

Policy Council

5/21/24

The May Policy Council meeting was held via Zoom. It was a condensed meeting due to severe weather impacting the area. Those participating: Jordan (Guttenberg), Alex (Monona), Kerry (New Hampton), Kaitlyn (Oelwein), Candace (Oelwein), Catherine (Oelwein), Sharon Burke, Martin Ahrndt, and Denise Tapscott (staff).

The meeting was called to order at 6:31 p.m. by Catherine. A motion to approve the April minutes was made by Alex and seconded by Kaitlyn. The motion carried.

Director's Report

Staff Changes: Megan Hoffman, Oelwein CD Teacher, Bethany Worth, Oelwein CD Co-Teacher, and Cassidy Peters, Oelwein A Co-Teacher have submitted their resignations. We continue to advertise for a Center Manager. If you know anyone who is looking for employment, please encourage them to apply!

Enrollment: Early Head Start is fully enrolled. Head Start has a couple of openings but we no longer need to accept new children when we are within 30 days of the end of the school year. On the Enrollment report, Monona, Oelwein CD, and Waverly were below the 85% attendance level due to illness, transportation issues, and Kindergarten Round Up.

Budget: The Head Start and Early Head Start April budget summaries were available.

Applications: The summary of applications for the 2024-2025 school year were included in the packet. We have currently received 247 Head Start applications. We have begun accepting income eligible applications in all classrooms. Remember to help us recruit by encouraging families in your communities to apply for Early Head Start and Head Start.

Transportation Waiver: Sharon will be submitting a waiver for both restraints and monitors on public school buses to the Regional Head Start Office. Waivers are necessary due to the cost associated with providing monitors on all buses carrying Head Start children.

Program Instruction: The Program Instruction regarding Fiscal Year 24 Head Start funding increase was included in the packet. It provides the details for all grant recipients' 2.35% Cost of Living Adjustment.

Information Memorandum: The Information Memorandum providing strategies for integrating mental health supports across all Head Start programs was included in the packet.

COLA: We have received the COLA funding guidance from Office of Head Start for a Cost of Living Adjustment of 2.35%. The total grant award is \$82,296. Head Start will receive \$59,098 and Early Head Start will receive \$23,198. This year an application is not required. They will provide a Notice of Award once funding is received.

Summer Wrap Services: The following classrooms will be open for Wrap Services this summer: Guttenberg, Monona, Oelwein, Postville, Waukon, Waverly, and West Union. Cresco, Decorah, and New Hampton will be closed.

Policy Change: The Exclusion Policy and Meal Time Practices policy were updated to match practice changes. A motion to approve the updated policies was made by Alex and seconded by Kerry. The motion carried.

Change in Scope Application/Center Closing/Funded Enrollment: Due to a budget shortfall of \$240,902 for the 2024-2025 school year, we are recommending the closure of two Head Start Classrooms. The

cost savings would be \$234,226. Sharon provided background information to support the recommendation to close one Waukon and one Oelwein classroom. The closures require submitting a Change in Scope application to request a reduction in our Head Start funded enrollment from 233 to 205. A motion to submit the Change in Scope application was made by Kerry and seconded by Kaitlyn. The motion carried. A motion to close the Waukon B and Oelwein CD classrooms was made by Kerry and seconded by Alex. The motion carried.

The April CACFP claim for reimbursement was available in the packet. Credit card bills will be reviewed next month.

Center Reports

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| EHS | Decorah Public Library, scheduling summer Field Trips to the Dubuque River Museum & La Crosse Children’s Museum, & Farmer’s Market Tours/Scavenger hunts. |
| Cresco | Today we had our annual pizza party and our graduation. Tomorrow we will have a pajama party with a movie day. The rest of the week, we will be spending time at different parks around Cresco. |
| Decorah | We planted seeds in small containers (some students planted flowers, others planted pumpkins!) and are reviewing what we have learned this year – We finished up our gardening study and have been working on our “Getting Ready For Kindergarten” study. We had our recognition night on Tuesday, May 7. |
| Guttenberg | No report |
| Monona | Farm study. We have a family bringing in horses on Friday. Practicing graduation which is Friday |
| New Hampton | Movie day as a reward party. Doing fun sensory activities like oobleck and chalk (silly rain). Enjoying extra outside time looking for bugs. We are also working on a special gift for a male in their life. |
| Oelwein A | No report |
| Oelwein B | We are learning kindergarten readiness and had kindergarten round up with students. We are doing sensory exploratory experiences and a fieldtrip to the park for a picnic. |
| Oelwein CD | We are learning about pets and have a veterinarian clinic in the classroom. A fun thing we are doing for the last week of school is going to the park for a picnic. |
| Oelwein E | Studies include Get ready for Kindergarten and a water study this last week of school. |
| Postville A | We are in our last week of the Get Ready for Kindergarten study. |
| Postville CD | We are reviewing and getting ready for kindergarten and 4-year-old preschool. |
| Waukon A | No report |
| Waukon B | No report |
| Waverly | No report |
| West Union | We are doing the Getting Ready for Kindergarten Study...We enjoyed Miss Sarah's baby chicks she brought it last week, watching our flowers grow and getting outside as much as we can with riding bikes. |

The next meeting will be held on June 18, 2024, via Zoom. The meeting was adjourned at 6:55 PM.

Submitted by Denise Tapscott

Approved 6/18/24