

Policy Council Meeting
10-16-21
Submitted by: Kerry Mehling

Members Present: Kaiya West, Douglas Gompert, Leslie Kinnaman, Kayla Christensen, Veronica Torres, Jackie Bryant, Mackenzie Schreiber, Laura Morehead, Shayna Hudson

Board Members Present: None

Staff Present: Kerry Mehling, Krystie Hohnstein

Policy Council Meeting called to order by Laura Morehead at 10:30a.m., following the Program Governance Training for new members that began at 9:00a.m. New member introductions were made. Members reviewed the minutes from the September meeting. **Laura moved to approve the September minutes. Kaiya 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. Members received specific information about the program requirements. Specifically, members were informed that the program must serve at least 10% of children with verified special needs and to meet 85% daily attendance for all children. A brief introduction for income qualifications for enrolled families accompanied the enrollment report. There are 2 openings in the Home Base program, 1 opening in the Bayard partnership and 2 openings at the Bridgeport location. Krystie explained that the attendance has been low due to ongoing illness for children and families at multiple locations and in the Home Base program.

Krystie explained the HHS requirements including screenings, child health status, and parent interaction activities such as parent-teacher conferences, home visits, family needs assessments and goals. Work towards meeting these requirements are in progress. The program expects to see the percentages continue to rise as families provide documentation, and data entry is completed by staff.

Finance Report:

All members received a copy of the Finance Report. Krystie and Kerry presented the reports. The program currently has a vacancy for the Fiscal Officer position. Pam Hebbert, the previous Fiscal Officer, continues to support the program by providing training to other ESU#13 fiscal staff and supporting questions. At this time, no applications have been received for her position of Fiscal Manager, and the program continues to advertise in the newspaper, social media, ESU#13 website and others such as Indeed, Linked-In, Nebraska Works and the NHTSA websites. The HS Regional Office has recommended that the program name an interim Fiscal Officer until a permanent person has been hired. The agency-wide ESU#13 Business Manager, Jodi Walker, meets the requirements of this position. Jodi has been working with Pam Hebbert to learn more about the HS grant and funding. The Head Start Program will ask Jodi to come to the Policy Council meetings in the future to support the Policy Council as they learn more about the grant funding and reporting they receive.

Members were given some training on how to read through the reports for EHS and HS, including the credit card expenditures, regular program budget, COVID funding, and Training and Technical Assistance funding (T/TA).

Krystie discussed COVID funding updates. Reports were provided for COVID 1, 2, and 3 Funds. The HS program is in the process of submitting for the carry-over of COVID 1 funds. Krystie explained to new members how the carry-over submission works with the Regional Office. COVID2 and COVID3 funding will continue to

be utilized per program needs. Staff wellness is a huge focus for utilizing the COVID funding. Upgrades for facilities, including enhancing playgrounds, are still projects on the radar with this funding. The program has two years to spend the COVID 2 and COVID 3 funds.

Lastly, credit card expenditures were discussed. No USDA reports were presented this month. Due to the early date in October for the meeting, these reports were not ready. ***USDA reports for September and October were tabled to the November meeting.*** **Shayna moved to approve the Fiscal Reports. Mackenzie seconded the motion. Motion carried by roll call vote.**

Board Report:

There has not been a board meeting since reporting at the last Policy Council meeting. No updates at this time.

Old Business:

Update on Locally Designed Option (LDO) – Class Size Waiver

Recently, the program applied for a locally designed option waiver for double session classrooms who are serving 20 children in mixed-age classrooms. The allowed number of children, according to the HS Performance Standards, is 17 without a waiver. This scenario is relevant to several of the public school partnerships who have double session classrooms and serve up to 20 children in each session. The waiver request was denied by the Regional Office. The program is now working towards a solution as this waiver denial currently affects the Gering and Mitchell partnerships. Conversations are continuing with the Regional Office to support the program and the partnerships as we resolve this issue. The Head Start Region 7 Specialist is working with the program to look into this disapproval. More information will be provided to Policy Council as decisions are made. Currently, the program will remain in these partnerships and work with partnership and ESU13 administrators, Policy Council, and Board of Education towards a solution. Discussion took place regarding the history of how this issue developed and conversations that have taken place regarding the public school partnerships and the class size prior to the disapproval.

