



STEP Head Start Policy Council Minutes

ZOOM Meeting	9:30 AM	February 14, 2024
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Parent Representatives (Voting Members):	Site	Attendance			
Felicia Rindos	WHB A, Mulberry, Willow	E			
Rasheeda Nixon	Oak	R			
Keionnah Strothers	WCB C	P			
Janet Roy	Redwood	E			
Community Representatives (Voting Members):					
Patti Wylie	WASD	E			
Aron Carter	JSSB	P			
Becky Swinehart	BLaST IU #17	P			
Ruth Love-Schooley	CareerLink	R			
Adria Eck	Former Muncy PreK	E			
Staff (Non-Voting):					
Carolyn Hawk	Boyd Street	P			
Shannon Cohick	Boyd Street	P			
Denise Baney	Boyd Street	R			
Melissa Edmonds	Round Hills	P			
Erica Blake	Boyd Street	P			
Guests (Non-Voting)					
Jim Plankenhorn	STEP	P			
STEP Board Representatives					
Aron Carter	See Above				
Key:	P= Present	E= Excused absence	U= Unexcused absence	T= Notice of Termination	R= Resigned



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Agenda Review:

I. Call to Order: Carolyn called the meeting to order at 9:39 am.

II. Welcome and Introductions

III. Approval of Minutes from January 10, 2024. Motion made by Becky, Ruth seconded.

IV. Reports

A. Treasurer's Report- We continue to appear as if we are overspending. Wage and fringe benefits are the highest expenditure. We are planning on applying for a carryover request to be able to use unspent funds from previous years around the amount of \$400,000 to offset overspending.

B. STEP Board Report – The STEP Board Meeting was held on January 22, 2024. The River Valley Mobile Dentist program, the annual Fitness Challenge and the Head Start Facebook page were all highlighted. Erica Blake received a STEP Star for the month of January. Jim Plankenhorn also complimented our PBIS efforts with the Baby Bee and Flat Phoebe initiative and the PBIS Newsletter.

C. Director's Report – Our annual Self-Assessment is beginning with orientation scheduled for this Friday. We are specifically focusing on elements that we will be evaluated on throughout our next Federal Review.

D. Family and Community Engagement Report – We continue to hold Parent Meetings and events. The next one will be Stuffed Animal Bingo on February 20th; we celebrated National Hot Chocolate Day with the parents in January. The next one will be focused on the kindergarten transition process. We are going to be starting the "Positive Solutions for Families" curriculum in April. The Family Advocate team is fully staffed.

Approval to Receive Reports as Read- Aron made a motion; Becky seconded.

V. Old Business

A. PCA Offices – we continue to recruit new members, will address offices when we have more parents that are voted on and able to attend regularly.

B. Meeting Schedule and Format – until we have a larger group, we will continue to meet via Zoom.

C. New Member Orientation- tabled until more parents are able to join.



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VI. New Business

- A. Enrollment and staffing-** We currently have the least amount of staff vacancies that have had in six years; current open positions are- EIMH Specialist, Center-Based Supervisor, Classroom Aide, Teacher Assistant and Floaters. All classrooms are open and operational. Our Full Enrollment Initiative requires us to have the program 97% enrolled by March and we are currently meeting the required numbers. We will need to maintain this until March in order to come off of the plan. If we are unable to maintain these numbers we will have one year of T/TA to complete and we may have to return funding. Some ways other programs have been able to meet the requirement are by reducing class size, converting slots (ex. Home-Based slot into a Center-Based slot or Head Start to Early Head Start). We do work closely with our Program Specialist and are assigned an Under Enrollment Specialist as well. Jim also noted that under enrollment is a concern across all Head Start programs and that the Office of Head Start is starting to recognize that some elements are not in the control of specific programs. Aron inquired how Covid and sickness continue to affect the program. Carolyn responded by saying that we are experiencing illness but we try to keep classrooms open and running as much as possible. Keionnah also noted that she really enjoys the staff and the program and has had a positive experience while enrolled.
- B. Notice of Proposed Rule Making-** The Office of Head Start has recently proposed updates to the Head Start Program Performance Standards. After they were released, they opened a 'comment phase' in which programs were able to make suggestions and respond. The majority of the new proposals were agreed upon, the most common concern was that there was no more funding guaranteed to support the changes. Rural areas may feel the changes more intensely as they already lack resources.
- C. HSSAP PIR Monitoring –** The Deputy Director of Preschool has been meeting with the state grantors to ensure that we are meeting expectations in all areas. When they completed the assessment our score was reduced by 20 points due to one of the teacher's assistants in the process of completing her CDA and that we had to return money from two years ago.
- D. HSSAP and PreK Counts Meetings-** these will begin in April and are mandatory.
- E. IM: Federal Reporting of Standard Forms 425 and 428-** details regarding submitting Financial Reports.
- F. Office of Head Start Grant Letter-** notification that grant requests must be submitted by May 1, 2024.
- G. Health and Safety Screeners-** Screeners were completed at Hope and Clinton County, no issues identified.



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- H. **Buzz Notes-** included in your packet
- I. **Success Stories-** none at this time
- J. **Hiring/Resignations-** Paige Styer (Teacher Assistant), Jena Robertson (Home Visitor) and Autumn Green (Cafeteria Aide)

Approval for Hiring/Resignations: Becky made a motion, Aron seconded.

- K. **Other Topics-** none at this time

VII. Trainings: none at this time

VIII. Good of the Order: none at this time

IX. Meeting Schedule:

- A. **Policy Council Meeting:** March 13th, 2024 via Zoom.

X. Adjournment: meeting adjourned at 10:15 am.

Enclosures:

1. Policy Council Agenda
2. Policy Council Minutes January 10, 2024.
3. Policy Council Financial Report 2023-2024 Fiscal Year
4. Head Start – FAA Major Budget Categories – Budget to Actual Analysis
5. Early Head Start – FAA Major Budget Categories – Budget to Actual Analysis
6. Head Start Supplemental Budget
7. PreK Budget
8. MIECHV Major Budget Categories – Budget to Actual Analysis
9. Early Learning Pathway Report- January 2024
10. STEP Board Report: Head Start- January 2024
11. STEP Board Report: EHS- January 2024
12. STEP Board Report: PreK- January 2024
13. Flat Phoebe & Baby Bee
14. IM: Federal Reporting of Standard Forms 425 and 428
15. Office of Head Start Grant Letter
16. Buzz Note Recipients: January 2024