

Policy Council Minutes

1-30-18

Submitted by: Jennifer O'Hare and Kerry Mehling

Members Present: Jessica Palomo, Gloria Morales, Trevor Soule, Lynelle Pahl, Ashley Newhoff, Megan Scheer, Heather Smith, Tony Mitchell, Amanda Miller, Jennifer O'Hare, Miranda Siefers

Staff Present: Kerry Mehling, Donna Jenne, Pam Hebbert, Stephanie Reynaga

Ashley Newhoff called the meeting to order at 6:18pm. Members reviewed the minutes from the November meeting. **Gloria Morales moved to approve the November minutes. Jennifer O'Hare seconded the motion. Motion carried by roll call vote.**

Director's Report:

All members received a copy of the Director's report. Donna discussed the report in its entirety. She noted the high percentage of children within the programs that have disabilities as a positive since it exceeds the 10% minimum requirement. There have been two bus evacuations already completed this year. A few families have already accomplished their family goals and many more will be done by the end of the year. Hiring and retaining qualified staff for both programs has been challenging and the continuation grant was submitted in December.

Update on Rule #11

Rule 11 through the Department of Education requires all teachers to be certified. Since the inception of the Head Start grant at ESU#13, this has become a challenge. The Head Start Program does not receive any funds from the state to support this requirement and the Head Start Performance Standards state that teachers must have a Bachelor's Degree in Early Childhood Education. The teachers in the program meet the Head Start Performance Standards requirements. In order to meet the requirements of Rule 11, a large amount of the program's teachers would have to go back to school again for another 72+ credit hours, or would no longer be qualified for their current position. Dr. Jeff West, Administrator, spoke to legislation regarding bill LB803. This bill would grant the programs a waiver so the teachers don't have to have their teacher certification. Head Start teachers currently receive a wide realm of professional development to support continuing education. Samples of this type of training was also submitted to show the importance of professional development to the Head Start Program.

Finance Report:

Pam Hebbert discussed the Finance Reports for November and December as there was not a meeting in December. All members received copies of the monthly report and credit card expenditures. Pam pointed out the differences in salaries in the columns showing the comparisons from last grant year to the current year and noted that the program has made

extensive efforts to increase staff wages. The end of the grant year is coming up on March 31st. Many of the expenses incurred in March will be expensed in April when they are paid. A maximum of 15% of the total funds including In-Kind are allowed to be used for administrative expenses. The administrative expenses are at 11.34% currently. USDA reports were also presented for November and December. **Ashley Newhoff moved to approve the Finance Reports for November and December. Jessica Palomo seconded the motion. Motion carried by roll call vote.**

Board Report:

Members of the board may donate their time at the meeting as In-Kind to the HS programs at an administrative rate. They have been working on tracking this at a more consistent rate. Some of the parking lots have been repaved and the board of directors was updated on the Continuation Grant and LB803. The other bill that was discussed was LB801. This bill proposes that the panhandle opens a Day Treatment facility for school aged children who are experiencing mental health concerns to keep them close to their families while they are receiving much needed services. The project would be named Panhandle Beginnings. School Districts would be able to send kids over while paying an equitable fee for the services they receive. It has been widely supported in the panhandle thus far.

Old Business:

None

New Business:

Federal Monitoring Review – Focus Area 2 and CLASS:

Federal reviews will be conducted the week of March 19th and the reviewers will be contacting Policy Council Reps and others in the community to get a comprehensive review. The CLASS reviewers will observe a percentage of classrooms to rate teacher/child interactions and the classroom environment. Our score will be ranked with the other HS programs nationwide and the lowest 10% of programs will have to re-compete for their grant. More will be discussed at the upcoming meeting in February.

Planning and Monitoring Written Plans MS01, MS09:

Program planning includes assessments of community strengths, needs and resources through completion of the Community Assessment done every five years. Currently, ESU#13 Head Start has a community assessment in progress. This process should be completed by the end of March to help guide the next 5 year grant cycle. Any goals and objectives are developed in consideration of child outcomes, self-assessment, community assessment, and program data. On-going monitoring and an annual self-assessment are also used to ensure compliance with requirements and standards. **Amanda Miller motioned to approve the Planning and**

Monitoring Written Plans MS01, MS09. Ashley Newhoff seconded the motion. Motion approved by roll call vote.

