

Polk County Board of Education
NC Pre-K Committee Meeting Minutes
January 21, 2026 9 am

The Polk County Board of Education's local NC Pre-K Committee Meeting was called to order at 9:02 am by Jan Crump, Superintendent Designee, with a quorum present and maintained throughout the meeting.

Members present: Jan Crump, Lori Byars, Renee Souther, Shelley Upton, Vanessa Parton, Lisa Brown, and Amy Scott.

Members present virtually: Kellie Bradley and Jennifer Griffith.

Members absent: Michael Meissner, parent representative; Melissa Maybin, Child Care Agency Representative; Thomas Compton, Licensed Child Care Representative; Donna Wood, Community Resource; Linda Carter, child care agency; Linley Foster, social worker.

Welcome and introductions

Jan Crump welcomed everyone to the meeting and committee members introduced themselves and provided information for their title/agency. Amy Scott reviewed the membership and voting eligibility.

Agenda overview and approval of minutes

Jan Crump presented the meeting agenda and asked the committee to review the August 5, 2025 Committee Meeting Minutes. A request was made for any corrections. None were needed. Jan Crump requested a motion to approve the minutes with no corrections. Vanessa Parton made the motion and Renee Souther seconded the motion. All voted in favor. All employees of the School System abstained.

Review and approve the conflict of interest statement

All present members will sign the agreement and it will be sent to those attending virtually.

Selection of NCPReK Contracting Agency

Renee Souther moved to accept Polk County Schools Board of Education as the NCPReK contracting agency for the 2026-2027 program year. Vanessa Parton seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Annual Planning and Implementation Plan

Polk County Schools Preschool program ensures that the neediest of children are being served in the county. Currently there are 4 sites: Polk Central, Saluda, Sunny View and Tryon serving 91 children with 91 slots allocated. Renee Souther moved to approve the Implementation Plan and Vanessa Parton seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Contract Compliance Update

Review of service data

Family Services - Amy Scott reviewed monthly attendance and enrollment for the coming school year, including the number of applications received program wide at this time.

Health and Disabilities - Renee Souther reviewed the update information sheet which included percentages of children that had received health assessments; hearing, vision, and dental screenings; dental screens and follow-ups; and immunization compliance rates. She also covered information about numbers of children with IEPs and the referral process.

Education - Shelley Upton discussed the Polk County Schools Preschool School Readiness Plan. She shared the data from the TSG winter checkpoint and benchmarks that have been met.

Support Coach - Lisa Brown spoke to working with children with behavior interventions and meeting with families to increase consistency among all parties working with the children.

Progress Toward Meeting Scope of Work

Lori Byars reviewed the updates. All 91 slots filled at this time, monitoring visits are complete for the school year, and all of the quality assurance measures have been adhered to.

Financial Update

Lori Byars went over the financial information. She reviewed the program budget and the spending plan for direct services, administrative, CCDF funds, and the anticipated reversion of \$5,952 due to unused slots.

Kindergarten Transition

Shelley Upton spoke to the Kindergarten portion of the Transition Plan. She discussed transition conferences. Both the PreK teacher and the Kindergarten teacher will meet with the family during the conference to assure all questions and concerns are addressed. Transitional IEPs are also held for those students who are moving into Kindergarten.

NC PreK State Updates

Jennifer Griffith highlighted some of the updates from the state including: restrictions on long term substitute teachers and teaching assistants. Currently a 12 week limit with a possibility for 12 additional weeks with a special request.

Reports from the field

Vanessa Parton, Partnership for children of the foothills - The partnership offers support for early childhood educators and parents. They currently support Circle of Parenting Groups, WAGES program, continuing education, and Play to Learn, a parental modeling group.

Meeting Schedule approval

The proposed dates for 2026-2027 meetings are: August 4, 2026 and January 20, 2027, both at 9 am in the Boardroom at Stearns.

Renee Souther moved to accept the schedule. Vanessa Parton seconded it and it carried unanimously.

Adjourn meeting

Vanessa Parton moved to adjourn the meeting. It carried unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 10:05 am.

Minutes taken and respectfully submitted by Amy Scott.