

## **Wilmington Education Improvement Commission – Meeting the Needs of Children in Poverty Committee**

United Way of Delaware Board Room

Minutes – September 28, 2015

### **Michelle Taylor, Co-chair, called the meeting to order at 4:02 p.m.**

The Co-chairs, Michelle Taylor, The Honorable Chandlee Kuhn, and Jackie Jenkins, introduced themselves, and then invited the members of the committee and public to introduce themselves.

Michelle Taylor announced that for all future meetings the parking lot next to the building would be open in addition to the garage under the building so that parking will be provided.

Chandlee Kuhn presented a PowerPoint presentation on the history of the Wilmington Education Improvement Commission (WEIC), list of WEIC Committees, and charge of the Meeting the Needs of Students in Poverty Committee.

Michelle Taylor noted that the charge of the committee extends beyond the school day and would include wrap-around services, focusing on the whole child. She also mentioned the potential overlap with the Parent, Educator, and Community Engagement Committee. The Co-Chairs of the Meeting the Needs of Children in Poverty Committee will be scheduling a meeting with the Co-Chairs of the Parent, Educator, and Community Engagement Committee.

While the full list of action agenda items is in the Wilmington Education Advisory Committee final report, the charge of the Committee is two primary tasks: 1. To develop a comprehensive plan for the integration of services for low-income children and families, and for schools with high concentrations of poverty and 2. To apply a developmental model from birth through college and workforce. Michelle Taylor posed a question to the committee: Does the committee want to take on two things at once, by splitting the group up? Or should all members continue to work together and prioritize one of the tasks over the other to begin with.

**The Committee and members of the public split into two groups based on last name.** Individuals with a last name that began with the letters A-L were placed in group one, and individuals with a last name that began with the letters M-Z were placed in group two. United Way staff members facilitated each group's discussion.

After approximately thirty minutes of discussion, the groups came back together to report out. Group two reported first. They came to the conclusion that both the comprehensive plan and developmental model are crucial, and that one cannot be done without the other. Group one came to the conclusion that both the comprehensive plan and the developmental model were necessary to complete. As to which to tackle first, the group was split. Some believed that the developmental model would provide a good framework from which the comprehensive plan could be developed. Other in the group felt like the comprehensive plan should be developed first and would naturally evolve into the developmental model. The plan would allow the group to identify areas of needs, which would be to address in the developmental model.

As the consensus of the group was that the committee should address both tasks, Jackie Jenkins asked for a show of hands who would be interested in working on each aspect. Based off of the individual preferences of the committee members, the committee once again split into two groups. Each group was again given thirty minutes to consider a number of questions including: What resources already exist? What might the committee need? Who else needs to be around the table? What three things does the committee need to do next?

The Developmental Model group began to define “developmental model.” They are looking for a model that looks at youth, family, community, and schools with a holistic approach that is developmentally appropriate. Throughout their work, it is important to define what “holistic” will include. Some important items discussed were the following:

- Looking at different holistic approaches that support children and their families, understanding the needs of the children
- Creating age appropriate resources and strategies for childhood development
- Staff and educator cultural competency, multi-cultural education
- Take a look at the social/ecological model
- Take a general look at poverty and the need associated with poverty inside and outside the school
- Look at what has worked – best practices for populations similar to that of Wilmington, but also recognizing that the charge is statewide.
- The group requested from the University of Delaware examples of existing developmental models that they could use to help shape their own. The group would also like to begin their developmental model with prenatal care rather than birth as the committee was tasked to do.

The Comprehensive Plan group focused on a few key points of their discussion for their report out. Their first task will be to define the endpoint that they would like to achieve. Once the endpoint is defined, and then it will be much easier to develop a plan of how to get there. Another important point that was stressed was that poverty takes many shapes and affects individuals in many different ways. The comprehensive plan will have to account for that. Some consideration will have to be made for how the committee defines success. While academic success is clearly the goal, the group must remain cognizant of traumas that occur outside the school building and the affect that has on children.

Michelle Taylor used the imagery of a three-legged stool to describe the relationship between the school, community, and home. All three “legs” are necessary for the stool to stand.

The committee members and members of the public were given sticky notes. On one sticky note Michelle Taylor instructed them to write what they would like to see in the next meeting. On the second sticky not she instructed them to write down what they did or did not like about this meeting.

Michelle Taylor confirmed that the committee would meet on the fourth Monday of each month, with the exception of November and December. Meeting dates for those months were moved because the fourth Monday conflicted with holidays.

A question was asked when deliverables would be due from the committee. The answer was that by the end of the year, the committee should have a plan of action for what they hope to accomplish solidified and know what they want.

A question was asked about when lawyers from the school districts will begin talking to one another. The answer was that they are already having discussions.

**The meeting adjourned at 5:54 p.m.**

**Wilmington Education Improvement Commission  
Meeting the Needs of Children in Poverty Committee  
Attendance at the 9/28 Meeting**

**Committee Members**

Jackie Jenkins, Co-Chair  
Chandlee Kuhn, Co-Chair  
Michelle Taylor, Co-Chair  
Adriana Bohm  
Vi Cade  
Nikki Castle  
Karen Eller  
Kia Ervin  
Melissa Foremning  
Mary Kate Mouser

Terrance Newton  
Kenny Oates  
Susan Perry-Manning  
Gwendolyn Sanders  
Cara Sawyer  
Michael Simonds  
Deb Stevens  
Jea Street  
Burtie Watson

**Members of the Public**

Burtie Watson  
Michael Simmonds  
Terrance Newton  
Kenny Oates  
Kathleen Patterson  
Adriane Bohm  
Orrin White  
Rita Bell  
Marcello Bradshaw  
Julie Harrington

Jeffers Browne  
Julie Harrington  
Ken Livingston  
Tia McDougal  
Tim Lewis  
Bill Doolittle  
Harold Brachy  
Elnore Adams  
Aretha Miller

**Institute for Public Administration Staff**

Kelly Sherretz  
Elizabeth Burland  
Liz Farley-Ripple  
Annie Gould

