

NEICAC Policy Council

August 18, 2026

The August Policy Council meeting was held via Zoom. Participants included: Dirsra (EHS), Kamra (EHS), Ciara (Cresco), Alex (Monona), Courtney (Monona), Sandy (Oelwein), Brea (Waukon), Sharon Burke, Rachelle Smith, Angie Leiran, and Denise Tapscott (staff).

The meeting was called to order at 6:05 p.m. and roll was taken.

A motion to approve the July minutes was made by Dirsra and seconded by Kamra. The motion carried.

Director's Report

Staff Changes: Terri Zell, Postville A Teacher, has resigned and Kristen Wengel has filled that position leaving a New Hampton Co Teacher position open and advertised. EHS Home Visitor, Amanda Lockington, has resigned her position, EHS HV Nikki Steffans has taken the position leaving a EHS HV/Trans Rm Teacher position open and advertised. We have interviewed for the Oelwein/Waverly Co Teacher Float position and are currently in negotiations.

Budget: Early Head Start and Head Start budget summaries and the cash flow report were reviewed. Both programs are on track for this time of year.

Enrollment: Rachelle reviewed the Early Head Start and Head Start enrollment reports. Rachelle will begin filling Early Head Start openings next week as our three-year-olds begin to transition out of the EHS program. Please help us recruit for the Early Head Start program as we will have several openings. We are almost at full enrollment for the 2026-2027 school year but continue to process Head Start applications as numbers change daily.

2026-2027 School Year: We are gearing up for the new school year. The first day of class will be August 24th.

Lap B-K Assessment: Angie Leiran, EHS Education Specialist, reviewed the spring 2026 developmental assessment results. Positive growth was reported in all areas. Results are used to inform program decisions. Parents receive individual reports on their child's development.

PIR (Program Information Report): The Head Start PIR Snapshot report was shared. It highlights the annual program data in areas of frequent interest.

Information Memorandum: Sharon reviewed the enclosed Information Memorandum from the Office of Head Start. It establishes a clearer review process and identifies the information grant recipients should submit when considering an enrollment reduction.

NPRM: Sharon discussed the Administration of Children and Families' Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (NPRM) proposing changes to the Head Start Program Performance Standards (HSPPS) that was released on August 7, 2026. The proposed changes are open for public comment until October 6, 2026. These proposed changes are not final and Head Start programs do not have to make any operational or budget changes based on this proposal at this time. The NPRM can be viewed at: <https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2026/08/07/2026-16134/reducing-federal-burden-for-head-start-programs>

The credit card statements were reviewed. All was found to be in order. There was no CACFP report this month as the classrooms were closed in July.

Center Reports

EHS: Upcoming playgroups at the Postville, Decorah, and Oelwein Farmer's Markets. Each participating family will receive \$10 in coupons to be used on the day of the market.

EHS Transition Room: The Transition Room is at full enrollment with eight 2-year-olds. Meet the Teacher Night was held on Aug. 17th. Classes begin on the 25th. We are currently hiring for an additional classroom teacher/home visitor. Enhancements were made to the book area.

EHS Home Visits: Parents reported working on gross motor skills, matching and sorting activities.

Head Start: There are no HS center reports. Classrooms are currently closed for Pre-Service training.

The next meeting will be held on September 15, 2026 at 6:00 p.m. via Zoom. Current PC members and new members will be invited to participate.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:40 p.m.

Submitted by Denise

Approved 9/15/26