

Policy Council Minutes 11.02.2023

VOTING MEMBERS PRESENT: Stephanie Armer, Christina Helvey, Dawne Letorneau, Chelsea Luffman, Brittanie Most, Jacque Peterman, Jennifer Svaty & Jenny Reyes

NON-VOTING MEMBERS PRESENT: Jasmine Corral, Lesa Larson, Casy Ziegler, Linda Lorette, Udana Arceo & Shanna Rector

MEMBERS ABSENT: Macy Young, Tricia Fry, Kelly Mobray, Shelly Peters, Sarah Crowley and Scott Gardner.

CALL TO ORDER: Udana Arceo called the meeting to order to order at 5:00pm

CHANGES AND ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA: There were no changes or additions to the agenda.

APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS: Dawne Letorneau motioned to approve the Consent Agenda. Jenny Reyes seconded the motion; motion passed.

TRAINING: In-Kind

Linda Lorette provided descriptions of the documented In-Kind received at Heartland. They include:

- **Enterprise and Ellsworth-** school districts provide multiple services for our programs: utilities, building and grounds maintenance, internet, transportation, adult meals, etc. Each district determines value twice a year.
- **Central KS Mental Health-** case management and other support.
- **Donated Materials-** items received must remain in the program and not sent home to families in order to be counted as in-kind.
- **Volunteer Hours-** parents and other community members document time providing services to the program or completing allowable educational activities.
- **USD 305 Operating-** the school district provides many services to our program as in kind: internet and email access, order processing, bulk purchasing, building maintenance and repairs, copy center, warehouse and pony delivery, MIS computer services, payroll and other administrative services.
- **USD 305 Health Insurance-** the school district supplements a portion of the monthly employee health insurance premium.
- **KPERS Contributions-** the State of Kansas determines the annual employer contribution rate towards employee KPERS account.
- **FDY Payments, Revenues and Donations, Food 4 Kids-** Center based EHS childcare sliding fee scale payments for parents not receiving DCF assistance, Misc. reimbursements, or funds received, cash donations to the program, and small grants received for the weekend food support project.
- **CKCIE Staff Salary-** Special Education staff provide services for Head Start children in all locations such as ECSE Consultant, classroom teacher assistants, one-on-one paras, speech services, physical and occupational therapy, and psychologist. Each staff determines the amount of time spent monthly and reports twice per year.

A three-year In-Kind report was included in the November documentation. Heartland is required to document 25% of the grant amount as In-Kind. Parents are encouraged to volunteer at Heartland. When

volunteer hours are documented, this generates In-Kind dollars to help meet the Federal Share requirement. In 2023 school year, Heartland exceeded the Federal Share requirement.

Financial Reports

Financial Reports include an expense/financial summary for all grants. The report documents the amount expended, what percentage has been spent, and how much we still have available to spend. The other half includes CACFP meal information and how much Heartland receives for meal reimbursements. All credit card charges for classroom supplies, gas and other activities are reported monthly. Visa credit card charges are included in a separate monthly report.

DIRECTOR UPDATE:

Lesa took some time to review more about Head Start Program Performance Standards. She explained how each Head Start agency must establish and maintain a Policy Council responsible for the direction of the Head Start program. Members serve for one year. If a member intends to serve for another year; s/he must stand for re-election, not to exceed five years. Lesa also reviewed the Head Start Act. Additional hand-outs were provided at the meeting outlining the federal requirements for program governance.

OLD BUSINESS:

Federal Review - Federal review is the week of December 4th. There will be three reviewers on site. They will visit classrooms, visit with parents, Policy Council/School Board members, parents and all staff. Lesa Larson will meet with Policy Council members in advance to review the protocol. On Thursday 12/7, the review team leader will meet with those members.

Under Enrollment Status – Casy reviewed the Under Enrollment Report and explained that Heartland is funded to serve 256 students. Currently, we have 144 enrolled, which is 56% of our funded enrollment. There are 19 children on a wait list; those children may be waitlisted for both Part Day and School Day. Brittanie Most asked if Heartland has hired anyone or opened new classrooms? Casy responded, “Some candidates were hired since our last meeting; we were hoping to open a classroom in October or January but we don’t want to open classrooms where we feel staff aren’t ready but we have enrolled a few more into current classrooms.” Udana Arceo asked if there is a possibility of collaborating with staff at Salina Tech? Shanna Rector replied, “Salina Tech doesn’t offer the CDA but we are talking about internship possibilities.”

