



First Start Partnerships for Children & Families

Policy Council

November 24, 2025

9:00 am

Policy Council Members Present: Ashley Simpson, Jordan Simpson, Bailey Price, Brittany Neff, Madelyn Davidson

FSP Staff Present: Travis Bitner, Jessica Hatch, Kim Holtry, Diane Hummel, Jessica Kreigline, Jennifer Mercer, Amy Pinkerton, Shannon Rudy

Board Members Present: None

- I. **Welcome:** Bailey welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order at 9:08 am.
- II. **Old Business:**
 1. October Minutes: Brittany Neff made a motion to approve the October minutes as written. Bailey Price seconded the motion. Motion passed.
 2. October Financial Reports & Credit Card Expenditures: Jessica Kreigline explained that for the federal grants, approximately 18.76% should be spent for Head Start, and 25% for EHS by the end of October. She noted that spending is at 26.7% for Head Start and 25% for EHS, and that the overage for HS is due to some salaries being reallocated due to the state budget impasse. Jessica also explained that for the state grants, expected spending should be at 27.31% for the end of October, but actual spending was at 18.1% due to the state budget impasse. Jessica noted that by December, the percentages should rectify themselves since classrooms are reopening. She also noted that the annual audit started on October 20th, and that at this time 71.58% of the items have been accepted, 28.42% have been fulfilled and waiting for the auditor. Bailey made a motion to approve the October Financial Reports and Credit Card Expenditures. Brittany seconded the motion. Motion passed.
- III. **New Business:**
 1. Staffing Updates: Diane Hummel shared the names and corresponding openings of new staff that the organization is hoping to hire in the next month. She noted that there were 4 new lead teachers being hired, one assistant teacher (AT) and 2 building assistant teachers (BAT). Bailey made a motion to approve the new staff hires. Madelyn seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.
 2. Program Re-opening Updates: Diane shared that on Thursday, November 20th, 4 morning classrooms reopened. She also noted that during the week of November 24th, 3 classrooms at Lincoln Way Early Learning Center (LWELC) and 6 classrooms at Chambersburg Early Learning Center (CELC) were offering an orientation for a family's chosen day in which children were invited to stay through lunch until 1:30. Diane shared that this was an opportunity for

children to get to know their afternoon teachers and get used to a little bit of a later day. She shared that all classrooms will be operating on their normal schedules beginning December 2, 2025.

3. **Annual Policy Council Training:** Jennifer Mercer explained that annual training is a requirement for Policy Council members and asked if December would be good timing since there will not be a monthly meeting. The Policy Council members discussed dates and decided that Monday, December 8th from 9:00-11:00 am will work for all of them. Jennifer noted that the training will be held at CELC.
4. **Family Event at Country Creek:** Amy Pinkerton noted that the Fall Family Event was canceled this year due to the state budget impasse, but that she had reached out to Country Creek about hosting an event for First Start families after their Trail of Lights season ends in early January. She shared that Country Creek is willing to host the event on January 6th with January 7th as a rain/snow date. The Policy Council members all agreed that they liked the idea of having the event at Country Creek on January 6th.
5. **Farm to School Grant:** Shannon Rudy shared that First Start has an opportunity through the USDA to apply for a farm to school grant. She noted that the purpose of the grant is to improve access to locally sourced food and nutrition education for families, and that if awarded, it would be for the 2026-2027 and 2027-2028 program years. Shannon explained that the grant application is due December 5th and that part of the requirement is to have community partners. She asked the Policy Council members for any suggestions they have, and there were several farms and businesses that were identified.
6. **Gratitude Bonus:** Jessica Hatch let the Policy Council members know that the organization is planning to give staff a bonus equivalent to one-week's pay on December 12th to honor their commitment and recognize their efforts during this difficult start to the year. All of the Policy Council members agreed that the staff deserved this token of appreciation.

IV. Directors Report:

- **See attached document for directors' report**

V. Member Discussion/Questions/Suggestions: No discussion/questions/suggestions at this time.

VI. Policy Council Meeting Schedule: Members discussed the best days and times for future meetings. The meetings will be held on the 4th Monday of the month at 9:00 am with locations to be determined.

VII. Adjourn: Meeting was adjourned at 9:52 am