



First Start Partnerships *for* Children & Families

Policy Council
January 27, 2025
9:00 am

Policy Council Members Present: Bailey, Mirtha Marcellus, Carmen Flores

FSP Staff Present: Diane Hummel, Jennifer Mercer, Jessica Kreigline, Jessica Hatch, Melisa Ostrowski, Pam Raynor, Shannon Rudy

Board Members Present:

- I. **Welcome:** Bailey welcomed everyone to our Policy Council Meeting at 9:02 am. We went around the room and introduced ourselves and Bailey asked everyone to share their favorite and least favorite food. Jennifer Mercer also shared the Home Visiting Video that was just published as a recruitment tool.
- II. **Old Business:**
 1. November Minutes: Carmen Flores made a motion to accept the November minutes. Mirtha Marcellus seconded the motion. Motion passed
 2. November Financial Reports & Credit Card Expenditures: Jessica Kreigline shared that we have not received the final approval from the state for the increase per child. Once this is approved, the budgets will be updated. We did make some large purchases in December due to renovations. We are currently at 52.1% of spending in the state budgets and at 47.5% in the federal budgets. We will be looking at some budget revisions to ensure that things are being coded correctly and being transferred over correctly. Jessica also shared that we still have CACFP money for food costs. Everything appears to be on target. Carmen Flores made a motion to approve the November Financial Reports and Credit Card Expenditures as presented. Bailey Price seconded the motion. Motion passed.
 3. NAEYC Accreditation Update: Shannon shared that on December 20th we submitted for accreditation via their system to have our site visits. We will have the visits within 6 months of the submission. They will randomly select half of our classrooms to observe.

4. **Nomination for Vice President Role:** Jennifer shared that our current vice president has asked to step down from her role due to just having a baby and trying to get back to work. She would like to remain in the role of secretary. Carmen Flores expressed an interest in the Co- Chair (Vice President) Role. Mirtha Marcellus made a motion that Carmen be appointed the Co-Chair of our Policy Council. Bailey Price seconded the motion and the motion passed.

III. New Business:

1. **Policy Council Training Update:** Jessica reminded the members of the Policy Council to send their training certificates to Jennifer either via email or text message. Jessica also provided follow up to the question surrounding the Fatherhood Demonstration. She stated that she found an independent study that piggy backed on the Early Head Start Grant which started in 1995. In 2001, you could apply to receive fatherhood demonstration money. 21 programs received funding and they were also collecting data to get fathers involved. The idea is to father involved early in their child's education.
2. **Enrollment Reduction Approval:** Jessica shared that through the enrollment reduction we can better serve children and families that we currently have enrolled. We moved the EHS center-based programs from Waynesboro to Chambersburg and HS classrooms sizes were reduced due to the number of children with higher needs. We are at 18 for most classes. Five or six of our classrooms are at 14 due to having younger children. The reduction also allowed us to increase wages for our teachers. On December 24th the notice of reward was emailed and received.
3. **Focus Area 1 Monitoring Visit/Self-Assessment:** Jessica explained that during our 5-year grant, we will be monitored 3 times. Our first visit is virtual and we tell them what we are doing. The second visit they come to our program and we show them what we are doing. The third visit is a CLASS visit where they observe our teaching staff. Our FA1 visit is scheduled to start next week via Zoom. We have been doing a self-assessment of our program and have identified an expert in each of the areas. We then compiled a report based on the questions that will be shared during the visit.
4. **Community Hub Mental Health CoP:** Shannon shared that this began out of an experience from last year. There is a regular meeting that is held where everyone in attendance are learning together. We were presented with the opportunity to work with Thriving Thoughts Global to practice good mental health. There is a new pilot at each community hub (CELC, LW, Southern and Administration), mental health group coaching. Learning skills based on the 7 Truths to Think By. Today launches a 10-module online course for all FSP employees.
5. **Introduce Selection Criteria:** Pam shared that children at the greatest risk are prioritized. Annually there is a community assessment tat is completed and this helps guide the selection criteria. There is a point

system in place for selection and the more critical the higher the points. We compare population data to the children currently enrolled in our programs. Pam stated that she would send an email out to the Policy Council members for any suggestions for recruitment ideas. The Selection Criteria will also be sent to Policy Council and Board of Directors for approval. Pam shared a PowerPoint presentation which gave an overview of how families are eligible. Next month the full selection criteria will come to Policy Council for vote

6. Internal Staff Conflict Update: Melisa shared the recommendations from the Ad Hoc Committee of the Board of Directors after they reviewed information provided regarding an internal staff conflict concerning equity in time off procedures. The committee did not find any evidence of discrimination or unfair treatment by any staff member in this situation. These are their recommendations:
 - a. Review PTO procedures and practices and amend them as necessary to ensure they are clear and easy to understand.
 - b. Review the staff handbook and include procedures that are relevant to staff.
 - The HR department will conduct an audit of all policies and procedures
 - c. Revise internal staff conflict procedures.
 - d. Staff should receive, review and sign acceptance of any updates to First Start's policies and procedures
 - This is a process that is currently in place, at time of hire and at the beginning of each school year, all staff receive the acknowledgement to sign and return to their supervisor. These documents are then uploaded to our ChildPlus system in each staff's personnel file.
 - In addition, HR will ensure completion through a monitoring system.

IV. Directors Report:

- Chambersburg Early Learning Center:
 - Enrollment- 97.4% (5 slots open)
 - EHS Center Based- 100% enrolled
 - EHS Home Based- 81.2% enrolled
 - Attendance rate in December- 73%
 - Parent Committee- No December meeting, January meeting postponed due to weather. The January topic will be safety and culturally sustaining classrooms
 - Highlight- CELC 8 was featured on our Facebook page for story telling and CELC 11 for local community highlights
- Lincoln Way:
 - Enrollment- AM Classes are at 91% and PM Classes are at 97%
 - Attendance- AM Classes are at 75% and PM Classes are at 74%
 - No Parent Committee in December. There was only 1 participant at the January 13th meeting so the topic of what

community services are available will be discussed at the February meeting.

- Highlight- teamwork between our AM and PM teachers, our AM teachers are going into the classrooms with the PM
- Teacher Education Update: 1 Master's, 1 Associates, 2 Associates through Apprenticeship program, 2 AT that are completing their preschool CDA

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

VI. Adjourn: Meeting was adjourned at 10:10 am