

Head Start Policy Council
May 15, 2023 Noon
Virtual/Stearns Education Center

Attending: Alicia Avellaneda (parent-Polk Central), Calan Halford (Polk County DSS), Philicia Pace (parent-Polk Central), Amy Smith (WNC Source)

Others Present: Kathy Harding, Amanda VanDuyne, Jan Crump, Xan Morse, Lisa Brown, Courtney Edney, Debbie Lovelace

Welcome and Introductions: Mrs. Crump led the meeting in the absence of the chairperson. She welcomed everyone to the meeting. Each person introduced themselves and stated the agency they represented.

Approval of March 21, 2023 minutes: Minutes were emailed to members prior to the meeting and included in member packets. Mrs. Crump asked for a motion to approve the minutes. Mrs. Pace made a motion to approve the minutes and Mrs. Avellaneda seconded the motion. All voted to approve the minutes.

Reports/Information: The preschool program monthly summary for March and April 2023 was emailed to members prior to the meeting and included in member packets.

Ms. VanDuyne reviewed the enrollment and attendance numbers for March and April. One child left the program, lowering total enrollment to 117 for April. Head Start enrollment was 78 for the month of April. Attendance percentages over the two months were okay, averaging in the 90% range. There was some sicknesses that caused a couple classrooms to have lower attendance.

Ms. VanDuyne also shared the Family Services report. She told members she had been very busy with applications and enrollment for the 2023-2024 school year. The program has received an unusually high number of applications at this point. She shared that all PreK staff had participated in a two day training on new student information management software last month.

Ms. Brown shared updates on her role as Support Coach. She said she had participated in a Family Resource Fair at Polk Central Elementary, sharing information about the program with families. She also participated in a Homeless Commission Focus Group hosted by the school system social worker.

Mrs. Edney shared information about health, safety and disabilities. She explained she continues to complete hearing and vision screenings for children being referred to the Exceptional Children's program. She is also attending meetings for students with IEPs, including transition meetings for those students going to kindergarten. She is also providing updated health assessments and other health information to school nurses for the rising kindergartners.

Mrs. Morse told members she had completed CLASS observations in each PreK classroom. Prior to the observations she provided training to new staff about what to expect during these observations. She also provides a summary of the observation to each teaching team after the observation. She stated she also attends many of the referral and eligibility meetings for children in the Exceptional Children evaluation process, along with Mrs. Edney.

Mrs. Harding gave program management updates. She said during this time of year she is focused on submitting grant applications and updates to funding sources. She said she is also working with Mrs. Lovelace to make sure all funds will be spent down by the end of the fiscal year and reviewing budget numbers. She said she is also focusing on enrollment numbers for next school year. She shared that North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services has provided an opportunity to request additional state funds that might possibly be used to resurface the Polk Central playground.

Mrs. Harding also shared an update on the new building at Tryon Elementary (agenda item in New Business). She told members the groundbreaking was held May 1st. She said the construction is being funded by a Head Start grant, an NCDPI grant as well as local funds. She explained the construction process itself actually started on May 1st and has progressed well, with the “footprint” of the building already taking shape.

Mrs. Lovelace reviewed the credit card report and the transaction report. Both of these reports were shared electronically with members prior to the meeting and included in member packets. She mentioned that the credit card is used sparingly and usually for professional development related expenses. She reminded members the \$1.5million showing on the transaction report is the funds for the new Tryon Elementary building. She said the program would have to request permission from Head Start to carry over this money into next year’s budget.

New Business: Ms. VanDuyne shared copies of the Head Start Eligibility Scorecard with members. She explained this form is used to give points to families for various risk factors and helps the program decide which families have greater needs and should be served. It is used to rank children in the event the program has a waiting list. She explained there was a revision made in January of 2022, and program staff did not think any additional revisions were needed at this time. She did ask members if they had any questions or suggestions about the form. There were none. Mrs. Harding also told members that internal auditors review this form along with family financial documents to determine if the program is correctly establishing eligibility. She said members needed to approve the form. Mrs. Crump asked for a motion to approve the Head Start Eligibility Scorecard as presented. Mrs. Pace made a motion to approve the scorecard and Mrs. Avellaneda seconded the motion. All voted in favor of approving the form as presented.

Mrs. Morse shared enrollment information for the 2023-2034 school year. Currently ninety-six families have completed the application and enrollment process and are on class rosters for next year. Of this group, approximately fifty-six are Head Start eligible. There are another eighteen to twenty children who have partial applications, with approximately thirteen Head Start

eligible. Mrs. Harding told members enrollment in the current school year matches the number of applications already received for next year. She explained that she expects more applicants over the next three months before the start of the 2023-2024 school year and this increase in applicants could necessitate a waiting list.

Old Business: None

2022-2023 Meeting Calendar: Mrs. Harding said no additional meetings were required for this school year. She did want members to be aware of a joint NCPReK Committee meeting with Head Start Policy Council scheduled for August 17, 2023. A reminder of this meeting will be sent in the summer.

Comments or Questions: Amy Smith from WNC Source shared that their classrooms had participated in a Head Start CLASS video observation pilot program this year. She said they had submitted videos of their classrooms and were waiting to hear the results of this. She stated the program had their own certified observers rate classrooms as well and were interested to compare the two sets of scores. She also mentioned their program's NCPReK classrooms were beginning to implement the LetterLand literacy program into their classrooms.

Adjournment: Mrs. Crump asked for a motion to adjourn. Mrs. Pace made a motion to adjourn and Mrs. Avellaneda seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned at 12:34pm.

Head Start Policy Council Secretary

Date