

Policy Council Meeting
2-25-25

Submitted by: Brandy Klinesmith & Kerry Mehling

Members Present: Echo Woyak, Cara Edington, Sydni Closson, Makenna Sempek, Veronica Gonzales, Carmen Torres, Jessica Brenizer, Brittain Reinmuth, Skylar Pottorff, Kristen Gompert, Shayna Hudson, Debra Jo Mason, Jessica Goodrich

Guest: Juan Gonzales

Staff Present: Kerry Mehling, Krystie Hohnstein, Lauren Starke, Joan Dewitt, Teena Branson,

Board Members Present: Tom Millette, Ray Richards

Policy Council Meeting called to order by Echo Woyak, at 6:06 p.m. There were no new members. Members reviewed the minutes from the January meeting. **Veronica Gonzales moved to approve the January minutes. Carmen Torres seconded the motion. Motion carried by roll call vote.**

Director's Report:

All members received copy of the Director's report. Members reviewed the report and were given the opportunity to ask questions of Krystie Hohnstein, Director, as needed. There were no questions.

Finance Report:

All members received a copy of the Finance Report. Lauren Starke, Fiscal Officer, presented the reports. The Head Start budget is 67% expended. The TTA reports show increased expenses for tuition as a new semester of school started for staff members. Lauren reminded the council that it is okay to over-spend in TTA funds and utilize regular funding for additional costs as needed. Early Head Start budget is 85.6% expended. She noted the biggest changes in expenses showing from December included a payment for Indirect Costs. She shared that there are not a lot more training expenses in the coming months before the end of the budget year.

The Administrative percentage is below 15%. There were no questions about credit card expenses for January. The one-time funding costs were spent on rent and some basic supplies. Supply expenses are expected to rise in the next month. December USDA Report for Reimbursement and January's were presented. **Veronica Gonzales moved to approve the finance report. Jessica Goodrich seconded the motion. Motion carried by roll call vote.**

Board Report: Krystie Hohnstein presented the Board Report. At the February board meeting there was a lot of discussion around legislative issues. Some board members had attended a meeting on this. Krystie presented on ERSEA and eligibility training. Ongoing remodeling at the HARMS center was discussed with hopes for completion by fall. Ray added that there was a special meeting last Friday about the VALTS Director moving to a superintendent position at Morrill schools. Advertisements are out to hire a new VALTS Director for the 2025-26 school year.

Old Business:

In-Kind Presentation: Lauren Starke, Fiscal Officer, presented. She discussed what In-Kind is what counts to meet those goals. In-Kind is any donation of time, services, or materials that benefit Head Start and could be paid for with grant money. Lauren discussed the funds needed for this year's In-Kind and how that money breaks down between the grant, COLA, and one-time funding awarded. The total amount needed for this year is \$980,479.00.

Classroom contributions can include activity calendars and reading logs, or through volunteers coming into the classroom. There are other options outside of the classroom, including but not limited to Policy Council or Board Member hours. She then discussed how that time converts into money at each level. A bulk of the program's non-federal share (In-Kind) comes from public school partnerships. She explained how this works in calculating in-kind costs from the partnership based upon enrollment slots and other expenses to run the classrooms serving Head Start children. Classroom or time donations by parents or community should be reported on a non-federal share donation form and signed by the person donating the items/time.

New Business:

Program Management & Quality Improvement Written Plans Review. Krystie Hohnstein, Director, presented. There were no major changes this year. Krystie Hohnstein, Director, presented. Topics included effective management and oversight of all program areas, coordinated approaches, achieving program goals, and engaging families in their home language. Efforts to communicate with the community, with families in the program, staff members, and the Governing Body and Policy Council were highlighted. Next, record-keeping and reporting systems were shared along with confidentiality measures that are in place. The final Strategic Plan Report booklet was shared with members to review as they chose as well.

Results of 1st Staff/Parent Self-Assessment Survey – Kerry Mehling discussed the assessment survey results from the fall survey, and a copy was given to all council members. Surveys are done 3 times a year. These included staff, partnership staff, and parent survey results. Focus areas included job understanding and preparedness, areas for support, mental health awareness, wellness support, job recommendations, positive experiences, and suggested improvements for HS staff. For partnership staff, the focus was on understanding the partnership, benefits of Head Start, areas needed for support, mental health awareness, support received from Head Start, recommendations for the partnership, and improvement ideas. For families, the survey highlighted satisfaction levels with the application/enrollment process, awareness and participation with mental health services, family engagement events in the program, feedback on family events and preferred involvement activities, recommendations and positive experiences, and suggestions for improvement.

2023-2024 PIR Discussion-Krystie shared that this is the Program Information Report done annually in July. Information is broken down for each program, state, region, or nation. This report consists of the all of the information from the year prior. The areas highlighted on the report are homelessness, foster care, and disability services as these tend to stand out on the report in our area due to it being a smaller area in comparison to the state as a whole.

Flyers were shared with parents and caregivers highlighting a method to reach out to NHSA to express the impact of Head Start and share success stories from families or others who have been impacted by the program.

End of Grant Year Purchases: Lauren shared about the end of year purchases and how every classroom will get \$1500 to spend on social-emotional materials. All classrooms are encouraged to have a cozy corner. This may look different in each location, but the goal is that staff will be utilizing it to teach kids how to manage feelings or learn coping skills.

New Hires:

Destiney Allbaugh-Assistant teacher in Bridgeport. Full-time, full year position. **Makenna Sempek moved to approve the New Hires. Veronica Gonzales seconded the motion. Motion carried by roll call vote.**

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. Updates are being made to the website.

Center Reports: Center reports were presented from: CDC 108, CDC EHS, Bridgeport, and Leyton.

The next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, March 25th with meal service beginning at 5:45pm.

Meeting adjourned at 7:10 p.m.