
Policy Council Meeting Minutes

January 19, 2022 4:30pm

Via Zoom Virtual Format and Email

1. Welcome & Introductions

Policy Council members present via zoom included: Ashley Jaffee-Montgomery (Cassopolis), Emerald Kiourtsis (Sawyer), Evelin Garcia (South Haven), Sherry Bennett (Community Member, Van Buren County GSC), Kristen Chism (Community Member, Berrien County GSC), Anna Carter (Community Member, Cass County GSC).

Policy Council members approving via email, included: Mary-alice Wirick (Niles Bell), Denice Burling-Jewell (SMC).

Quorum was met.

Guests at the meeting included: Chanda Hillman (CEO/Executive Director), Laura Burtis (Finance Director), Ana Moreno (Family Advocate), Crystal Hayes (Family Advocate), Jodi Curran (Family Advocate), Amanda Raymond (Family Advocate), Elizabeth Rodriguez (Dual-Language Coordinator), Mandy Orlando (HS Education Director), Patti Masters (EHS Education Director), Sarah Savage (Family Advocate), Eve Caballera (Family Advocate), Rachelle LaCount (Family Advocate), Lourdes Franco-Puzevic (Human Resources Director), Gloria Walter (Family Services Director)

2. Call to Order - Meeting was called to order at 4:39pm.

3. * Election of Vice-Chair, Secretary, and Treasurer was postponed.

4. * Approval of Minutes from December 15, 2021 Meeting. Evelin Garcia motioned to approve. Anna Carter seconded. Motion passed.

5. * Directors Report - Chanda Hillman presented the Directors Report from December. Enrollment (79.5% enrolled). Grant updates – funding application was approved that morning, received half of the funding, similar to last year. Discussed turnover was at 19.21%. Reviewed health numbers including % of children with disabilities, and discussed the blood lead clinic. Mandy Orlando and Patti Masters discussed the School Readiness report. Evelin Garcia motioned to approve. Kristen Chism seconded. Motion passed.

6. * Finance Report - Laura Burtis presented the Finance Report for December. She reviewed in-kind, CACFP, and credit cards amounts along with plans for remaining COVID funds. She also discussed that spend down of both operational funds and training funds were more on track than the previous year. She also indicated that we received approval from the regional office for the purchase of the vision and hearing machines and lawn mowers. Emerald Kiourtsis motioned to approve. Kristen Chism seconded. Motion passed.

7. Education – Cultural Competency Committee – Elizabeth Rodriguez presented. Discussed the creation of the committee and the projects that are being worked on. Anna Carter thanked the committee for their help with the GSC Equity Task Force and discussed some future projects.

Tri-County Head Start Mission: *To be a vibrant and progressive educational agency supporting the development of children 0-5 years of age while promoting healthy family functioning for Head Start children and families in Berrien, Cass, and Van Buren Counties.*

8. Strategic Planning – Build Back Better
Discussed the plan for the mid-cycle planning and the areas that will be discussed, including foundation, staffing, children, families, board/pc, facilities, data/data usage.
9. Report from 50-year anniversary committee – discussed the event date, location, and alumni articles will be coming out soon
10. Report from Location Review Committee – discussed progress the Benton Harbor project. Application is almost complete, shared the budget, a draft of the application and what to expect when it is sent to them.
11. Report from Great Start Collaboratives –
Anna Carter: Cass County GSC – Discussed the upcoming Color of Us training, the Book Study and the postponement of their winter event.
Kristen Chism: Berrien County GSC – Discussed their Parent Coalition Meeting on January 25 and their initiative with child care providers and Talking is Teaching
Sherry Bennett: Van Buren GSC – discussed Strengthening Families and the Protective Factors events, and the upcoming Love and Logic classes.
12. Pleasure of the floor – Evelin Garcia was excited to hear that we were beginning to work with High School Vo-Tech students.
13. Next Meeting Date – February 16, 2022, 4:30pm via Zoom
14. Adjournment – Ashley Jaffee-Montgomery motioned to adjourn, Anna Carter seconded. Meeting adjourned at 5:55pm

Approved: 2/17/22

*Denotes approval needed