

1/18/22 Policy Council Meeting Minutes

Attendance:

Staff Present: Jodie Dommaschk, Tricia Salvarezza, Chrissy Daignault, Kris Germaine, Emily Fagle

Members Present: Isabel Lundquist, Diane Coughlin, Vladimir Pratt, Terri Jackson

Meeting called to order at 9:36 AM

Approval of December Meeting Minutes

Motion to Approve December 2021 minutes. 1st Isabell made motion to approve, 2nd Terri, all 4 members in favor, Motion Carried.

Program Reports and Updates

Director's Report

Tricia discussed struggles with trying to remain open for in-person services during the surge of positive COVID cases.

- Current guidance says children who test positive for COVID should quarantine for a full 10 days
- Staff who test positive for COVID must isolate for 5 days. Staff can return to work after the 5 days once they are fever free and their symptoms are improving. They must wear an N95 mask for the next 5 days.

Tricia explained that the Office of Head Start understands that COVID has significantly impacted enrollment so they are no longer enforcing the mandate that programs must be fully enrolled by 1/1/22.

Tricia discussed issues with hiring qualified staff and how lack of staffing is causing coverage issues.

Tricia reviewed recent issues with Head Start buildings, including the fact that Dix Avenue has had a sewer smell. Washington County Building and Grounds is aware of the issue and is working to get it fixed.

Tricia stated that the annual program self-assessment is coming up. The date has been changed from February to March.

Jodie reviewed the current program enrollment. She stated that the Head Start program has had a slight increase in their enrollment numbers.

- Agency wide there has been a big push to recruit eligible families and qualified staff.
 - Amy Jordan and Kelsey Campbell have been sending out packets of information to area schools and other community partners. The agency has been focusing on recruiting pregnant women, as this is an under-served population.

Kris Germaine reviewed DRDP reports. When looking at Head Start children only, there has been a small increase in all DRDP areas from Fall 2020 to Fall 2021.

Kris explained how teachers use observations and lesson plans in order to complete DRDP reports.

DRDP allows our program to include Center-Based children, Home-Based children, and any children who have an IEP or IFSP.

The DRDP reports show that compared to the national average the children in our program scored slightly below average in social-emotional development and were in the average range for math and science.

Finance Report

Emily reviewed the financial reports. Tricia and Emily are scheduled to meet to discuss how the program will use the excess funding.

Approval of Program and Financial Reports

Motion to approve the program reports, including the Director's and Financial Reports, 1st Terri, 2nd Isabell; All 4 member in favor; Motion Carried.

New Business

- Reviewed purpose of Self-Assessment. Date has been changed from February to March. Asked if Policy Council Members are interested in volunteering to participate in a focus group. Isabell volunteered to join the Family Engagement focus group and Vlad volunteered to join the Fiscal focus group.
- Vlad asked if it would be possible for staff to put together a list of community resources that can be shared with families.
 - Chrissy will put together a flyer of resources and send it out to Family Advocates and Home Visitors so they can share the information with families.
- Tricia discussed concerns about long term vacancies and lack of qualified applicants.

- Tricia reviewed how staffing issues are affecting the program's ability to safely keep classrooms open.
- Tricia explained that offered salaries are also impacting the program's staffing abilities.

Meeting adjourned at 10:23am

Next Meeting is scheduled for February 15th at 9:30am