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**Meeting Notes**  
**Family Success Alliance Council Meeting**  
**Monday, February 20, 2017**  
**Whitted Human Services Building, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, Hillsborough**

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**In attendance:**

**Council:** Colleen Bridger, Liska Lackey, Penny Rich, Luke Smith, Jenifer Della Valle, Sarah Vinas, Ric Bruton, Rydell Harrison, Aviva Scully, Jake Henry, Damon Seils, Angela Wilcox, Cordelia Heaney, Maria Palmer, Jenn Weaver, Robin Pulver, Delores Bailey, Alicia Jones, Mark Marcoplos, Michael Steiner, Mack Koonce, Alice Denson

**Absent:** Charles Blackwood, Nancy Coston, Sharon Freeland, Annette Stone

**Staff:** Melvyn Blackwell, Alizarina Rojas, Mariela Hernandez, Kenyatta Clark, Coby Austin, Allison Young, Stacy Shelp, Juliet Sheridan, Beatrice Parker, Meredith McMonigle

**Guests:** Rose Byrnes, Nick Allen, Ennis Baker, Linda Foxworth, Claudia Yerena

**Welcome and Key Organizational Updates**

Liska L. began the meeting with a welcome. She invited anyone to share agency reports.

Jenn W. announced that today, the Orange County Food Council will be facilitating in a community forum. The forum will be at the Cedar Grove Community Center from 5pm-7pm.

Mack announced the plans for the next phase for United Way's Social Innovations. He explained, this spring, UWGT will launch its Generation Next: College Edition. This will encourage children and families, promote new ideas for college entrepreneurs, and focus on children of low-income families. He noted that on this initiative they hope to collaborate with FSA. He elaborated that there are teams currently working at some of the HBCUs in the Triangle.

**Budget Review & Vote**

Coby discussed and reviewed the budget with the Council. She broadly noted the next fiscal year's budget to be 1.37 million dollars. She acknowledged the \$134,000 difference from the current fiscal year's funding. She explained increasing the budget going into the next fiscal year will be geared to increase programming (services & supports), FSA backbone staffing, and to provide benefits to Navigators.

Coby highlighted one revision made to the last proposal that was sent out to the Council. She noted there was an increase in Medicaid Allocation Cost Settlement Dollar. The amount was increased to \$150,000.

A question was posed, to what level of funding does UNC provide to FSA evaluations. Coby informed UNC's level of funding for this year is \$500,000. She noted that this amount of funding will not be needed for the next FY, because the evaluation process will be more developed and/or established.

Colleen voiced a motion for the Council to approve the budget, and there was a second to the motion. All Council members were in favor of approving the budget proposal.

### **Work Group Breakout Sessions**

Liska led everyone in the Work Group breakout exercise. She pointed out huddle areas for each Work Group, and reminded groups of the motive behind the exercise, which is to create ideas and dialogue on how to better reach established work group goals.

### **Report-Out and Gather Input on Work Group Action Items**

After the Work Group breakout sessions, Liska invited a group spokesperson to report what was discussed during the sessions.

*Work Group 1* report-out: They discussed working with the subcommittee of the Orange County Preschool Interagency Council, the Early Childhood Mental Health Task Force, and FSA navigators to come up with an inventory of prenatal-to-5 years of age services and opportunity for families, as well as a gap analysis of the resources needed or lacking and/or supports that are existing/available. The Advisory Council requests that the work group refine their draft recommendations for what supports FSA provide in the prenatal-to-kindergarten age range and reflect three dimensions for each proposed recommendation: supporting research or evidence-base, equity, and estimated cost. Also, we should get a sense for the number of families who might take advantage of programs. The work group is expected to report back to the Council in June.

*Work Group 2* report-out: They discussed some of the work that has been happening in the school districts (i.e. K-readiness). They spent a good amount of time talking about school based mental health in the districts. They reviewed the mental health assessment that Orange County conducted, in which gaps were highlighted that may be associated, such as affordability, transportation, location, education to combat stigma, post diagnosis maintenance and care, early intervention, and citizenship status. The group came up with some ideas and questions on how FSA might advocate for continued mental health support in schools, incorporate respected pilot approaches in Zones 4&6, and have Navigators as catalysts in support and promotion of this goal. The group also discussed how to provide education to families on bullying and how that relates to mental health issues.

*Work Group 4* report-out: They discussed how to make progress on additional literacy opportunities. Literacy opportunities and attendance has been picking up. There will be plans to look into having more literacy opportunities in Zone 4 and other areas in the northern part of the county versus constantly having the sites in the Chapel Hill-Carrboro area. Topics of discussion were on poverty, affordable housing, and issues with section 8 availability. Navigators are currently collecting stories from families in reference to housing issues. Through collaborations with UNC, Compass Center conducted surveys and focus groups to conduct a needs assessment for families experiencing domestic violence. The bulk of discussion focused on options and approaches for a College Savings Accounts program. The proposal is to start the program by having Navigators enroll Cohorts 1 and 2, and eventually include more cohorts.

FSA would match an initial deposit of up to \$100 per year, and families would be eligible for additional incentive funds up to \$100 per year for completing financial literacy classes. Some of the questions that came up were: Are the accounts to be regular savings accounts or 529 accounts? Would monies collected be tax deferred? Would there be restrictions on an amount families could withdraw? If families leave a Zone, how can they still have access to their account? A suggestion was made that a family utilize account funds for trade school or community colleges, if it is not decided that a child will attend a traditional four-year university. Another suggestion was creating easy access to enrolling into the savings account program, and offering a more tangible incentive to open an account, other than the \$100 match; for example, a utility or bill voucher, bus pass, or gas card voucher.

Maria Palmer suggested that FSA seek out collaboration with the Latino Credit Union. She noted her desire to know families' financial aspirations as it relates to their child's education and link them up with organizations that are able to assist families with their aspirations, as it relates to investing in their child's future education.

*Equity Work group report out:* The Equity group is a new workgroup. It was created based on the need to put equity more front and center in all of our work. One goal is to have all staff and Council members receive racial equity training. We will look to see if we have funds to provide some financial support for Council members who would like to complete this training. In answer to the question "What do we want the other subcommittees to keep in mind related to equity?", the group responded that they want to ensure that families are at the center of the work. I.E., Is what we are proposing what the families are actually asking for? Who participates and who did and didn't enroll and why? The group will also further examine racial equity tools in order to select a tool to use starting in June 2018.

On the community engagement continuum, the consensus of the group is that FSA is at the consulting level. Despite being one of the few UWGT initiatives in the Triangle that started by going out to the communities and building out from there, more work needs to be done to move toward deeper community engagement.

## **Council Business**

Liska encouraged Council members to sign-up for racial equity training. She reminded members to complete meeting evaluation forms. Liska invited any missed announcements. Coby invited everyone honor Colleen Bridger and wish her farewell from Orange County, upon the adjournment of the meeting.