

NEICAC Policy Council

March 17, 2026

This meeting was held via Zoom. Those participating: Ciara (Cresco), Amy (Decorah), Alex (Monona), Payton (Monona), Courtney (Monona), Sandy (Oelwein), Courtney (Waukon), Kirby (Waverly), Sharon Burke, Rachelle Smith, and Denise Tapscott (staff). There was 1 visitor present.

The business meeting was called to order at 6:01 p.m. Roll was taken. A motion to approve the minutes from the Feb. 17, 2026 meeting was made by Amy and seconded by Courtney. The motion carried.

Director's Report

Staffing: Sadie Wermers, Cresco, Decorah and New Hampton float, and Kathy Wood, Waverly Co-Teacher, have resigned. Their positions have been advertised. Brenda Wallace, Ed and Professional Development Specialist, has resigned and interviews have started.

Enrollment: Rachelle reviewed the enrollment reports and the February attendance report. Early Head Start has a couple of openings and Head Start is fully enrolled with weekly fluctuations. Monona and Oelwein A were below the 85% attendance level for the month of February due to illness, family vacations, and/or medical appointments.

Applications: Rachelle reported on application numbers for the 2026-2027 school year. To date, we have received 131 applications. We are in the process of verifying income and determining eligibility. Please help spread the word that enrollment efforts are underway! Parents can complete an online application on the NEICAC.org website.

Budget: The February budget reports were reviewed. This is the first month of our fiscal year. We are hoping to have the 4 EHS vans we have purchased arrive the first part of April.

LAPBK Assessment: This item will be moved to next month's agenda due to some issues with the reporting system.

GOLD Assessment: Sharon reviewed the Head Start GOLD assessment results for the winter assessment period. The results are what we would expect for this time of the year. Parents will receive individual results on their child at their conference/home visit.

The February CACFP report and credit card bills were reviewed. All were found to be in order.

New Business

Federal Review (Focus Area 1): Our Early Childhood Programs had an unannounced federal review from March 10-12th. A team of four were on-site for three days. They met with staff from each of the component areas and visited all of the HS classrooms. Results will be available in approximately 60-90 days, but we felt it went well. Thank you to Alex and Sandy for participating in the Policy Council board interview.

Pyramid Model Classrooms: Cresco and Oelwein B classrooms were designated for the 2nd year in a row as a Pyramid Model Classroom in the state of Iowa. Classrooms receiving this distinction are implementing PBIS strategies at a high level of fidelity as measured by the Teaching Pyramid Observation Tool.

IHSA Award: Kristine Novey, EHS Home Visitor, was awarded the Head Start Staff Higher Education Scholarship by the Iowa Head Start Association. Kristine will be recognized at the Iowa Head Start Association Spring Conference and Annual Meeting on April 15th in Des Moines.

Center Reports

EHS	Waukon Wellness Center and math activities in Postville
Cresco	They are working on building structures and letter recognition. Last week, Angie’s mom brought in 22 eggs for the children to watch hatch in about 21 days. This week, Angie’s mom will come back to the classroom and show the children the chick growing inside the eggs. Once the eggs hatch and it gets warmer outside, we will go back to the farm and see the eggs we hatched. This week we are continuing to learn about the sand/beach/ocean. Next week we will have our beach day in the classroom. Parents have been invited in for food celebrations.
Decorah	Finishing up the bread study! And were able to go visit Pizza Hut to see how pizza is made and will move onto the garden study
Monona	We just finished up the tubes and tunnels study. Children really enjoyed blowing paint through straws and making toilets paper bird feeders. Used paper towel tubes to stamp letters.
New Hampton	No report
Oelwein A	No report
Oelwein B	We started the simple machines study and making leprechaun traps using simple machines. Families are also making them at home for in-kind and bringing them in to see if we can catch the leprechaun.
Postville A	We just started our unit on gardening. The kids are very excited to plant some cucumber in our pots as well as some flowers for mother's day. We will also talk about greenhouses and make our own with a ziploc bag and moist cotton to grow beans.
Postville CD	No report
Waukon	No report
Waverly	We are doing the garden study. The kids love learning about how all the different things they eat grow and where they come from.

The next meeting is scheduled for April 21, 2026. The meeting adjourned at 6:37 p.m.

Submitted by Denise Tapscott

Approved 4/21/26