

Policy Council Meeting
10-24-23
Submitted by: Kerry Mehling

Members Present: Tiffany Hogsett, Brittain Reinmuth, Jessica Brenizer, Karina Garza, Adriana Gonzales, Juan Gallardo, Veronica Gonzales, Maria Garcia, Alexis Griner, Veronica Ramirez, Tiah Alvizar, Vanessa Gleason, Bryant Hunter, Shayna Hudson

Guest Present: Lacey Hunter

Board Members Present: None

Staff Present: Kerry Mehling, Krystie Hohnstein, Lauren Starke, Joan DeWitt, Christy Rodriguez

Policy Council Meeting called to order by Tiah at 6:20p.m. New member introductions took place during the Policy Council Orientation segment of the evening prior to the October business meeting from 4-6pm. Members reviewed the minutes from the September meeting. Some discussion continued regarding the TSGold/Tadpoles app for parents offered at stand-alone centers as a follow-up question from September and information for new members. **Shayna moved to approve the September minutes. Veronica Gonzales seconded the motion. Motion carried by roll call vote.**

Director's Report:

All members received a copy of the Director's report. Krystie Hohnstein discussed the report and explained it in detail for new members. There was some discussion on attendance and support for families who may be struggling with meeting the attendance requirements, along with documentation efforts and decisions for continuing enrollment. Health requirements were explained along with 45 and 90-day requirements. Screenings, rescreening, and ongoing assessments were included. Health Services Advisory Committee was introduced as a support to the program with local providers who help with ideas and supports to meet ongoing health challenges that occur in the community and for children in the program.

Lauren explained non-federal share/in-kind requirement for our program in the amount of \$861,378. This comes to the program through volunteers, parent activities supporting program curriculum, donations, and partnership services. Members received a current chart highlighting each location and the amount of in-kind that has been collected this year in comparison to the previous year, along with the goal amount for each location that is based on enrollment.

Finance Reports:

All members received a copy of the Finance Reports. Lauren Starke, Fiscal Officer, presented the reports and began training new members on how to read them along with some of the areas that Policy Council members can help to monitor. The ESU13 Head Start grant period runs from April 1 through March 31 each year. The reports display current month, previous month, expenditures in the entire budget period, indirect costs, administration limitations and expenses. These categories were explained. Members can help to ensure that the administration percentage stays under 15% for the entire year. Credit Card Expenditures and USDA Reimbursement for September was presented. **Bryant moved to approve the finance reports. Veronica Ramirez seconded the motion. Motion carried by roll call vote.**

Application for DHHS Grants: The program was awarded two grants through NDHHS in the amount of \$70,784. It is designated to spend on employee salaries and must be expensed by March 2023. The program is working on a plan to implement the use of this funding. As the plan develops, the Policy Council will be updated.

Board Report: Krystie Hohnstein presented the last board meeting summary. The ESU#13 wing at the Harms Advanced Technology Center will be involved in some new construction for additional classrooms beginning in August 2024. The programs, including VALTS and open rooms for professional development, will be displaced for 12-18 months.

One Board of Education member position is vacant and the opening is being advertised. Several board members will be attending an upcoming conference, and they recently had a guest speaker whose mission is to support rural school districts. There was a presentation on Strategic Priority #2, focusing on evaluating organizational effectiveness for the purpose of planning and improvement.

Members were presented with the dates for the upcoming Head Start Focus Area 2 Monitoring Review and FY24 CLASS Review. In addition, one Board Member liaison opening was mentioned, as Diane Coon will no longer be able to serve in this capacity for Head Start, but will remain on the ESU13 Board of Education. Members were invited to attend a Poverty Simulation facilitated by the UNL Extension Center and Implicit Bias training hosted by Head Start in January.

The ESU offices and programs in the Scottsbluff area, including local Head Start centers and partnerships, practiced their emergency response during a community-wide drill and received feedback from first responders to improve training and preparation. NE Cyber Security Network is an ongoing topic of conversation for schools.

Old Business: None

New Business:

Focus Area 2 Federal Monitoring Review Parent and Policy Council discussions on Wednesday, Nov. 1st:

- *Family/Parent Discussion: 1:00-1:45pm*
- *Policy Council Discussion: 2:00-2:30pm*

Meeting Dates/Times/Committee Elections: Meetings are held on the last Tuesday of each month. The meeting timeline was provided in the updated training binders. Policy Council officer and committee elections will take place during the November meeting. These were discussed and pointed out in the by-laws.

Approval of Head Start (HS) Philosophy

The HS Philosophy was provided to members in their training binders and reviewed. **Veronica Gonzales moved to approve the HS Philosophy. Alexis seconded the motion. Motion carried by roll call vote.**

Approval of the By-Laws

All members received a copy of the Policy Council By-Laws in their training binders. These were explained to members. **Alexis moved to approve the By-Laws. Veronica Gonzales seconded the motion. Motion carried by roll call vote.**

Continuation Grant (Due in December) Krystie Hohnstein discussed that the grant is submitted every year in December and approval is needed for this in November. There is no meeting in December. The program does not expect any major service changes. No further input from members.

Five Year Program Goals were provided to members in their training binders in Tab 7. Members were asked to look through this tab more in depth on their own time and to ask questions with grant approval next month during the November meeting.

Employment Openings:

Agency-wide employment openings are found on the ESU13 website (www.esu13.org) under *Employment Openings*. Prospective Employees can also apply directly on this site. This was shown to members.

New Staff Hires: The role of Policy Council members in approving new staff hires was explained to new members. There was only one new hire since the last meeting in September as follows:

Sylvia Maldonado – Family Advocate – 40 hour/week – 9 month position. **Tiah moved to approve the new hire. Veronica Ramirez seconded the motion. Motion carried by roll call vote.**

Forms Training (In-Kind, mileage w/ W-9, Center Reports) Members received samples of important forms that will be completed as a Policy Council member. Members are asked to work with their teachers for Center Reports each month to present ongoing activities during the Policy Council meetings.

Training Evaluation (Signed by Reps.) Members were asked to complete a training evaluation.

Center Reports received: ELC EHS

Meeting adjourned at 8:15pm.