

Policy Council Minutes March 2nd, 2015

The HRDC Head Start Policy Council for February was postponed until March 2nd, 2015 with the following parent representatives present: Policy Council Chair, Sara Wussow, Victoria Pikul, Rachel Palmer, Robbie Smith, Chiara Schober, Brandie Boese, Tonya Torres, and Jennifer Carter, Director Ken Miller, Program Coordinator Kathy Piatz.

Call to Order: PC Chair, Sara Wussow called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. There was no public comment.

Director's Report Updates-Presented by Director Ken Miller

- **Attendance**

Our attendance percentages are below 85% with Belgrade at 86.40%, Livingston at 81.59% and Bozeman at 78.78%. The Bozeman Center has consistently had lower attendance than the other centers primarily due to the rate of turnover in families. Our Livingston Center experienced an extraordinary amount of illness last month including both staff and children. The center was closed for one day because we did not have sufficient staff, due to illness. The day will be made up at the end of the school year.

- **Enrollment**

We have remained full in Livingston and Belgrade and the Bozeman Center is close to capacity.

- **Enrollment Reduction Request**

The Region VIII office of Head Start has begun to process our request for enrollment reduction, as per previous Policy Council approval, and we have forwarded additional information as requested. We have been advised that we will receive our final grant approval after April 1st.

- **On Site Review Report**

We have received the results of our Environmental Health and Safety Review that occurred in November and we're pleased to report that we were found compliant in all areas with the exception of "Handling and Storage of Medications." This finding pertained to an asthma delivery device called a "bridge" that was not stored in its original container and had not been labeled with the prescription information however the medication was labeled correctly and at no time did this present a danger to children. We developed a Corrective Action Plan as required and copies of the plan were handed out to the council. Our next monitoring review will be the week of March 16th and will be in the areas of ERSEA (Eligibility, Recruitment, Selection, Enrollment and Attendance) and Fiscal Management. Jennifer Carter made a motion to approve the Corrective Action Plan, the motion was seconded by Victoria Pikul and the motion was approved by unanimous approval.

- Director Ken Miller advised Policy Council members that our Striving Readers Implementation Team and Site Supervisors would be attending meetings and training in

Helena the first week of March. In addition to Striving Readers training, discussion and planning for the Preschool Development Grant is also on the agenda. We will be a pilot program for the grant beginning in the fall of 2015, however we are still awaiting further details as OPI assesses the needs of the 16 communities that will be involved. We do know that classes will be in session 5 to 6 hours per day for 180 days in a school year

- The last topic on the Director's Report was the Blood Lead report for the 2014/2015 school year. This year, through our partnership with Tri Med Services, 79 children were tested for elevated blood lead levels and we are pleased to report to the council that no elevated levels were found.

Policy Council Chair Sara Wussow requested a motion to approve the Director's Report, Victoria Pikul made a motion, the motion was seconded by Robbi Smith and the motion to approve the Director's Report was approved by unanimous vote.

Budget and Parent Fund Report

Members were given the January Budget to Actual reports for review. As of January 31st, 81.77% of our grant year has elapsed and the program has expended 78.11% of funding. Ken advised members that with our grant year ending March 31st, we will be utilizing any extra funds for the cost of major repairs in the centers.

The updated Year to date In Kind total as of January 31st was 36.80% or \$115,215.43 raised. We have some larger In Kind amounts yet to be recorded and traditionally we see a big push from the classrooms to meet their classroom goals by the end of March. Chair Sara Wussow requested a motion to approve the Budget Report, Chiara Schober made the motion and the motion was seconded by Victoria Pikul, the motion to approve the Budget Report was unanimously approved.

Copies of the Head Start Parent Fund were handed out to members. There were no changes to the fund as there have been no fund raising activities yet this year. Balance remains at \$7,317.93. Included in the handout packet was the credit card statement due February 7th, CACFP Meal totals and Attendance totals for January. Chair Sara Wussow asked for a motion to approve the Parent Fund, a motion was made by Victoria Pikul and seconded by Jennifer Carter, the motion was approved by unanimous approval.

