

**Polk County Schools**  
**Head Start Policy Council Minutes**  
**Wednesday, February 12, 2025 12 pm**  
**Stearns Education Center**

**Meeting Call to Order**

The Head Start Policy Council Meeting was called to order at 12:06 pm by Margit Nelson with a quorum present and maintained throughout the meeting.

Members present: Cindy Allen virtually: Margit Nelson, Calan Halford, Ana Najera Garcia, Natalie Trachsel (sitting in for Dena Pfister)

Staff present: Renee Souther, Jan Crump, Kathy Harding, Laura Jane Howald, and Amy Scott

**Welcome and Introductions**

Natalie Trachsel from the Polk County Health Department was sitting in for Dena Pfister and introduced herself.

**Code of Conduct**

All members present have signed the document, one will be emailed to Natalie Trachsel from the Polk County Health Department.

**Approval of Minutes**

Minutes from the meeting held on January 15, 2025 were reviewed. Cindy Allen moved to approve them. Ana Najera Garcia seconded. There was no discussion. The motion carried.

**Reports and Information**

Kathy Harding - Program Management - Enrollment is near capacity. Attendance was a little down in January, mostly due to sickness. The staff working on the 5 year Head Start Grant which will be presented today. The bids for the playground construction are coming in and there is a site tour tomorrow in order for the bidders to fully understand what is involved.

Amy Scott - Family Services - Enrollment event is coming up at the end of the month, so now is recruitment time and time to accept and process new applications. There was a take-home family engagement literacy/STEAM activity given to all the children in January.

Lisa Brown - Support Coach - Spent January visiting classrooms and helping with children who need extra behavior support.

Renee Souther - Health and Safety - Sent out letters for children who need annual health assessments and updated immunizations and the documents are coming in now. 6 month medication authorizations are also being updated. IEP meetings are on-going for new referrals, as well as holding annual meetings. There are 3 new IEPs and 5 in the referral process.

Laura Jane Howald - Educational Services - There are High School Interns in the classrooms now and we held an orientation to discuss the Preschool expectations as well as share class expectations. The program staff will participate in Pyramid model training and we have invited the interns. The kindergarten teachers will participate in eoy family conferences for rising kindergarten children.

Financial Reports

Credit Card Reports

Kathy Harding reported for Debbie Lovelace - reviewed and explained the reports, highlighting we are on track as planned in the budget for expenditures at this time.

## **New Business**

### **2025-2030 5 Year Baseline Grant**

#### **Year 1**

The grant summary has one typo that will be corrected by Kathy Harding.

Kathy went on to address the self-assessment tool, highlighting the section on the importance of the included substitute training.

Laura Jane Howald spoke to the 4 Program goals and how they are aligned with our Training and Technical Assistance Plan. We have allotted from the Office of Head Start \$12, 827 for Training and Technical items, including professional development.

Kathy concluded the presentation with information on the budget categories. Polk County Schools has a non-federal dollar amount match and this is what our NCPREK funds are used for. She called attention to the high consumables/supplies line item that is so important for preschool aged children to be able to have hands-on, messy, and creative curriculum. She also mentioned that the Teachers and Teaching Assistants are paid on the State salary schedule which helps create stability and retain staff in the program.

Natalie Trachsel moved to accept the 2025-2030 5 year baseline grant proposal and Cindy Allen seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

## **Old Business**

Agency Reports:

Margit Nelson reminded us of the WNC Source Columbus Children's Center's Open House on February 20, 2025 3:30-6pm. There will be tours of the center and hors d'oeuvres from Southern Manners for all to enjoy!

## **Next meeting date and time**

Wednesday, March 12, 2025 at 12 noon

Cindy Allen moved to adjourn the meeting at 12:34pm

It was seconded by Ana Najera Garcia