

**Policy Council**

October 24, 2023

9:00 am

Policy Council Members Present: Rene Batres, Greg Taylor, Katelyn Rainey, Janice Gillespie, Carissa Wilson, Kessa Wagaman, Edd Wilson, Tatiana Choueiri, Heidi Calhoun, Ivette Vargas, Diana Suarez, Angel Dreyfus

FSP Staff Present: Jennifer Mercer, Carolyn Clouser, Diane Hummel, Amy Van Horn, Julie Pepo, Stephanie Melgarejo, Jessica Kreigline, Erik Nichols

Board Members Present: Lura Hanks and Jennifer Hawbecker

1. **Welcome:** Heidi welcomed everyone to our first Policy Council Meeting of the school year and introduced herself as the returning President. We then went around the room and introduced ourselves
2. **Old Business:**
3. September Financial Reports & Credit Card Expenditures: Jessica explained that our State Grants include our HSSAP and Pre-K Programs and our Federal Grants include Head Start and Early Head Start. Jessica shared information surrounding the following line items:
* Nutrition Services- Significantly low for this period as we have not received invoices from our food vendor yet
* Substitutes- Much higher than originally budgeted, will need to be a re-budget
* Supplies- Are very high for this point in the year, specifically EHS, HS, HSSAP and GASD. A re-budget may need to occur

Our financial audit is currently in process, Jessica explained this process to the members as a report card for the programs to make sure everything is used correctly. All yearend reports for 2023 have been completed. Lura Hanks made a motion to accept the September Financial Reports and Credit Card Expenditures as present. Rene Batres seconded the motion and the motion passed.

1. Family Fun Day at Country Creek: Jennifer reported that our Annual Family Fun Day at Country Creek is scheduled for November 1 from 3:00-6:00 pm. The rain date will be November 2, 2023 at the same time. Registration for the event closed the end of day Friday and we have 127 children ages 3 and under and 996 ages 4 and over (including adults) pre-registered. This will be the third year for the event and it has tripled in size. Questions were asked if individuals could still register and Jennifer explained that everyone is welcome to attend even if they missed the deadline to register since we give a final count to County Creek after the event.
2. **New Business:**
3. Overview of Roles and Responsibilities: Carolyn gave an over of the governance structure to include the Board of Directors, Policy Council and Parent Committees. Policy Council does evaluate programs and discuss what is happening in the hubs that may need to elevated to the Board. Parents and Community Members can serve on Policy Council but at least 51% of the membership must be Head Start and/or Early Head Start parents. As a member of Policy Council, you have a voice in spending and what happens within the classrooms. Carolyn also shared that they will be invited to participate in our annual self-assessment, which gives them a powerful voice in whether we are meeting or not meeting the standards.
4. Planning for 2023-2024 Program Year: Heidi shared that our meeting day, time and location was established last year so we can discuss what will work best for our new year. We can offer to include a Zoom and phone in option when sending out the invites so that way if you are not able to attend in person you can still participate. We can also offer child care. One member stated that they liked the day and location but suggested holding the meeting a little later in the morning. A discussion was held and a motion was made by Janice Gillespie to hold our Monthly Policy Council Meeting the 4th Tuesday of each month (except November which is the Self-Assessment) from 10:00-11:30 am at the Chambersburg Early Learning Center. Kessa Wagaman seconded the motion and the motion passed.
5. FSP Annual Report: A PowerPoint presentation was shared the members prior to the meeting which gives a detailed overview of our Strategic Plan. Carolyn shared that FSP completes a new strategic plan every five years and this year is the start of the new plan which focuses on Healthy Children, Families, Schools and Communities. Carolyn went through the PowerPoint with Policy Council Members and gave the opportunity for questions and comments.
6. 2023 FSP Self-Assessment: Our Annual Self-Assessment is scheduled for November 15, 2023 from 3:00-5:00 pm via Zoom. Carolyn gave an overview of how the Self-Assessment process works with a Board Lead and Staff Lead who facilitate the start of the discussions in breakout rooms. Carolyn explained that everything will be given to all subcommittee members prior to the meeting so they are prepared for their breakout rooms. Jennifer will send a calendar invite to them with the Zoom link as well as an email with a link to select their subcommittee if they want to participate.
7. **Member Discussion/Questions/Suggestions**
* There was discussion surrounding several policy council members running into insurance issues for their children. There have been some changes within the Department of Public Welfare and Katelyn stated she had to have her caseworker changed in order to get anything completed. Carolyn will send information out surrounding Hope from the Start to the group.
* There was also discussion around fundraising possibly at the Hub level. Carolyn stated that identifying funding sources was part of her job responsibilities. This is something that she will be looking into and will share more with group once she gets a better understanding as to what is allowable through Office of Head Start.
* A discussion was held surrounding the menu for meals having a lot of items that are sugar based. Diane stated that she is working with the school districts and there are menu changes coming up in November. There was also discussion as to why meals were not prepared on location instead of having them brought in. Diane explained that the hope is for one day to have this completed on location but right now the kitchens are not set up and we do not currently have the staff to do this.
* Kessa stated that she would like to volunteer to work with parents within hubs that may need addiction support. She shared that addiction is in all communities and there is a strong need for support. She has been in recovery for 7 years and she feels strongly about supporting other parents. Katelyn stated she would be more than happy to help Kessa because she has also been in recovery for 7 years.
* Diana asked about Parent Cafes and it was shared that the schedule for these are hub specific and that the Parent Committees should be involved in conversations about times work best for their individual hubs.
1. **Adjourn:** Meeting was adjourned at 10:54 am

**Next Meeting: FSP Annual Self-Assessment, November 15, 2023 from 3:00-5:00 pm via Zoom**