

**Buncombe County Board of Commissioners
September 26, 2017 Work Session**

Community Panel on Early Childhood Education: Panelist Info

**Leslie
Anderson**
*Leslie
Anderson
Consulting*

For over 40 years, Leslie has worked to improve services, systems and opportunities for young children in North Carolina and beyond. This commitment includes a variety of roles: volunteer on the first local Smart Start Board, one of 4 founders of what is now NC Child, core consultant for Smart Start's National Technical Assistance Center, fundraiser, founder of Children First, and consultant to early childhood-related initiatives all over the country. Leslie worked for City of Asheville Parks and Recreation for 12 years and as the Director of Downtown Development for 10 years.

Leslie Anderson Consulting, Inc., works extensively with organizations involved in early childhood education, as well as other groups in the nonprofit, business and philanthropic sectors. The firm provides planning, facilitation, research, assessment and executive coaching services to clients such as the Asheville-Buncombe Preschool Planning Collaborative, the National Association for the Education of Young Children, Smart Start Partnerships, state-level organizations, and community coalitions. Twenty years ago, in the first year of the firm, they were hired to organize the Buncombe County Smart Start Partnership, and Leslie served as the first Executive Director.

**Jennifer
Bosworth**
*Asheville-
Buncombe
Technical
Community
College*

Jennifer serves as the Department Chairperson for Early Education at A-B Tech. She has a bachelor's degree in Education of Deaf Children with a concentration in Educational Interpreting from UNC-Greensboro and a Masters of Arts in Teaching degree in Birth-Kindergarten (B-K) Education from Western Carolina University. In addition, she holds an NC Standard Professional II B-K teaching license and has served as an evaluator and mentor for the Early Educator Support, Licensure and Professional Development Office under the Division of Child Development and Early Education. Jennifer has spent much of her career dedicated to working with children. Her background includes a roles such as classroom instructor, child care center director, and human services professional.

Founded in 1959, A-B Tech is the largest higher education institution in Western North Carolina, serving approximately 25,000 students a year in Buncombe and Madison counties through curriculum, continuing education and workforce development programs. A-B Tech's Early Childhood Education program offers three certificates (Infant-Toddler, Early Childhood & Special Education) and an Associate of Applied Science degree in Early Childhood Education. A-B Tech is the local provider of higher education teacher preparation for currently working and future early childhood teachers. The program prepares students for workforce entry (EDU 119) through degree completion and transfer to four-year early childhood programs.

Sheila Hoyle
*Southwestern
Child
Development*

Sheila serves as the Executive Director for Southwestern Child Development Commission, a position she has held for the past 30 years. She grew up in Western North Carolina, attended Western Carolina University, earning a Bachelor's Degree in Sociology and Social Welfare and a Master's Degree in Public Administration. Sheila has an extensive 45-year background in early childhood education. She worked for the NC Division of Child Development and Early Education in Raleigh as the Subsidized Child Care Program Supervisor, was a fellow in the charter class of Early Childhood Education Leadership Development Program at UNC-Chapel Hill, and a Governor's Appointment to the State Smart Start Board of Directors. Currently, Sheila serves on the Executive Board of the NC Early Education Coalition, the NC DCDEE Subsidized Child



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Sheila Hoyle
*Southwestern
Child
Development*

Care Committee, represents NC on the Membership Council of Child Care Aware of America (the national organization for Child Care Resource and Referral), is a founding member and member of the Executive Council of the NC Child Care Resource and Referral Council, a charter member of the Region A Partnership for Children Board of Directors and a founding member of the WNC Early Childhood Coalition.

Southwestern Child Development Commission (SWCDC), with main offices in Jackson County, was organized by the County Commissioners in each county of Region A in 1972, originally funded with Appalachian Regional Commission funding. SWCDC currently delivers an array of direct services to families with children. The agency has four main service delivery programs: (1) the operation of child development centers, (2) the administration of subsidized child care for 9 local Departments of Social Service in WNC, (3) Child Care Resource and Referral (CCR&R) services by a state-level contract, and (4) the Nurse-Family Partnership Program in 4 WNC counties.

Tracey McCrain
Eliada

Tracey Serves as Chief Operations Officer for Eliada, where she has worked in various capacities since 1989. She served for 10 years as a Residential Youth Counselor, Team Coordinator, Group Leader and Treatment Director before moving to Child Development in 1999. Tracey is a Level III Early Childhood Administrator with a BA in Psychology and an MBA. She worked as the Assistant Child Development Director from 1999 to 2002, at which time I was promoted to Director of Child Development Services. I was promoted to Chief Operations Officer in August of this year.

