



MINUTES

Land of Sky P20 Council: Executive Committee

April 13, 2026 11am-12pm

Location: Teams

Present:

Dr. Gene Loflin, Emily Martin, Emily Nicholson (Executive Director), Katlen Smith (Staff)

[Link to agenda](#)

1. Welcome & Opening Remarks

Mrs. Nicholson opened the meeting by welcoming members and outlining the primary focus. The intent of the meeting was to provide updates on ongoing work beyond committee activities, including grant efforts, program updates, and planning for upcoming events.

2. Grant Updates

Mrs. Nicholson provided an overview of current and prospective grant opportunities:

- The council continues to pursue grants aligned with its mission, primarily through nonprofit and foundation funding sources.
- The Education Design Lab grant application was not awarded; only one North Carolina applicant (Central Pines Regional Council) received funding.
- An upcoming application for the Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) was discussed. A letter of intent will be submitted, with a potential request of approximately \$200,000 requiring a 50% match.
- Existing grants, including YouthBuild, were briefly reviewed.

A discussion followed regarding challenges with a current subrecipient under the YouthBuild grant. Concerns were raised about performance, oversight, and potential reputational risks. Staff noted ongoing communication with the Department of Labor and internal leadership regarding next steps, including the possibility of ending the contract and identifying a new subrecipient.

3. Student Resilience Program Update

Ms. Smith presented a proposed redesign of the student representative program funded through the Dogwood Health Trust grant:

- Recruitment goal: 20 students (5 per county).
- Program structure: a two-week “Resiliency in Action” challenge where students develop and present projects.
- Timeline: recruitment in September, project work in early October, and showcase events in November.
- Students would present projects in community locations (e.g., government buildings or schools) to local leaders.
- Each student would receive a stipend, with potential for light competition or recognition.

Discussion emphasized:

- The importance of engaging students who are not typically involved in leadership roles.
- Creating meaningful community connections and visibility for student work.
- Leveraging school counselors and local partners for recruitment.

4. Data & Attainment Update

Mrs. Nicholson shared that updated regional and county-level attainment data has been published:

- Social media posts highlighted credential attainment by county.
- Members were encouraged to review the full dataset to better understand regional progress and the remaining gap of approximately 19,000 credentials by 2030.
- Opportunities to share this data with partners and stakeholders were discussed.

5. Upcoming Quarterly Meeting Planning

The committee reviewed plans for the April 14 quarterly council meeting:

- Each committee will provide updates and identify next steps.
 - A structured facilitation approach was developed to guide discussion and avoid unnecessary digressions.
 - The meeting will be held in a hybrid format to improve attendance.
 - Hard copies of materials will be provided for in-person participants.
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6. Committee Operations & Survey Discussion

Members discussed the potential use of a P20 needs survey to gather input from council members regarding:

- Organizational resources and services
- Communication improvements
- Areas of support needed from P20

Staff will follow up on distributing the survey and incorporating it into committee planning as needed.

7. Workforce Board Event Collaboration

Mrs. Nicholson shared that the Workforce Board is seeking increased P20 involvement in the upcoming AI Summit:

- P20 currently participates in Construction Career Day and will continue its role there.
- For the AI Summit, members discussed potential contributions such as:
 - Recommending speakers (particularly from education)
 - Promoting proposals through networks
 - Exploring ways to integrate P20 perspectives into the event

Members were encouraged to consider how P20 can add value to the summit moving forward.

8. Upcoming Events

April was noted as a particularly active month with multiple events and engagements. Staff and partners are heavily involved in planning and participation across several initiatives.

9. Next Steps & Action Items

- Staff to submit ARC letter of intent.
 - Continue monitoring and addressing YouthBuild subrecipient performance.
 - Further develop student resilience program and recruitment strategy.
 - Prepare materials and facilitation plan for April 14 quarterly meeting.
 - Explore distribution of P20 needs survey.
 - Identify opportunities for P20 involvement in the AI Summit.
 - Determine committee meeting schedules following the quarterly meeting.
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Adjournment:

Meeting adjourned at 12:00 PM.