New Business:

Meeting Dates/Times/Committee Elections: The Policy Council agreed to continue with meetings on the last Tuesday of every month at 6p.m. The next meeting will be on November 30th. Policy Council officer elections will take place during this meeting. Officers elected will include a President, Vice President, and Secretary. Other opportunities for committee work will be presented as well.

Approval of Head Start Philosophy: The Head Start (HS) Philosophy was provided in the Policy Council Binders for members to review. **Mackenzie moved to approve the Head Start Philosophy. Veronica seconded the motion. Motion carried by roll call vote.**

Approval of the By-Laws: The ESU#13 Head Start Policy Council By-Laws were provided in the Policy Council Binders and reviewed with members. **Mackenzie moved to approve the By-Laws. Kayla seconded the motion. Motion carried by roll call vote.**

Review of Governance Written Plans (voting in November): The Governance written plans were provided in the Policy Council Binders. Members were asked to review the written plans prior to the November meeting when they will be asked for approval.

Bus Disposition/Equipment Purchase: Head Start currently has 2 buses that are not being used, and have not been used for a few years. One is a 2015 handicap accessible bus and the other is an older bus that was acquired by the program when the local grant was moved from Community Action Partnership of Western NE and awarded to ESU#13. The program has decided to sell the buses as the need for transportation has declined with the increase in public school partnerships for preschoolers and infant/toddler slots over the past few years. The program has been working with the Regional Office for guidance to sell the buses. The funds from the sale will be considered program income and will need to be used towards other vehicles or maintenance of vehicles. The program has identified the need for another car for staff travel and a larger van for travel with multiple people to training. The bids are being placed out in the community and the Policy Council will be kept up to date on bus sales.

Continuation Grant:

Members were asked to provide input to the 2022-2023 grant process as discussions begin for submitting the grant by the end of December 2021. The Policy Council will continue to be updated on the grant process and any proposed changes to the services offered through ESU13 Head Start. The 2022-2023 grant must be approved by the Policy Council during the November meeting. There isn't a Policy Council meeting in December and the grant must be submitted by December 31st. Member attendance is very important at the November meeting.

Five-Year Program Goals: Members received a copy of the Program Five Year Goals in their binders. Updates on the goals and conversations about progress and challenges will take place throughout the year. Members were asked to review the goals.

Employment Openings were shared with members. Openings included:

Special Education Retention Program Manager

Title 1C Education Recruiter

Title 1C Education Service Provider

Head Start Grant/Fiscal Officer

Head Start Floater/Assistant Teachers

Substitute VALTS Facilitator Sidney

School Mental Health Provider 2021-2022 – Sidney area

School Psychologist 2021-2022 school year

Substitute Para educators Meridian, ECEC, VALTS

Job descriptions including credential requirements can be found at www.esu13.org (Employment Opportunities).

New Hires:

No regular program new hires this month. Policy Council was asked for their approval to officially hire Krystie Hohnstein in the permanent position of Head Start (HS) Director. Krystie has been serving as the Interim HS Director since June 2021. ESU#13 is ready to formally move forward with this process and is seeking Policy Council approval to keep Krystie in the Director position and to cease any additional processes to fill this position. Krystie gave a summary of her professional experience and education that qualifies her for this position for new members. **Laura moved to approve Krystie advancing from Interim HS Director to permanently filling this position. Shayna seconded the motion. Motion carried by roll call vote.**

Forms Training (In-Kind, Mileage w/ W-9, Center Reports): Members received training on how to fill out the forms that accompany their roles on the Policy Council.

Confidentiality Statement/Training Evaluations were completed by representatives.

Center Reports: None at this meeting.

Meeting adjourned at 11:57a.m.