

Policy Council Meeting Minutes

305 W. Douglas St.
November 29, 2023, 5:30pm

1. Welcome & Introductions
 - a. **Policy Council Members in Attendance:** Ashley Jaffee-Montgomery (Chair, Cassopolis), Amanda Simpson (Treasurer, New Buffalo), Efrain Chaves (Bangor), Mary-alice Wirick (Niles), Heather Weber (Dowagiac), Ebone Wilborn (South Haven), Samantha Litaker (SMC), Samantha Carter (Watervliet), Mellody Buzalski (Cass GSC), Kristen Chism (Berrien GSC)
 - b. **Policy Council Members voting through email:** Michelle Hedgspeth (Vice-Chair, Mattawan), Jessica Heistand (Paw Paw)
 - c. **Guests in attendance:** Chanda Hillman (Executive Director), Laura Burtis (CFO), Kevin Wordelman (HR Director), Jade Evans (Communication and Engagement Coordinator), Jodi Curan (Family Advocate), Sarah Savage (Family Advocate), Becky Welch (Teacher), Cherrie Smalley (Bangor Center Director), Eve Caballera (Family Advocate), Crystal Hayes (Family Advocate), Rut Vargas (Enrollment and Recruitment Assistant), Sandi Candelario (Dual Language)
2. Call to Order – Amanda Simpson called the meeting to order at 5:39pm
3. * Approval of Minutes – October 2023
 - a. Mellody Buzalski motioned, Ebone Wilborn seconded. Motion passed.
4. * Directors Report – October
 - a. Amanda Simpson motioned, Samantha Litaker seconded. Motion passed.
5. * Finance Report – October
 - a. Mellody Buzalski motioned, Samantha Carter seconded. Motion passed.
6. * Fund Development Job Description
 - a. We have received a significant donation that allows us to hire a Fund Development Director to help us build connections in the community and move forward with our business development plan.
 - b. Mellody Buzalski motioned, Ebone Wilborn seconded. Motion passed.
7. *Policy 144.2 - Education Compliance Plan

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.*

- a. It was decided that this policy did not need updated, so it was not included to be voted on.
8. * Health Insurance
 - a. Premium rates are increasing by 8.5%, to help alleviate some of the cost, we are including an HSA option for staff this year that will be a cheaper option.
 - b. Samantha Carter motioned, Kristen Chism seconded. Motion passed.
 9. * 401K Audit
 - a. Our audit revealed one finding that is being corrected. We are reviewing our internal controls to make sure it does not happen again.
 - b. Mellody Buzalski motioned, Amanda Simpson seconded. Motion passed.
 10. *Line of Credit Increase
 - a. Per the finance committee, we have decided to increase our line of credit as a safety net incase of our funding being delayed due to the instability in the government budget.
 - b. Mellody Buzalski motioned, Samantha Carter seconded. Motion passed.
 11. EnFocus Final Report
 - a. The board hired enFocus to create a business plan and do a community needs assessment. The results of that study were included in the packet for the Policy Council to review.
 12. Education – Association Request Letter
 - a. Included in the packet for the Policy Council to review is a letter from six Head Start associations and their asks of the Office of Head Start.
 13. Report from Centers
 - a. Niles Family Committee is hosting a craft show and a give back night at Hacienda. The parent committee has raised \$425 in contributions to the program thus far.
 14. Report from Great Start Collaboratives
 - a. Berrien GSC is going to be hiring someone to take over their Community Reading program, and they have been participating in the open tent sessions.
 - b. Cass GSC has been having great success with their storywalks and is looking to do an indoor one for the winter. They also have been hosting events for the community to come and get to know them and what their services are.

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.*



15. Pleasure of the floor

- a. Niles staff presented a \$950 donation from the Niles Scream park. They discussed what the parents are hoping to see the money go towards.
- b. Ashley Jaffee-Montgomery announced that she is moving and will have to step down from the Policy Council. Next meeting we will be doing a vote to elect a new Vice-Chair.

16. Next Meeting Date – January 17, 775 Hazen St, Paw Paw Mi, 49079 5:30pm

17. * Adjournment

*Denotes approval needed

~~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.*~~