

Policy Council Meeting
12-1-20
Submitted by: Kerry Mehling

Members Present: Heather Lambert, Kaci Fowlkes, Laura Morehead, Veronica Torres, Andrea Rodriguez, Kelsey Duffield (Zoom), Salvador Lopez, Kristina Stokes, Rebecca Jacobs (Zoom), Jeannette Lara (Zoom), Jennifer Gutierrez (Zoom), Amanda Flores (Zoom), Madison Koch (Zoom)

Staff Present: Kerry Mehling, Donna Jenne, Pam Hebbert, Krystie Hohnstein, Maria Pineda

Policy Council Meeting called to order by Kerry Mehling at 6:15pm. New member introductions were made both in person and for those members attending via Zoom. Members reviewed the minutes from the October meeting. **Kacey moved to approve the October minutes. Veronica seconded the motion. Motion carried by roll call vote.**

Director's Report:

All members received copy of the Director's report. Donna Jenne discussed the report and continued training with members on the program requirements and reporting. The Home Base program remains under-enrolled due to the COVID-19 pandemic and safety concerns. EHS Center Base options only have 1 opening at this time and a new enrollee will be considered. Head Start options are fully enrolled. Attendance has been under the 85% requirement due to illness, classroom closures, and quarantines. Staff continue to monitor and document reasons for absenteeism. Data entry is ongoing for health requirements, parent teacher conference and home visit completions. Family services home visits are in progress and have also been impacted by illness and safety concerns. Staff continue working with families to provide services via phone or Zoom as possible.

Staff continue to engage in many virtual training options to support mental health, family well-being, virtual family engagement, etc. Education staff who are engaged in coaching have each completed their first goals for the year. There are 6 education staff participating in the coaching process. All CLASS and Behavioral Health observations have been completed. TPOT and TPITOS observations have been put on hold due to COVID-19 safety concerns.

Health Services Advisory Committee took place via Zoom on 11/17/20 and coordination with speech/language pathologists and ESU13 deaf educators continues as new children are enrolled or rescreens are needed. Referrals are in progress for several children currently.

Finance Report:

All members received a copy of the Finance Report. Pam Hebbert, Fiscal Officer, presented the reports. Several new members were in attendance, so Pam gave an overview of the reports that she distributed to all. Reports presented included Head Start (HS) Operating, Early Head Start (EHS) Operating, HS Training and Technical Assistance (T/TA), EHS T/TA, and credit card expenditures. Members were reminded that the grant year runs from April 1, 2020 thru March 31st, 2021. Reports outline current month expenditures in comparison to previous month expenditures where applicable, the budget year-to-date, and the % of the budget year expended. Pam also explained the Administrative percentage requirements and costs and reminded members that this number cannot exceed 15% at any given time.

An additional report for the CARES ACT Funding in response to COVID-19 was also included. Expenditures have included additional mental health services for families, cleaning supplies, materials for remote services, and

increased staffing to support classrooms through the pandemic to allow for additional cleaning and staff due to illness and added duties. With the consideration of the obligation to the cost of increased staff through July 2021, the program has approximately \$100,000 remaining (of the total \$251,339 awarded) to use for COVID expenditures.

Pam mentioned that the annual ESU13 audit was completed in November 2020, and that there were not any concerns highlighted during the audit. A final report will be received by ESU13 by January 2021.

Finally, Pam reviewed the USDA report of reimbursement for meals served including the months of September and October 2020. It was noted that the number of meals served in October were less than September because there were several classroom closures in October due to COVID. All members received a copy of these reports.

Kaci moved to approve the finance report. Andrea seconded the motion. Motion carried by roll call vote.

Board Report:

Donna discussed the board report from the last meeting. Donna presented program governance training for the board members. The Head Start continuation grant was discussed and approved for submission. Discussion took place regarding the ESU13 strategic plan #2, possibilities about forming a foundation that works with ESU13, and revisions of the Board Articles #2 & #4.

New Business:

Approval of Head Start (HS) Indirect Cost Rate: Pam gave an overview of the process by which the Head Start program has been communicating with the Nebraska Department of Education, Head Start Region VII and the ESU 13 auditor in order to assess whether the Head Start program is eligible to use the non-restricted indirect cost rate, as assigned by the Nebraska Department of Education each year. The ESU 13 auditor has provided assurance that the federal funds for the Head Start program “supplement and/or supplant” state and local funds, which is the criteria the Nebraska Department of Education uses to discern the use of the restricted versus the non-restricted indirect cost rate. Guidance from the Head Start Region VII office has led the Head Start program to provide information to the ESU 13 Board of Directors and the Head Start Policy Council about the procedure the program intends to use when budgeting and expending indirect costs paid to ESU 13. The program then requests approval from the Board and Policy Council to use an indirect cost rate up to and including the non-restricted rate assigned to ESU 13 by the Nebraska Department of Education.

