

## NEICAC Policy Council

November 19, 2024

Those present: Peyton (EHS), Dirsa (EHS), Kami (EHS), Stephanie (Cresco), Malissa (Cresco), Jordan (Guttenberg), Alex (Monona), Juana (New Hampton), Justin (Oelwein), Zachary (Oelwein), Luanne (Oelwein), Mandy (Waukon), Ashley (West Union), Sharon Burke, Martin Ahrndt and Denise Tapscott (Staff). There was one visitor present.

New member Orientation was held at 5:00 p.m.

The meeting was called to order at 6:35 p.m. Introductions were made.

A motion to approve the minutes of the October meeting was made by Stephanie and seconded by Mandy. The motion carried.

### **Director's Report**

*Staff Changes:* Lydia Knox, West Union Co Teacher has resigned and we have advertised her position. We have hired Jacqueline Vargas as the 30-hour Co Teacher float to cover Postville, Decorah, Monona, and Waukon.

*Budget:* Submitted budget summaries were reviewed. We are watching funding very closely as we move closer to the end of the grant period.

*Enrollment:* Submitted reports were reviewed. Early Head Start and Head Start are both fully enrolled with drops and adds as families move in and out of our service area. Both programs have an income-eligible waitlist. The October Attendance Report was reviewed. All classrooms were above the 85% target except for Postville A. Absences were due to illnesses and a surgical procedure with an extended recovery time.

*Wrap Around:* We have identified 92 children who qualify for services. We hope to reach 145 to utilize all of our wrap dollars. Sharon will be writing a new grant application that will lower the funded enrollment to 120 slots.

*Grant Application:* The 2025-2026 Five Year Continuation grant was submitted electronically on 10/29/24 to the Regional Office.

*Holiday:* The Thanksgiving Holiday will be November 28<sup>th</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup>. All classrooms will be closed on the 28<sup>th</sup> (Thanksgiving Day). Head Start classrooms are surveying parents to see if there is a need for extended day services for Friday the 29<sup>th</sup>. Any staff working on the 29<sup>th</sup> will receive a different holiday day.

*Information Memorandums:* Sharon reviewed the two Information Memorandums enclosed in the packet. The first provides guidance on helping programs understand the Head Start application and funding process for facilities activities. There are parts of it that apply to the sale of the building that housed our former Waverly classroom. The second is on reporting child health and safety incidents and requires programs to submit reports, for specified significant incidences, to our Regional Office immediately, but no later than seven calendar days, following an incident. A third Information Memorandum was not received in time to be included in the packet but was shared at the meeting. It describes the types of Monitoring Reviews the Office of Head Start administers. We are not anticipating any reviews occurring this program year.

*Program Instruction:* Sharon reviewed the two enclosed Program Instructions. The first provides technical updates (typographic errors and omissions) to the final rule on supporting the Head Start Workforce and Consistent Quality Programming. The second is regarding the final rule to delay the effective date for increasing the CLASS Instructional Support domain competitive threshold from 2.3 to 2.5. August 1, 2025, was the original effective date in the Head Start Program Performance Standards. This final rule officially delays the effective date to August 1, 2027.

*Policy Changes:* Sharon reviewed the agency's 2024 Employee Handbook policy changes that were included in the packet. They include—Fringe Benefits, Annual Leave, Sick Leave, Paid Holidays, Education Leave, Portable Computer

Policy and Head Start Standards of Conduct. A motion to approve the changes was made by Alex and seconded by Mandy. The motion carried.

*Wage Changes:* The Personnel Committee recommended changes in the salary schedule by 2.5% effective 2/1/25. A motion to approve the wage change was made by Malissa and seconded by Alex. The motion carried.

*December Meeting:* We will not have a December Policy Council Meeting but we will provide you with the packet of information.

*Meeting Time Change:* PC members were surveyed regarding an earlier start time at the suggestion of a PC member. All members would be available at 6:00 PM. The Council voted unanimously to approve the time change.

The submitted October CACFP report was reviewed along with the October credit card statements. All was found to be in order.

### Center Reports

<b>EHS</b>	November Playgroups: Large motor activities at the Luana Bank, postponed Cresco Library Storytime to December. Home visits: Large and small motor skills
<b>EHS Transition Room</b>	Kids are enjoying riding bikes indoors and working on motor skills while making muffins.
<b>Cresco</b>	Jolly Phonics and identifying sounds and letters
<b>Decorah</b>	Buildings study and taking walking field trips to see the hospital, Kwik Star, and surrounding buildings.
<b>Guttenberg</b>	Clothes study. Kids are having fun with the washing wash, iron hanging clothes on the clothesline. Threading beads, straws, buttons on pipe cleaners. Dressing people on the light board and the "Gingerbread" men. Sent home disguise the turkey as in-kind. Kids earned a pajama day.
<b>Monona</b>	Finishing up the clothing study. We used a child sewing machine toy that makes stitches on a paper, the kids loved it! Also stitched with a plastic needle and thread they loved that too. Parents have enjoyed this month's home projects with the turkey feathers and the turkey disguise. Parents organized a family fun night with a potluck dinner, bounce house, and games. It was very well attended.
<b>New Hampton</b>	Parent Meeting was held this week. The food of the month is pumpkins. Kids created paper plate pumpkins.
<b>Oelwein A</b>	Finishing up our Tree Study, marble painted leaves, learned what animals live in trees, what food grows in trees, tried squirrel food (walnuts) (they said it tasted like lotion), decorated a tree in our dramatic play area.
<b>Oelwein B</b>	We have been learning all about pumpkins and thanksgiving. We are creating our own boats and testing them out to see if they sink or float. Kids enjoyed coloring turkeys and are working on phonics.
<b>Oelwein CD</b>	Family Fun Night was well attended. Kids enjoyed painting pumpkins and playing games.
<b>Postville A</b>	We started our music unit. Some fun things we have done are learn the names and sounds of many instruments-some that we have in our classroom and others that we don't. We plan on making our own instruments like guitars out of boxes, hand drums from plates and harmonicas from popsicle sticks.
<b>Postville CD</b>	We are studying music, the high school band is coming. We are making instruments and learning a new song for the upcoming holiday.
<b>Waukon A</b>	Pet study. Kids are enjoying playing Veterinarians, coloring turkeys, and tasting cabbage and pumpkin seeds.

<b>Waverly</b>	We are beginning our Tree Study this week! We are learning all about the different parts of a tree, what lives in trees, and what we can eat from trees. We went for a walk around our school and checked all the different trees we have just in our backyard!
<b>West Union</b>	Our study is the Ball study. In our dramatic play center we set up a bowling alley. Water/Sand Table we put in water beads and sand with ice cream scoop and melon baller. Also exploring forces-pushing and pulling, ducks, and sandwiches. Working on songs for a winter concert.

The next meeting will be held on January 21, 2025 at 6:00 PM via Zoom.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:25 p.m.

Submitted by Denise Tapscott

Approved 1/21/25