

Policy Council Meeting
 11-26-24
 Submitted by: Kerry Mehling

Members Present: Vanessa Gleason, Skylar Pottorff, Shayna Hudson, Brandy Klinessmith, Veronica Gonzales, Makenna Sempek, Kristen Gompert, Madison Koch, Dehlia Cardona, Cara Edington, Debra Jo Mason, Jessica Goodrich, Tiah Alvizar, Brittain Reinmuth, Jessica Brenizer, Angel Poor Bear, Echo Woyak

Guest: Juan Gonzales

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

Board Members Present: Tom Millette

Policy Council Meeting called to order by Tiah Alvizar, at 6:03p.m. New member introductions were made. Members reviewed the minutes from the October meeting. **Veronica moved to approve the October minutes. Makenna seconded the motion. Motion carried by roll call vote.**

Director's Report:

All members received copy of the Director's report. Krystie Hohnstein discussed the report and continued training members on the program requirements and reporting. Data entry continues and percentages for completion of requirements are rising. The program reports 27% completion to the final fiscal year in-kind goal. In comparison to the previous year, the program is reported to have collected more this year at this time. Ongoing discussion and training occurred on what types of contributions are allowed for partnership classrooms/families who are not enrolled in Head Start but are attending in a private pay slot.

Finance Report:

All members received a copy of the Finance Report. Lauren Starke, Fiscal Officer, presented the reports. Lauren continued training with members on how to read the reports. Lauren reminded members that it is okay to over spend on T/TA funds as regular program funds can be utilized for more training opportunities. The ESU13 Head Start Program invests highly in staff development, so will typically utilize all T/TA funding and some program funding to complete professional development goals. She also pointed out the differences in expenses between the EHS and HS reports in that there are no payments for public school partnership slots in EHS and on both reports there are no indirect cost payments at this time. The program remains under the required 15% administrative cost cap. The one-time funding grant was also included for the mental health program to show expenses that are being utilized towards this goal. **Echo moved to approve the finance report. Madison seconded the motion. Motion carried by roll call vote.**

Board Report:

Krystie presented the Head Start Governance Training. The ESU13 Board approved the Head Start 5-year grant application. Upcoming events were reviewed for the agency. The ESU13 audit is underway and funding options for the Panhandle Beginnings Project are being explored. Results of the NDE Federal Grant Fiscal Review were presented, and the Mid-Winter Conference is scheduled for February. Dr. Barrett was honored with the *2024 Educational Administration Impact Award* by UNL. A review of a proposed policy amendment on communicable diseases, discussion of facility matters and ESU13 vehicles, HARMS Center updates on remodel, and facility assessments also occurred.

Old Business:

Bus Disposition: The program will sell an extra bus that has not been used for several years and is not needed. Approval was granted for the sale of the bus by the Region 7 Office without any additional restrictions based upon federal interest due to the lower value of the vehicle.

Incident Report/RAN (Risk Assessment Notification) Review Update: No further updates have been received at this time. Changes in procedure have been made and policies have been reviewed to ensure child safety. The program continues to wait on a report and response from the Office of Head Start and will report back to Policy Council once this has been received.

New Business:

Election of Officers: Officers engaged in elections for the following Policy Council leadership positions and volunteered for program committees: Executive Committee including a President, Vice President, and Secretary. Other committee opportunities include: Personnel and Health and Mental Health Services Advisory Committees. An explanation of each committee occurred and members had the opportunity to nominate self or others. Nominees had the opportunity to talk about their interest in the position, and why they felt they would be a reliable candidate to carry out the responsibilities.

Executive Committee:

President:	Vice President:	Secretary:
Nominees: Echo Woyak Tiah Alvizar Jessica Brenizer	Nominees: Echo Woyak Jessica Brenizer	Nominees: Angel Poor Bear Brandy Klinessmith
<i>Elected – Tiah Alvizar</i>	<i>Elected- Echo Woyak</i>	<i>Elected – Brandy Klinessmith</i>

Volunteers for Committees:

Personnel: Dehlia Cardona, Makenna Sempek

Health and Mental Health Services Advisory: Tiah Alvizar, Dehlia Cardona, Madison Koch, Kristen Gompert, Veronica Gonzales, Brandy Klinessmith, Shayna Hudson, and Echo Woyak

Veronica moved to approve the Officers and Committee Members. Angel seconded the motion. Motion approved by roll call vote.

Office of Head Start (OHS)/Region 7 Discussion: Members received handouts to demonstrate how the Head Start Program functions and the oversight of the program at state, regional, and national levels. They received “The Head Start Ecosystem” showing Federal Funding sources, Collaborative Offices, Advocacy Programs, Grant Recipients, and other funding sources. The ESU13 Head Start Organizational Chart was also presented.

HS/EHS Continuation/5-Year Grant Approval: Krystie Hohnstein discussed the upcoming submission of the 5 Year Continuation Grant and expected service delivery. Members received the 2025-2030 Head Start Strategic Priorities in their binders and Krystie shared the working document that the program will utilize during this 5-year grant cycle to monitor and track responsibilities, timelines, and outcomes/status of the goals as the work is completed. The grant must be submitted by December 31st, 2024.

Krystie gave an overview of the grant with no proposed service changes. The program plans to serve a total of 274 children with 8 public school partnerships in Bayard, Bridgeport, Gering, Leyton, Minatare, Mitchell, Morrill, and Scottsbluff. A total of 202 slots will be preschool, with 148 of those slots in the public-school partnerships.

The additional 72 slots are designated to EHS center-based locations. Annual community assessment surveys, parent surveys, staff surveys, and the self-assessment process have helped to guide the process for the continuation grant and service delivery for 2025-2030. **Veronica moved to approve the 2025-30 5-Year/Continuation Grant submission. Madison seconded the motion. Motion approved by roll call vote. President, Tiah Alvizar, signed the document verifying Policy Council approval for grant submission.**

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 Hires: None this month.

Center Reports: Center reports were presented from: Bayard, Minatare, Leyton, Mitchell, CDC EHS/HS, Bridgeport, Scottsbluff Roosevelt and Stadium. Other reports received included: ELC HS & EHS.

Members were reminded that there is no meeting in December. The next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, January 28th with meal service beginning at 5:45pm.

Meeting adjourned at 7:25p.m.