The intended procedure was outlined as follows:

The HS Program will budget at a rate as close to the non-restricted rate as workable when writing and submitting the application each year. That rate would be used when expensing indirect costs from April through July. In July/August when certified teacher costs (or other budget uncertainties) are determined, the program may adjust the rate used accordingly. For ESU13 budgeting purposes, HS will pay a minimum of 8% in indirect costs. If there are unobligated funds at the end of the HS budget period, the program can still pay up to the non-restricted rate, if it does not put the program over the 15% administrative maximum. **Kaci moved to approve the use of an indirect cost rate of up to the non-restricted rate assigned to ESU13 by the Nebraska Department of Education to expense indirect costs paid to ESU13 by the HS Program. Veronica seconded the motion. Motion carried by roll call vote.**

Election of Officers: Officers were elected for the following Policy Council seats and committees: Executive Committee including a President, Vice President, and Secretary. Other committee opportunities discussed were:

Personnel and Health Services Advisory Committees. An explanation of each committee was given and members had the opportunity to nominate self or others and the nominees were given opportunity to talk about their interest in the position and why they felt they would be a reliable candidate to carry out the responsibilities. Final election results are as follows:

Executive Committee:

President:	Vice President:	Secretary:
Nominees: Kelsey Duffield, Veronica Torres, Laura Morehead	Nominees: Laura Morehead	Nominees: Kaci Fowlkes, Amanda Flores
<i>Elected – Kelsey Duffield</i>	<i>Elected – Laura Morehead</i>	<i>Elected – Amanda Flores</i>

Personnel Committee Volunteers: *Andrea Rodriguez and Kaci Fowlkes*

Health Services Advisory Committee Volunteers: *Andrea Rodriguez, Amanda Flores, Laura Morehead*

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

Program Governance Written Plans PG01-PG20: Members reviewed the Program Governance written plans after receiving a copy in their Program Governance Training Binder in October. They were asked to review the policies prior to the November meeting. No further discussion. **Jeannette moved to approve the Governance Written Plans. Laura seconded the motion. Motion approved by roll call vote.**

HS/EHS 2021-2022 Continuation Grant Approval: Donna Jenne discussed what the upcoming continuation grant will encompass. The grant amount is \$3,313, 210.00 for each year of the 5-year grant cycle. The grant must be submitted by December 31st, 2020.

Donna gave an overview of the grant with no proposed service changes. Several changes have been implemented over the past 5 years and the program feels that it is in a place currently to meet community needs with no further changes. The program plans to serve a total of 286 children with 7 public school partnerships in Bayard, Gering, Minatare, Mitchell, Morrill, and Scottsbluff and Sidney. Program goals for the next 5 years were included in the discussion. 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 2021-2022. **Veronica moved to approve the 2021-22 Continuation Grant submission. Andrea seconded the motion. Motion approved by roll call vote. The Policy Council Chairperson, Kelsey Duffield, signed off on the letter of approval by the Policy Council.**

Child Outcomes and School Readiness Discussion: Krystie Hohnstein, Education Manager, presented the child outcomes and school readiness goals to the members. She discussed how the goals align with the *Early Learning Outcomes Framework* (ELOF) for children ages birth to five. She then discussed the *GOLD Assessment* tool that measures child learning and growth in the domains of social-emotional, physical, language, cognitive, literacy, mathematics, and how it guides staff and families to assist with dual language learners. Assessments take place four times in 12-month classes and three times in a nine-month class.

Policy Council members were able to review the baseline assessment for children in Early Head Start and Head Start for this school year. The first check highlighted additional supports necessary in the areas of Literacy and Math. Enhanced training and materials will be provided to facilitate more intentional teaching and learning in these areas.

The program also utilizes the *Creative Curriculum* which is also aligned with ELOF and GOLD. In addition, the curriculums are enhanced by using the *Social-Emotional Pyramid Model* and *Second Step Curriculum* for social-emotional development. Staff receive training on an ongoing basis to utilize the curriculum and the assessment tools with fidelity. TPOT and TPITOS are additional observation tools that are implemented to support the *Social-Emotional Pyramid Model*.

Update from Focus Area 1 Federal Review: The Federal Review was postponed until sometime in 2021. The program received notification the Thursday prior to the start of the scheduled review. Further communication will take place when it is rescheduled.

Self-Assessment Process for EHS/HS SA01:

Kerry Mehling presented the self-assessment process and discussed the first staff and parent survey that was used to gain feedback regarding the upcoming 5-year grant submission including program and community needs. Surveys have taken place in previous years on an ongoing basis with staff and parents throughout the school year to gain feedback on program operations. This process will continue. The annual self-assessment process includes data from classroom observations, interviews with staff and parents, and data review regarding screenings, assessments, child and family outcomes, and much more.

Members present were able to see the results of the fall surveys that were completed with parents during parent-teacher conferences and staff during the fall months. **Kristina moved to approve the Self-Assessment Process. Heather seconded the motion. Motion approved by roll call vote.**

Employment Openings were passed around for members to review. Openings included:

Head Start Assistant Cook – Scottsbluff area – 35 hours per week/12-month position.

Substitute Head Start Assistant Teacher – On-call, as needed.

School Psychologist 20-21 & 21-22 school years. Full-time position.

Special Education Classroom Teacher 20-21 school year – Day Treatment/School. Full-time position.

Substitute Para Educators – Meridian School.

Substitute Teachers – Meridian/Lifelink Schools – On-call, as needed.

Substitute Job Coaches – Valts & Lifelink Schools – On-call, as needed.

Substitute VALTS Facilitator Sidney – On-call, as needed.

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

New Hires:

Delisha Neal – Floater/Assistant Teacher @ CDC. 40 hours/week, 12-month position.

Jaci Barnes – Floater/Assistant Teacher @ ELC. 40 hours/week, 12-month position.

Andrea moved to approve the New Staff Hires. Laura seconded the motion. Motion approved by roll call vote.

Center Reports: Due to time constraints, center reports were turned in for Gering, CDC, ELC HS, and Bayard. Meeting adjourned at 8:15pm.