

Policy Council Meeting
7-28-26

Submitted by: Brandy Klinessmith and Teena Branson

Members Present: Jessica Brenizer, Brittain Reinmuth, Manuel Hernandez, Tiah Alvizar, Sydney Closson, Stephanie Gonzales

Guests Present: None

Staff Present: Lauren Starke, Joan DeWitt, Teena Branson, Shannon Yeoman

Board Members Present: Tom Millette

Policy Council Meeting called to order by Jessica Brenizer, at 6:04pm. There were no new member introductions needed. Members reviewed the minutes from the June meeting. Sydney Closson **moved to approve the June minutes.** Brittain Reinmuth **seconded the motion.** **Motion carried by roll call vote.**

Director's Report:

All members received a copy of the Director's report. Lauren Starke discussed the report which covered the overall program information. Enrollment numbers and demographics were shared. Program requirement percentages were shared and information about trainings attended and referrals that have been made along with the In-Kind report.

Finance Report:

All members received a copy of the Finance Report. Lauren Starke, Fiscal Officer, presented the reports. Spending is on track and the information for expenses and financial statements were explained. **Jessica Brenizer moved to approve the finance report. Manuel Hernandez seconded the motion. Motion carried by roll call vote.**

Board Report: No board report was shared due to there not being a Board meeting in July.

Old Business: No old business at this time.

New Business:

Nutrition Written Plan & Review and/or Revision: Shannon Yeoman Health and Nutrition Manager presented information on these topics. The overview of the 2026–2027 Nutrition Policies included information on program requirements for providing culturally and developmentally appropriate meals, family-style dining practices, food safety procedures, accommodations for children with special dietary needs, breastfeeding support, nutrition education, and compliance with CACFP and Head Start performance standards.

Anaphylaxis Response Policy Approval: Health and Nutrition Manager Shannon Yeoman reviewed the new Anaphylaxis Response Policy which was updated to align with the DHHS requirements. The policy establishes procedures for preventing, recognizing, and responding to severe allergic reactions in children with known allergies. The policy outlines requirements for Individual Health Plans, staff training, emergency medication administration, emergency response procedures, and documentation to help ensure the safety and well-being of enrolled children. Brittain Reinmuth **moved to approve the Anaphylaxis Response Policy.** Sydni Closson **seconded the motion. Motion carried by roll call vote.**

Enrollment & Recruitment Update: Teena Branson, Enrollment Manager, presented the current accepted counts for all program options and openings still available.

Results of the 3rd Parent/Staff Self-Assessment: Teena Branson presented the overview of the survey results which included comments on issues of attending family events and scheduling. The majority of responses were positive and gave some great ideas from staff and parents on ways the program is successful and made an impact. Thoughts were also shared on the topics and timing of family engagements events.

Community Assessment Findings/Updates: Fiscal Officer Lauren Starke presented the numbers and demographics of the area in the updated community information. The 2025 Community Assessment Annual Update, highlighted current community demographics, homelessness trends, poverty levels, disability data, transportation access, and the availability of publicly funded preschool services. How the program addresses equity, accessibility, and inclusiveness of its services to meet the changing needs of children and families throughout the ESU 13 Head Start service area was also presented.

Employment Openings - Agency-wide employment openings are found on the ESU13 website (www.esu13.org) under *Employment Openings*. Current opening for a Full-Time 12-month and 9-month Assistant Teacher at the Bridgeport location. Prospective Employees can also apply directly on this site. This was shown to members.

New Hires:

Grace Larson Head Start Assistant Teacher CDC full-time assistant teacher, SBPS After School Program, worked at Helping Hands as a Care Coordinator, 3 years' experience at Building Blocks Daycare as a teacher and some college at WNCC studying Early Childhood Education.

Jamie Stewart Head Start Education Coach office located at UNL has a BS Early Childhood Eastern New Mexico University and was an Early Childhood Coach Credential Colorado - 20+ years as an Early Childhood Teacher, coach, program director. Tiah Alivzar **moved to approve the New Staff Hires.** Manuel Hernandez **seconded the motion. Motion approved by roll call vote.**

Center Reports: None at this time

The next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, August 25th. Dinner will be served at 5:45pm and the meeting will begin promptly at 6:00pm.

Meeting adjourned at 7:02p.m.