

Head Start Policy Council Meeting Minutes **12 pm Wednesday, February 14, 2024**

The Head Start Policy Council Meeting was called to order at 12:06 pm by Jen Thorstad.

Members present: Margit Nelson, Crystal Gonzalez, Jen Thorstad (virtual)

Members by email: Mariela PenalozaValdez, Donna Wood, Calan Halford

Approval of Minutes

Minutes from the meeting held on January 10, 2024 were reviewed. Crystal Gonzalez moved to approve them. Jen Thorstad seconded. There was no discussion. The motion carried by the present members. Email approval votes: Mariela PenalozaValdez, Donna Wood, Calan Halford

Reports and Information

The **January Preschool Monthly Report** was shared by program managers.

Kathy Harding, Director, spoke about attendance. It is still great in spite of sickness. Head Start enrollment has stayed steady at 80 children. The new building construction remains on schedule and the drywall and inside construction is happening now. She has been choosing colors and finalizing details. The Class videos are being completed now and will be submitted by the March 12th deadline.

Amy Scott, Family Services Specialist, January was full of updating forms, handbooks, and planning Spring enrollment and family engagement activities.

Lisa Brown, Support Coach, spoke about assisting in the classroom for teacher and child support, and helping with family engagement events.

Renee Souther, Health and Safety Coordinator, has been training with Nurse Courtney, visiting classrooms to meet teachers and children. The mid-year medication plans have been updated and recorded and the tracking of health assessments and immunizations is on-going.

Laura Jane Howald, Education Specialist, CLASS videos are halfway finished and accepted by the Office of Head Start, staff have completed all required training hours for the year.

The Financial Report and the Credit Report

Debbie Lovelace reviewed the January fiscal data and credit card reports specific to Head Start and the new building.

New Business

Head Start Continuation Grant 2024-2025

Kathy Harding presented the Head Start Continuation Grant Application Summary with budget categories.

We are requesting \$784,972 funding from the Office Of Head Start for the fiscal year 2024-2025. This is year 5 of our 5 year grant cycle. Details of the budget were discussed.

The main updates to the Self-Assessment and Improvement Plan surrounded curriculum, health assessment, immunization, and dental successes and needs.

The 5 Year Goals update included working on the current goals and looking ahead to the next 5 years as we plan for the next year's 5 Year Grant Application.

The Training And Technical Assistance plan includes: training for staff in GoEngage (data management system for Head Start), teacher training which will be focused on the area of math education and classroom environments based on Fall data addressed in The School Readiness Plan.

Crystal Gonzalez moved to accept the proposed grant application. Margit Nelson seconded the motion. The motion carried by all present members. Email approval votes: Mariela PenalozaValdez, Donna Wood, Calan Halford

Supplemental Grant Request to replace PreK Playgrounds at Polk Central, Saluda, and Sunny View

Kathy Harding discussed the need to replace the playgrounds at the three schools which were built or refurbished in 2004.

The cost to do this project far exceeds the funds available to the program without seeking additional special funding. The program is requesting a waiver to the 20% Non-Federal Match as this is a project without funding available from the baseline grant.

Polk Central	\$221,618		
Saluda	\$109,865	TOTAL REQUEST	\$460,348
Sunny View	\$128,865		

Margit Nelson moved to accept the proposed supplemental grant request. Crystal Gonzalez seconded the motion. The motion carried by all present members. Email approval votes: Mariela PenalozaValdez, Donna Wood, Calan Halford

Changes to the Eligibility Scorecard

Amy Scott spoke about the Eligibility Scorecard, how it is used and the proposed changes. Margit Nelson had a question about 3-year old children and classroom composition in regards to children with developmental delays and typical children. Developmental Day Classrooms with lower ratios were discussed as well as enrollment eligibility scores.

Crystal Gonzalez moved to accept the proposed changes to the Eligibility Scorecard. Margit Nelson seconded the motion. The motion carried by all present members. Email approval votes: Mariela PenalozaValdez, Donna Wood, Calan Halford

Old Business

School Readiness Plan

Laura Jane Howald addressed the final draft of the Polk County Preschool School Readiness Plan 2023-2024. It has been accepted by the School Readiness Committee at the January meeting.

Margit Nelson moved to accept the final draft of the School Readiness Plan. Crystal Gonzalez seconded the motion. The motion carried by all present members. Email approval votes: Mariela PenalozaValdez, Donna Wood, Calan Halford

Announcement

Amy Scott made an announcement from Donna Wood about The Hope Chest being selected for the WSPA Caring for the Carolinas Community Service Award. There will be a video taping on February 22, 2024 at 2:30 pm at the Columbus Baptist Church and the Hope Chest House across the street, which is currently under renovation. All are welcome to attend and show support!

Next meeting day and time

Wednesday, March 13, 2024 at noon

The meeting was adjourned at 12:40pm