



First Start Partnerships *for Children & Families*

Policy Council

February 4, 2026

9:00 am

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

FSP Staff Present: Carolyn Clouser, Jessica Hatch, Kim Holtry, Diane Hummel, Melisa Ostrowski, Amy Pinkerton, Pam Raynor

Board Members Present: Lura Hanks

I. Welcome: Bailey welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order at 9:06 am.

II. Old Business:

1. November Minutes: Brittany Neff made a motion to approve the November minutes as written. Bailey Price seconded the motion. Motion passed.
2. November & December Financial Reports & Credit Card Expenditures: Bailey made a motion to approve the November and December financial reports. Brittney seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.
3. Annual Policy Council Training Documents: Diane reported that Jennifer is waiting on a few documents to be returned from the December training. Diane asked the PC members to send any completed documents to Jennifer.
4. Family Day Wrap-Up: Diane reported that a total of 225 individuals attended the family event at Country Creek on January 6th.

III. New Business:

1. Staffing Updates: Diane Hummel shared the names and corresponding positions that have been filled since November. Ashley made a motion to approve the staffing updates. Brittany seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.
2. Selection Criteria: Pam Raynor explained that selection criteria is the specific tool that is used to prioritize enrollment for those children with the greatest need. She provided a handout that outlined the criteria for the point system that First Start uses to determine eligibility. Pam also explained the two proposed additions for this year.
3. CLASS and Focus Area 2 Monitoring: Jessica Hatch shared that the organization is in the middle of the CLASS (Classroom Assessment Scoring System) review and noted that for this assessment classrooms are videoed for one-hour, and then the video is submitted for scoring. She shared that the video submissions are due by February 13th and then there is a waiting period for scoring. Jessica also shared that the organization will have an Office of

Head Start Focus Area 2 Monitoring visit this year. Jessica explained that the FA-2 monitoring is a 3-day on-site visit where representatives from OHS will meet with management, observe classrooms, and review financial statements. She explained that there will be a 45-day notice before they come and that the organization is completing an internal self-assessment to prepare.

4. Strategic Plan Updates: Jessica Hatch shared the most recent updates on the program's strategic plan goals of healthy children, healthy families, healthy schools, and healthy communities. (See attached document)

IV. Directors Report:

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

V. Member Discussion/Questions/Suggestions:

- a. Bailey shared that she heard about a Seedlings to Schools program through the Pennsylvania Game Commission that provides free seeds to schools. She said that she wasn't sure if First Start would qualify but wanted to mention it just in case.
- b. Lura Hanks shared that local school districts, health systems, Lackawana College, the Game Commission, County Commissioners, and the Governor's office are all coming together to work with Penn State University to transition the Mont Alto campus into an Integrated Learning Hub. She noted that the plans include nursing, OT, and PT programs, forest ranger training, and therapeutic services through Leg Up Farm.

VI. Adjourn: Meeting was adjourned at 9:50 am