Eliada provides a continuum of care for children and families that creates a platform for success from cradle to career. These services include Child Development, NC Pre-Kindergarten, Developmental Day services, summer camp, Foster Care, Therapeutic Foster Care, Community Day Treatment, Psychiatric Residential Treatment Facility (PRTF), Eliada Students Training for Advancement (ESTA) to serve youth aging-out of the Foster Care System and RISE internship program from newly graduated college students wanting to enter the Mental Health field. Eliada believes that child development is a preventative service.

Dawn Meskil
*Asheville City
Schools*

Dawn serves as the Preschool Director and Primary School principal for Asheville City Schools. She holds a bachelor's degree in birth-kindergarten education, a master's degree in social work and a doctorate in educational leadership and policy analysis. She has served as a teacher, Early Head Start coordinator and director, as a regional consultant for the state early intervention program as well as an assistant director of the western regional Children's Developmental Services Agency. Her work and studies have primarily focused on educational equity for young children and their families.

Asheville City Schools serves approximately 4,500 children in grades K-12. In addition, for over 25 years the public school district has provided a high-quality early childhood education program to children in the Asheville area. Most recently early childhood education was identified as a strategic priority for the district resulting in program growth and expansion, as well as strengthened community partnerships focused on improving the quality of and access to early childhood education.

Brian Repass

Brian Repass is the Children, Family and Community Partnerships Department Director for Community Action Opportunities (CAO) Head Start program. He has worked for CAO for 14 years and been Department Director for the last four years. Previously he



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**Brian
Repass**

*Community
Action
Opportunities*

worked in local government public and environmental health. Brian is active at the local and State level having served on the North Carolina Head Start Association, Buncombe County NC Pre-K Committee, Madison County NC Pre-K Committee, Madison County Partnership for Children and Families, Buncombe Partnership for Children, Channels for Child Care Advancement, and Buncombe Cares About Child Care. Brian received a BS in Political Science (1991) and a Master of Public Administration (1998) from Appalachian State University. He has lived in Buncombe County since 1998.

Community Action Opportunities is a Community Action Agency, founded in 1964 by the Economic Opportunity Act. CAO works with citizens who live on limited incomes, elected public officials and private sector representatives to confront and solve the problems that cause poverty. The Head Start program provides comprehensive health, education, and family support services in Buncombe and Madison Counties for children ages 3-5 years and their families who live on limited incomes. Head Start serves children with disabilities. CAO also operates Life Works and Weatherization programs.

**Susanne
Swanger**

*Buncombe
County
Schools*

Susanne serves as Associate Superintendent for Buncombe County Schools and previously served as a public school teacher and preschool teacher. She holds a Bachelor of Science in Education, K-4 and Reading K-12 and a Masters in Educational Administration from Western Carolina University. As a community volunteer, some of her recent roles include board chair for Buncombe County Health and Human Services, board member for Children First/Communities in Schools United Way of Asheville and Buncombe County and advocate for the First 2,000 Days Campaign. Susanne is a strong believer in partnering with families, especially for school readiness.

Buncombe County Schools is the largest public school system in Western North Carolina, serving approximately 25,000 students enrolled in 47 schools and programs. Buncombe County Schools believes that children will become better learners when they have participated in quality early learning experiences and supports strategic investments in early childhood education. Buncombe County Schools has 15 Head Start classrooms and houses Valley Child Development Center at Community High School. Other partners include Buncombe Partnership for Children, Children First Communities in Schools, and NC Pre-K. The system also operates a Bookmobile that provides resources to young children.

Cici Weston

*Christine
Avery
Learning
Center*

Cici is the founder and Executive Director of the Christine Avery Learning Center, which was formed from the former Hill Street Day Care. She is an educator who has a Masters of Arts in Education. She is the third of four children of the late Nilous and Christine Avery, both of whom were community activists in Asheville and Buncombe County. Cici strongly believes in creating an environment of continuous learning and self enhancement by developing innovative programs that engage community resources to enrich learning experiences.

The Christine W. Avery Learning Center is a non-profit organization focusing on educational enrichment for students ages 2-15. The mission is to provide students of all backgrounds with access to a quality education rooted in sociocultural theory and ministry; assisting in the growth and development of our students academically, socially, and spiritually; and producing the next generation of leaders. The center provides early childhood education, wraparound child care and after school care.