Communication & Record Keeping Written Plans MS02-MS05, MS07-MS08:

The program establishes and implements systems to ensure that timely and accurate information is provided to the general community, including effective two-way comprehensive communications between staff and parents. EHS and HS staff also regularly attend Policy Council meetings to provide updates about program activities. There are mechanisms for regular two-way communication between program staff to facilitate quality outcomes for children and families. Efficient and effective record-keeping systems are maintained to provide accurate and timely information regarding children and families. Staff must ensure appropriate confidentiality of this information. Reporting systems are also maintained, efficient and effective.

Gloria Morales motioned to approve the Communication & Record Keeping Written Plans MS02-MS05, MS07-MS08. Trevor Soule seconded the motion. Motion approved by roll call vote.

ERSEA Written Plans EL00-EL06 including Eligibility Training & General Procedures and 2018-2019 Selection Criteria:

The community assessment that is done every five years is used to reach out to the children that are in most need of the program services as well as define recruitment strategies and areas of program focus. An interview must be done in-person with each family who is participating in the application process and children need to be within the age range of the program and families need to meet income qualifications defined by the HHS Poverty Guidelines. The program is allowed to serve up to 35% of mid-income families and up to 10% of over-income families. Also noted was the requirement that the program must serve at least 10% of children with identified disabilities throughout the grant year. Discussion took place regarding determining, verifying, and documenting eligibility and each member was able to see the paperwork that is utilized throughout the program's processes. Discussion also took place regarding eligibility for children and families experiencing homelessness, receiving public assistance, or those who are unable to provide pay stubs or income verification.

Selection criteria must weigh the prioritization of selection of participants and the program must maintain a waiting list. Members had the opportunity to review the proposed selection criteria for the 2018-19 school year and give input.

Any vacancy must be filled within 30 days of when it was vacated. Regular attendance is promoted and tracked for each child. Discussion took place regarding the program's responsibility for follow-up with families who are experiencing chronic absenteeism or failure to communicate with the school. The daily attendance rate in a center-based program should not fall below 85%. Suspension and expulsion is not allowed. **Ashley Newhoff motion to approve**

the ERSEA Written Plans EL00-EL06 including Eligibility Training & General Procedures and 2018-2019 Selection Criteria. Gloria Morales seconded the motion. Motion passed by roll call vote.

Employment Openings:

HS Assistant Teacher in Sidney, Bridgeport, Kimball and Scottsbluff, 35-40 hours/9 month position

Substitute Job Coaches for the 2017-2018 school year for ESU#13 LifeLink School

Substitute Teachers for the 2017-2018 school year for ESU#13 Meridian School

Substitute Para-Educator for the 2017-2018 school year for ESU#13 Meridian School

New Hires:

Stephanie Reynaga – Enrollment Manager 40 hours, 12 month position

Jackie Garza – Bridgeport, 40 hours, 9 month position

Karina Garza – Bridgeport, 40 hours, 9 month position

Elizabeth Williams – Kimball, 35 hours, 9 month position

Linda Uglow – Kimball, 40 hours, 9 month position

Kandi Weinbender – Kimball on call substitute

Desiree Valencio – CDC Bus Monitor, 30 hours, 9 month position

Katherine Esselstein – HFRC Assistant Teacher T-4, 40 hours, 9 month position

Kymerlees (Dakota) Randles – CDC Assistant Teacher/Floater 30 hours, 9 month position

Stephanie Coley – Scottsbluff Area on call substitute

Camyla Anderson – Scottsbluff Area on call substitute

Ashey Newhoff motioned to approve the New Hires. Jessica Palomo seconded the motion. Motion carried by roll call vote.

Center Reports:

Center reports were passed in to Kerry at the end of the meeting due to the time. Reports turned in included: Bayard, Central, CDC4, Mitchell, CDC3, CDC1, TCP Morrill 3 year old and 4 year old classrooms, Gering, and Bridgeport.

Meeting was adjourned at 8:06pm