Secretary Nomination – Jenny Reyes nominated Chelsea Luffman as Secretary. Chelsea Luffman accepted the nomination. Dawne Letorneau seconded the motion. Udana Arceo approved the motion. After the vote, Chelsea Luffman was elected for 2023 Policy Council Secretary.

NEW BUSINESS:

ERSEA Training presented by Casy Ziegler

Head Start Program Performance Standard 1302.129(m)(1) a program must train all governing body, policy council, management, and staff who determine eligibility on applicable federal regulations and program policies and procedures.

Complete and accurate eligibility information is collected from families

Intake interviews are conducted “in person” if possible. Families are required to bring proof of income with their application for Head Start/Early Head Start. Proof of income must include all income received by the family for a 12 month period, either the last calendar year or the previous 12 months. Income includes: wages/salary, social security, unemployment, public assistance, self-employment, child support, scholarships/grants, etc.

Families are treated with dignity and respect

Families must always be treated with dignity and respect. All intake interviews will be conducted in a private and confidential manner. Intake paperwork is reviewed by only those working directly with the family and is kept in a locked file cabinet. The intake worker uses “preliminary questions” in a conversation format to determine the program option that will best meet the specific needs for the family. Some questions are very personal and deal with such topics as domestic violence, incarceration, child abuse and/or neglect, welfare benefits, etc. Intake staff often provide information on community resources for families with immediate needs.

Actions are taken against staff, families, or participants who intentionally attempt or provide false information

When it is determined that a parent has purposely provided false information during the intake process, the participant, and any enrolled family member, will immediately be exited from the program. A staff person will be immediately suspended from their position if it is suspected they knowingly accepted false information, intentionally omitted income, or purposely miscalculated income or family size. An investigation of the incident will be conducted to determine continued employment of the staff person.

Addendum

In-person interviews were paused in March 2020 due to the COVID-19 Pandemic. In-person interviews will remain optional until Heartland is back to full enrollment. Although we acknowledge the importance of face-to-face interactions, phone interviews are typically more convenient for families and eliminate the loss of time if interviews must be rescheduled.

Fall Checkpoint Child Assessment Outcomes

The Galileo assessment is designed to determine if children are progressing in their development and prepared for their next level of education. All children move through developmental skills at their own pace. It is Heartland’s goal to make sure children are successful as they progress. Jenny Reyes shared her appreciation to Heartland because her children know to wash their hands before a meal and the importance of brushing teeth every day, for example. She also commented there is a difference between Heartland and day care and how much Heartland focuses on the little things that help children grow and be prepared for kindergarten. Jenny is very grateful. Casey reviewed the baseline assessment data.

Self-Assessment

The annual self-assessment is an analysis of multiple monitoring surveys, reports and data. In addition there are monitoring systems in place to ensure Performance Standards and program requirements are being met. These include: Child plus audit, program chart reviews, and Health and Safety Checklists.

A Self-Assessment plan is completed in October and approved by Policy Council and the USD 305 Board of Education in November. It will be reviewed regularly. Casy Ziegler reviewed the 2023 Self-Assessment summary identifying areas to strengthen within our programs. They include:

Heartland has identified five areas to improve:

1. Staffing shortage has resulted in closed classrooms.
2. Under Enrollment is impacting Heartland due to a staffing shortage.
3. The education level of Head Start teachers has decreased significantly since 2019.
4. Limited Access to Oral Health Care - Only 21% of Early Head Start children and 29% of Head Start children were up to date on dental exams.
5. Head Start child assessment data showed two domains (early math and literacy) out of 10 that showed less than 70% of goals met (2022-23).

Dawne Letorneau motioned to approve the 2023 Self-Assessment as presented. Jenny Reyes seconded the motion. The motion passed.

PARENT AND COMMUNITY REPORTS:

Nothing reported due to running short on time.

Respectfully submitted by Jasmine Corral, Administrative Assistant