

Policy Council Meeting

4-27-21

Submitted by: Amanda Flores and Kerry Mehling

**Members Present:** Laura Morehead, Diana Delgadillo, Kristina Stokes, Veronica Torres, Lydia Scott, Kelsey Duffield, Andrea Rodriguez, Heather Lambert, Madison Koch, Maria Rosario Sanchez, Jeanette Lara

**Board Members Present:** Diane Coon, Ray Richards

**Staff Present:** Kerry Mehling, Donna Jenne, Pam Hebbert

Policy Council Meeting called to order by Kelsey 6:15pm. New member introductions were made. Members reviewed the minutes from the March meeting. **Lydia moved to approve the March minutes. Laura seconded the motion. Motion carried by roll call vote.**

**Director's Report:**

All members received a copy of the Director's report. Donna Jenne discussed the report. EHS is still short in the home based program with three openings. All center base classrooms are fully enrolled. HS has three openings at (2) Sidney and (1) at ELC Preschool.

An additional \$86,077 was awarded for COVID funding for the 2021-2022 school year. The program is awaiting availability of funds.

Transition backpacks and materials will be provided to children who do not receive services during the summer months. Transition activities for EHS children and ELC preschool children will be ongoing in the classrooms throughout the summer.

There will be some facility work during the week of May 17<sup>th</sup> at both CDC and ELC. This involves kitchen renovations that will require the centers to close during that time. CDC is in the process of getting a new roof currently. The only disruption for that project will be that the children may have to move to a vacant room for a couple of hours during the day but does not require closure of classrooms.

**Finance Report:**

All members received a copy of the Finance Report. Pam Hebbert, Fiscal Officer, presented the reports. Fingerprinting and background checks were completed for all staff members with end of the year funds. The program has since been informed that DHHS services will provide a refund to the program for this service. Several discussions took place regarding budgeted items and expenses that were noted as higher than the budgeted amounts. Pam explained how program changes impacted the original budgeted amounts. Training and Technical Assistance (T/TA funds) reports were reviewed for the end of the grant year. Administration costs are projected to stay under the 15% limit. The credit card expenditure report and USDA Reimbursement report were presented.

Pam then provided an update on COVID Funding. Laptops that were purchased for staff will be paid partially out of operating funds and partially out of COVID funds. COVID funding for the 2020-2021 budget period have expired, however, as the grant is closed out, unobligated funds in the approximate amount of \$81,000 will be requested as carry over funds. The request to carry-over these funds will be submitted late June or early July with an outline of how the program intends to utilize the funds in the 2021-2022 school year. **Andrea moved to approve the finance report, including the CACFP report for March. Kristina seconded the motion. Motion carried by roll call vote.**

**Board Report:** The April meeting was held in Sidney at the new ESU 13 administration facility on the WNCC campus to include the ribbon cutting ceremony. Certificated staff hires and resignations were approved. The distance learning system will be upgraded at the HARMS Advanced Technology Center in the ESU 13 section of the building and some concrete work is scheduled for completion to add a sidewalk to access the Meridian playground. In addition, ESU 13 will be partnering with local school districts in the Scottsbluff/Gering area to participate in a joint emergency response simulation on May 10<sup>th</sup>.

**Old Business: None**

**New Business:**

**Family & Community Partnerships (FCP) Written Plan Review:** Kerry Mehling, FCP Manager, presented the written plans. Topics included: family engagement strategies; parent involvement in decision-making, approach to child development and education, community advocacy, transition activities, and home visits. Discussion about budgeting for family engagement events and utilization of parent interests to plan the events along with the importance of male involvement. The process of family partnership building, family partnership services was explained. Family rights and responsibilities, including parent/guardian permission to release confidential information, volunteers, and coordination with other early childhood programs, community partnerships and community resources were noted. **Veronica moved to approve the FCP Written Plans. Lydia seconded the motion. Motion approved by roll call vote.**

**Transportation Written Plan Review:**

Donna Jenne, Director, presented the written plans. Topics included: identification of children who need transportation services and types of service provided, child restraint systems, use of school buses or allowable alternate vehicles, maintenance and inspection of vehicles. Next, safety measures were explained for operation of vehicles, driver qualifications, driver and bus monitor training, trip routing, and safety education were explained. Lastly, services for children with disabilities were outlined along with coordination of transportation services to control costs and improve the quality and availability of transportation services. **Laura moved to approve the Transportation Written Plans. Jeanette seconded the motion. Motion approved by roll call vote.**

**Self-Assessment Results (2<sup>nd</sup> Staff & Parent Surveys):**

Kerry Mehling, FCP Manager, presented the results of the surveys. The primary focus for this round of surveys was in regards to family well-being and program support for mental health, physical health, safety, and financial well-being. Areas such as child abuse and neglect, domestic violence and substance misuse were included to ensure that the program staff are confident in helping families with this type of service and that the families were receiving support as needed in these areas. This survey is directly related to one of the program's five-year goals, to continue to support and train staff and families in these difficult areas. Several training opportunities and resources were included throughout the year for staff members to enhance focus and understanding in these topics.

**Discuss Community Assessment for coming year:**

Kerry and Donna discussed the process for community assessment updates in the upcoming year. Self-Assessment surveys and partnerships with local entities who complete community surveys will help to inform this process. Agencies such as Panhandle Public Health District, The Buffet Institute, local public school districts, and other social service agencies gather and share data that is pertinent to the Head Start program. The program

will be working with their training and technical assistance supports for new ideas and resources in the upcoming month to support ongoing Community Assessment.

**EHS/HS Grant Review/5 Year Goals/Changes for 21-22 school year:**

Donna reviewed the program's Five Year Goals and progress with members. Upcoming changes for the 2021-2022 school year include an expansion with the Gering Public Schools partnership with HS. Gering will take over the Northfield modular and increase partnership slots to 30 HS. An additional Head Start stand-alone preschool classroom will be opened at CDC. Currently, CDC only serves EHS slots in five classrooms. The additional preschool classroom will support families who have both EHS and HS age children in one location.

**Employment Openings** were shared with members. Openings included:

Summer Head Start Floaters – Head Start

Part-time Summer Grounds/Facilities Help – Administration

Early Childhood MTSS Implementation Facilitator/Coach Coordinator – Early Childhood

Ecological In-Home Family Treatment Supervisor – Psychology & Behavioral Health

School Mental Health Provider 2021-2022 School Year – Psychology & Behavioral Health

ASD Behavior Specialist – Special Education

Community Engagement & Marketing Specialist - Administration

School Psychologist 20-21 & 21-22 school years. Psychology & Behavioral Health

Teacher 2021-2022 – Day Treatment/School – Psychology & Behavioral Health

Early Childhood Certificated Teacher 2021-2022 – Head Start

Floaters/Assistant Teachers – Head Start/Early Head Start

Substitute Head Start Assistant Teacher – Head Start/Early Head Start

Substitute Para Educators – Meridian School – Special Education

Substitute Teachers – Meridian/Lifelink Schools – Special Education

Job descriptions including credential requirements can be found at [www.esu13.org](http://www.esu13.org) (Employment Opportunities).

**New Hires:**

None this month for approval.

**Reminder – No Meeting in May. Next Meeting June 29. Due to construction at ESU 13 an alternate meeting location will be used for June and July meetings.** More information/map to come with June packet.

**Center Reports:** CDC EHS 102, ELC, Northfield South, CDC EHS 104, Gering, EHS Home Base

Meeting adjourned at 7:45pm.