

**Polk County Schools**  
**Head Start Policy Council Minutes**  
**Wednesday, May 14, 2025 12 pm**  
**Stearns Education Center & Virtual**

**Head Start Policy Council Meeting Minutes**

**Date:** March 12, 2025

**Time:** 12:07 PM – 12:50 PM

**Called to Order By:** Margit Nelson

**Attendance**

**Members Present:**

- *In person:* Margit Nelson, Cindy Allen, Donna Wood, Ana Najera Garcia, Mariela Penaloza Valdez
- *Virtual:* Calan Halford, Dena Pfister

**Staff Present:** Kathy Harding, Renee Souther, Jan Crump, Debbie Lovelace, Laura Jane Howald, Lisa Brown, Amy Scott

**Welcome and Introductions**

Margit Nelson welcomed attendees. No new members or visitors were present.

**Approval of Minutes**

The March 12, 2025 minutes were reviewed. Cindy Allen requested a punctuation correction.

**Motion:** Cindy Allen moved to approve the amended minutes. **Seconded by:** Ana Najera Garcia. **Motion carried.**

**Reports and Information**

- **Preschool Summaries:**
  - *Kathy Harding:* Playground construction will begin after the school year ends.
  - *Amy Scott:* Reported attendance and enrollment projections.
  - *Lisa Brown:* Students are observing caterpillars' transformation into butterflies; outdoor centers are being set up.
  - *Renee Souther:* Wrapping up medication management, vision follow-ups, and dental records; IEP meetings and field trips ongoing; enrollment for next year underway.
  - *Laura Jane Howald:* TSG checkpoint completed; family conferences in progress; student growth exceeded previous year in all domains; professional development

plan for August–September finalized; Asheville City Preschools toured the Forbes site.

- *Debbie Lovelace*: Reviewed financial and credit card reports; preliminary audit completed; final audit scheduled for fall.

## New Business

- *Director Transition*: Kathy Harding announced her retirement effective October 2025 after 25 years of service. She presented Laura Jane Howald as the proposed successor, **pending approval by both the Policy Council and the Board of Education.**  
**Motion**: Ana Najera Garcia moved to recommend Laura Jane Howald as the new Director, contingent upon final approval by the Policy Council and Board of Education.  
**Seconded by**: Mariela Penaloza Valdez. **Motion carried unanimously.**

## Old Business

- *CLASS Results*: Laura Jane Howald presented 2024–2025 CLASS data, to be shared with teachers and principals.
- *Playground Update*: Kathy Harding presented updated playground designs featuring climbing structures and playhouses. Sunny View's site will include a swingset.

## Next Meeting

**Date**: Wednesday, September 10, 2025

**Time**: 12:00 PM

### Adjournment:

**Motion**: Ana Najera Garcia moved to adjourn at 12:50 PM.