children in Graham County and 520 region-wide. Any questions please reach out to Barbara, NC Pre-K Coordinator, 828-226-6445, bjefferys@rapc.org, www.rapc.org/ncprek.

Chrystal provided attendees with an overview of Catholic Charities Diocese of Charlotte. One does not need to be catholic in order to receiving assistance. Catholic Charities helps with the following areas: Adoption and Pregnancy Support; Burial Assistance; Case Management; Disaster Relief; Elder Ministries; Food Assistance; Housing Permanency Services; Infant Clothing Closets; Legal Immigration Services; Mental Health Counseling; Refugee Services; Social Concerns and Advocacy; Stay the Course; Supportive Services for Veteran Families; Transition Out of Poverty; and Youth Empowerment Opportunity Program. The Murphy office which serves Cherokee, Clay, Graham and Swain Counties as well as the Qualla Boundary offers direct assistance in helping with food, baby supplies, disaster relief, case management, help with utility, rent and housing; food and diaper hygiene ministry with diapers of various sizes; elder

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	<p>assistance which could just be sitting and talking for a few minutes; low case of case management; and, burial assistance. Assistance of other services may be available through the Asheville office. For questions or assistance reach out to Chrystal Mimbs, Case Coordinator, Catholic Charities Diocese of Charlotte, 27 Hatchett Street, Murphy NC 28906, Phone: 828-270-3067, Fax: 828-835-9794 or CLMimbs@ccdcc.org.</p>
Upcoming Presentations	<p>April—No meeting May—No meeting June—Planning for next fiscal year</p>
Smart Start Strategic Plan	<p>A focus for the team is on children in households that are food insecure: 15.5% in 2021 from 22.2% in 2019. The concern is that the number may have dropped, however is still high.</p> <p>A second focus area is teen pregnancy at 40.8 according to the Roadmap of Need County Profile.</p> <p>A third focus area is children without health insurance: 7.9% in 2021 from 6/2% in 2020. A slight increase.</p>
LICC Strategic Plan	Child find event
Activities to Achieve Strategies	<p>Child Find Event Share food resource list at events</p>
General Team Goals	<p>Desired outputs for 2024 - 2025: Number of meetings/times review goals: 8 (8); Number of events: 1 (2); Number of team member / community presentations: 7 (9).</p>
Old / New Business	N/A
Planned Community Events	N/A
What worked, what should we do differently, and when do we meet again	Our next meeting is scheduled for June 12, 2025

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