

Policy Council

4/21/26

This meeting was held via Zoom. Those participating: Dirsra (EHS), Kamra (EHS), BreaLynn (Decorah), Courtney (Monona), Sandy (Oelwein), Karen (Postville), Brea (Waukon), Courtney A. (Waukon), Sharon Burke, Rachelle Smith Angie Leiran, and Denise Tapscott (staff). There was 1 visitor present.

The meeting was called to order at 6:02 p.m. A motion to approve the March minutes was made by Courtney A. and seconded by Karen. The motion carried.

Director's Report

Staff Changes: Phyllis Koester is the new Head Start Education and Professional Development Specialist. Kelly Sattler, New Hampton Co-Teacher has resigned. Olivia Cain, Oelwein-Waverly Co-Teacher Float has moved to the Waverly Co-Teacher position. Hannah Peyton was hired as the Oelwein-Waverly Co-Teacher Float and we are checking references for the New Hampton Co-Teacher position. We continue to advertise for the Cresco-Decorah-New Hampton Co-Teacher Float position.

Enrollment: Both Early Head Start and Head Start are fully enrolled with drops and adds. The March Attendance Report was reviewed. Decorah, Waukon, and Waverly were slightly below the 85% attendance levels for March due to illness, medical appointments, and family vacations.

Applications: Rachelle reported on application numbers for the 2026-2027 school year. To date, we have received 181 applications. We are in the process of verifying income and determining eligibility. Remember to help us recruit by encouraging families in your communities to apply for Early Head Start and Head Start. Parents can complete an online application on the NEICAC.org website.

Budget: The Head Start and Early Head Start March budget summaries were reviewed. Both are on track for this time of the year.

Survey Results: Denise shared the results of the HS and EHS Parent Surveys. Classrooms have received their individual results. Thank you to everyone that took time to provide feedback and help us with our continuous program improvement!

LAPBK Assessment: Angie Leiran, the EHS Education and Professional Development Specialist, reviewed the Early Head Start winter assessment results. All areas of development were above 85% of meeting or exceeding their developmental level. The program's focus will remain on maintaining and increasing language and cognitive development for all children. Home Visitors share the individual results with each family to assist with setting individual child goals.

NHSA Conference: We have staff attending the National Head Start Conference in Minneapolis, MN from May 4th-7th. It is the largest national conference devoted to all things Head Start including an agenda filled with a variety of training topics.

2025-2026 School Year: The last day of class for the 2025-2026 school year will be May 22nd for all Head Start locations. Classrooms are busy preparing for the transition of students who will be moving onto kindergarten.

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

New Business

Home Visitor Appreciation Week: EHS and families are recognizing our amazing Home Visitors with special activities all week as part of the 2nd Annual National Home Visitor Appreciation Week.

Center Reports

EHS	April playgroups were a pizza and pool party at the Cresco Fitness Center and an EHS & HS spring fling family fun night in Oelwein with STEM activities. Home visit activities included matching games, painting, and doing Home Visitor appreciation activities.
EHS Transition Room	Children are enjoying sensory activities, ball play and making tape balls, painting with bubble wrap and watercolors.
Cresco	No report
Decorah	We are doing the Garden Study. Friday, we went for a walk to find dandelions to put on a lions mane. We also planted the organic peas which came in our food bag in a greenhouse to watch grow. The children are enjoying watching their seeds grow and playing outdoors.
Monona	We just finished the ball study. We went to The Rake to play tball and kick ball. Kids loved it! We are starting a garden study and we will complete the year with the end of year study.
New Hampton	We are doing the garden study. They are enjoying beans and rice in the sensory tub with flowers. We have kindergarten round-up on Friday.
Oelwein A	The children are really enjoying re-telling the Mrs. Wishy- Washy story and exploring some story props.
Oelwein B	The families created robots for an at-home activity. Lots of very creative ideas!
Postville A	This is our last week of Gardening we will be starting our Getting Ready for Kindergarten Unit next week. Our students have grown both cucumbers and beans they really enjoyed watching the seeds sprout and documenting their growth in their garden journals. Next they will be growing daisies for Mother's Day and are looking forward to decorating their flower pots. We have 5 mini greenhouses where the class is growing tomatoes, onions, and peppers. They like setting the lights timer and guessing which one will help the plants grow faster.
Postville CD	No report
Waukon	They are doing an exercise unit and talking about changes in the body when you exercise. They are enjoying the nice weather and having outdoor snack time.
Waverly	No report

The next meeting will be held on May 19, 2026, via Zoom. The meeting was adjourned at 6:40 p.m.

Submitted by Denise Tapscott

Approved 5/19/26