

Policy Council Meeting
4-25-23

Submitted by: Kathrine Macintosh & Kerry Mehling

Members Present: Laura Morehead, Carolyn Carlyle, Mary Brumage, Tiah Alvizar, Kathrine MacIntosh, Madison Koch, Kari Schukei, Kianna Ybarra, Shayna Hudson, Tess Martin, Christina Alvarez, Maria Olivia

Staff Present: Lauren Starke, Krystie Hohnstein, Kerry Mehling

Board Members Present: Ray Richards

Policy Council Meeting called to order by Laura Morehead at 6:11p.m. New member introductions were made. Members reviewed the minutes from the March meeting. **Tiah Alvizar moved to approve the March minutes. Kiana Ybarra seconded the motion. Motion carried by roll call vote.**

Director Report:

All members received copy of the Director's report. Krystie Hohnstein discussed the report. The program has two open slots in Early Head Start as a result of the reduction of the Home Base program and the addition of the Bridgeport infant/toddler classroom. The classroom remains closed for facility work completion. Home Base families will continue to be served through the end of the 2022-23 program year, but new enrollees are not being accepted for Home Base. Head Start is fully enrolled. Health data requirements will continue to increase as data is entered. The program had a staff vacancy in this component for a long period and the person hired for the position has also been covering in the kitchen where staffing vacancies exist. Education 2nd parent teacher conferences and Home Visits are near complete. 70% of families are making progress with family outcomes or family goals. There are many trainings happening for staff members on an ongoing basis. Coaching and staff goal completion is also going extremely well. Classroom observations are complete. The program is involved in discussions with CAPWN dental in Chadron regarding future partnerships, in addition to current and future advancements in screening supports with PPHD for lead and dental.

Finance Report:

All members received a copy of the Finance Report. Lauren Starke, Fiscal Officer, presented the reports. This report shows the last month of the grant year with an increase in spending to spend all funds. COVID funds have been invaluable for replacing needed items in classrooms, updating facilities and playgrounds. The program is certain that all funds will be liquidated by the June 30th deadline. Lauren also shared the credit card expenditure report and the March USDA report of reimbursement. **Kathrine MacIntosh moved to approve the finance report. Madison Koch seconded the motion. Motion carried by roll call vote.**

Board Report: Presented by Krystie Hohnstein. The board is working on expanding their ability to hold electronic meetings. They discussed new certified hires and resignations for the upcoming school year. Krystie Hohnstein discussed the childcare stabilization grants through DHHS and an upcoming visit from Region 7 Program Specialist, Dr. Walker, in May. Facility updates are in progress for ESU13, including HVAC and updates to the controlled entry system at CDC and Bridgeport. Adoption of the 2023 Mental Health Month Proclamation.

Old Business: None

New Business:

Child Care Stabilization Grant Applications: Presented by Lauren Starke. DHHS has extra funding they are giving in form of grant which is called Child Care Stabilization Grant. The program submitted 3 applications on 4-21-23 for CDC, ELC and Bridgeport locations. If the funding is granted the money will go towards staff

incentives. Updates were provided with the Region 7 Program Specialist on the process and requirements. The funding is not tied to federal Head Start funds so the requirements are different from normal grant applications. Notice should be provided by June on funding awards.

Family & Community Partnerships Written Plan Discussion: Kerry Mehling, Assistant Director & Family and Community Partnership Manager facilitated the written plan discussion. Strategies for family engagement are integrated into all systems and programs. Members all have a copy of the Family and Community Engagement Framework and efforts throughout the program were discussed. The Family Partnership process helps to identify needs, interests, strengths, goals, and resources to support family well-being. Home Visits (Education and Family Services); Parent Teacher Conferences, Family Engagement Events and Parent Education; Attendance; Health, Nutrition and Mental Health; Community Advocacy, Transition efforts, Volunteering, and Family Rights and Responsibilities were all discussed.

Transportation Written Plan Discussion: Krystie Hohnstein, Director, facilitated the transportation written plan presentation. Transportation is offered in limited locations. Laws and regulations; equipment and proper restraints for transporting children; and emergency procedures were outlined. Regular maintenance and inspections occur regularly. All drivers must maintain a CDL and attend annual training. Trip routing, release of children, and family/child safety training were discussed. Adaptations are available for children with disabilities for transportation services.

Self-Assessment Results: Kerry Mehling presented the results from the 2nd staff and parent surveys. All members received a copy in their packets for preview. Several families and staff responded.

Discuss Community Assessment for the coming year: Krystie Hohnstein updated members on the process to update the community assessment for the next grant cycle. A community assessment must be completed every 5 years. The program has been collaborating with other agencies to collect data.

Continuation Grant 2023-2024 Review and 5 Year Goal Update: Krystie Hohnstein updated members that the program has received notice that the continuation grant for the 2023-2024 year is approved. The reduction of the Home Base slots to add a center base infant/toddler classroom in Bridgeport was the only change in services for this grant application. All members received a copy of the 5 year goals with updates & progress discussed. Many of the goals are met or almost met.

Tiah Alvizar presented an idea about an app called Bright Wheel that keeps parents updated on their children's daily routines and events. Teachers can upload videos, pictures; send reminders, and much more. The program will explore this more for possible implementation for families who are interested.

Employment Openings - Agency-wide employment openings are located on the ESU13 website (www.esu13.org) under *Employment Openings*. Prospective Employees can also apply directly on this site. The website was visible to members for review of current open positions.

New Hires:

Loretta Lawrence – Assistant Cook @ CDC. Full-time/Full Year Position. **Shayna Hudson moved to approve the New Staff Hires. Kianna Ybarra seconded the motion. Motion approved by roll call vote.**

Center Reports: Center reports received from Home Base, ELC PreK, Bayard, ELC EHS, CDC, Gering Meeting adjourned at 8:08p.m.