Education Work Plan

Our Education Curriculum Coordinator, Stevi Jackson was scheduled to attend the Striving Readers Conference, therefore, Director Ken Miller presented the Education Work Plan to the council. Ken reviewed changes to staff titles and positions as noted throughout the plan. Changes included the addition of eDeca terminology, a new online strengths based social and emotional health screening and assessment system that focuses on providing resources and strategies to promote children's resilience, the utilization of *myIGDI*, (Individual Growth and Development Indicators) a comprehensive set of assessments for monitoring growth and development in early literacy and numeracy of young children and *PAL* (Process Assessment of the Learner), a phonological awareness and literacy screening tool. Ken also reviewed the Tiered Action Plan process explaining that all children enter the program at Tier 1, those needing

group intervention are considered Tier 2 and those needing intense help are considered Tier 3. He also provided members with the full names of the MELS acronym or Montana Early Learning Standards and defined School Readiness Meetings as the old Curriculum Meeting. Sara Wussow requested a motion to approve the Education Work Plan, a motion was made by Victoria Pikul and seconded by Robbi Smith; the motion was approved by unanimous vote.

Disabilities Waiver

We are submitting a request for waiver of the 10% enrollment requirement for children with Disabilities as we have been unable to enroll sufficient children to meet the 10% requirement. A copy of the waiver request was given to members for their review. Our Region VIII Program Manager, Cheryl Lutz had recommended the submission of a Disabilities Waiver Request during her on site visit in September that if after all recruitment efforts had been exhausted and we were at the mid-year point in our school year without meeting the 10% requirement. The waiver request outlined our efforts to meet the requirement and our Plan of Improvement going forward. Victoria Pikul made a motion to approve the Disabilities Waiver Request, Chiara Schober seconded the motion and the motion was passed by unanimous vote.

Education Incentive Compensation Policy

In preparation for our next monitoring review, our fiscal department has requested that we adapt an actual policy for incentive compensation paid to our teaching staff for attaining education degrees. Any teacher holding or attaining a Bachelor's degree that meets Head Start requirements by January will receive \$500.00 compensation per year to be paid by the end of March. Assistant teachers with an Associate's degree or BA that meets Head Start requirements or those that attain the degree by January will receive \$250.00. A copy of the formal policy was handed out to members for their review. Victoria Pikul made a motion to approve the new Employee Incentive Compensation policy, the motion was seconded by Robbi Smith and the motion was approved unanimously.

New Hire Jessica Seekins and Sylvia Zavala

Ken advised members that our contracted data entry employee, Jessica Seekins had been hired effective March 1st as a permanent part time employee. Jessica has a Bachelor of Science in Family Consumer Science and is working on a BS in Sociology Criminology. Jessica began as an intern last spring, transitioned to a substitute and then onto the contracted position of Data Entry Specialist before her current position.

We have hired a new cook for the Bozeman Center, Sylvia Zavala. Sylvia comes to us with many years experience cooking for children at Mount Ellis Academy here in Bozeman. We have already heard many positive reactions from staff and parents. We welcome both Jessica and Sylvia to HRDC Head Start.

Chair Sarah Wussow asked for a motion to approve Jessica Seekins and Sylvia Zavala, Brandi Boese made the motion and the motion was seconded by Victoria Pikul. The motion was approved by unanimous vote.

What's Happening in the Classrooms?

Parent representative took a few moments to share with members what was currently happening in their child's classroom. Each member provided interesting anecdotes about what has been going on in their child's classroom during the past month.

January Meeting Minutes

Chair Sara Wussow requested a motion to approve the January Policy Council minutes, Chiara Schober made the motion to approve the minutes and the motion was seconded by Brandi Boese. The motion to approve the January minutes was unanimously approved.

Adjourn

At approximately 7:34pm Robbi Smith made a motion to adjourn the meeting, motion was seconded by Brandi Boese and the motion to adjourn was unanimously approved.

Schedule of Next Meeting

The next meeting of the HRDC Policy Council is scheduled for March 30th, 2015.

Submitted by: Kathy Piatz