

## Policy Council Meeting Minutes

Mountain States Early Head Start

Zoom

January 11, 2024- 10:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m.

The meeting convened at 10:00 a.m.



### **Our Mission:**

- Promote healthy pregnancies healthy babies.
- Enhance the development of very young children.
- Promote healthy families.

Policy Council Member Attendance:					
<i>Name &amp; Title</i>	<i>Center and Representative Type</i>	<i>Present</i>	<i>Absent</i>	<i># of Absences</i>	<i># of unexcused Absence</i>
2023-2024 Policy Council Members					
Kendra Bartlett, Vice Chairperson	Parent Representative	X			
Robyn Metzger, Secretary/Treasurer	Parent Representative	X		2 – July, Nov.	
Brandy Mendy re-elected Vice Chairperson	Parent Representative	X			
Brittany Czerniakowski	Parent Representative		X	1 – Jan.	
Tara Mayers	Parent Representative	X		1 – Oct., Dec.	
Shaura Larson	Jannus Board Liaison	X		1 - July	
Brooke France	Parent Representative	X		1 – Aug., Dec.	
Karen Yother – Community Library Network	Community Representative	X		1 - November	
LaTanya Keough - NIC Head Start	Community Representative	X		1 - November	

**Staff Present:** Aleta Garcia-Clute, Jana Brooks, Catie Kotmel, Irene Dreith, Jennifer Hepinstall, Mikayla Brown, Sandra Menegas, Sarah Howell, Melissa Bennett.

**Call to order:** Kendra called the meeting to order at 10:02 a.m.

**Roll Call/Membership Attendance:** Completed by Melissa Bennett.

**Connection Time:** Aleta shared a word search with the group containing focus words for 2024.

**Previous Meeting Minutes:** Members reviewed minutes from the December 2023 meeting.

***Brandy M. motioned to approve the November meeting minutes; Robyn seconded and the motion for approval carried.***

**Old Business:** Parent Project Updates – Aleta

Anna helped order the parent project items and they have all arrived. Aleta will be reaching out soon to schedule a time to put everything together. More to come!

## Table “Report Outs”/Training

### **Training Overview:**

- **In Kind and Parent/Child Activities at Home** – Catie K. (see attachment)
  - What is In-Kind? In-kind covers materials, services, or volunteer time contributed to the program at no cost. The Federal Government requires that 20% of the EHS grant be matched with contributions from parents and the community. Many sources count towards In-Kind such as serving on committees, volunteering with projects, supporting recruitment efforts, donation of services, and parent/child home learning activities. In-Kind is always presented in our monthly financials during PC meetings.
- **Understanding Audits and Summary of Jannus Annual Independent Audit Report** – Jenna Renner

Jenna is the CFO for Jannus, Inc. and has been in the role for almost 26 years. MSEHS has always been under her purview and she is therefore very familiar with our program. Today Jenna shared the audit fact sheet and explained the grant requirement that Policy Council be made aware of the annual Jannus audit as they are an important oversight committee for the grant.

  - This is an independent audit, which means it is performed by an outside entity with a deep dive into our books. Audits are performed on the larger Jannus programs of which MSEHS is one. The auditors focus on compliance and specifically look to verify we are acting responsibly with taxpayer dollars. Non-profits that receive more than \$750,000 annually from the federal government must undergo an annual audit and this last fiscal year Jannus topped \$24 million.
  - Banks and other programs we work with require that we undergo an annual audit. All funders look at this closely to be sure we are doing a good job with the money given us.
  - Harris and Company in the Treasure Valley worked from August through September and their final report was issued in October. A formal verbal report was presented to the Jannus Board and was an “unmodified-clean report” meaning there were no findings and we are in good standing with our audit reports.

### Program Design & Management Report Out

#### **Director’s Report & Program Updates** – Jana Brooks

##### Grant Updates

- Jana shared a full enrollment initiative presentation explaining how enrollment dipped from 153 to just over 70 following COVID. A large percentage of Head Start and Early Head Start programs nationwide are under-enrolled following the pandemic due to a range of issues such as lack of staff, inability to recruit and hold events, etc. Our change-of-scope reduction from 153 to 125 enrollment began in April of 2023 and ends April 2024. This represents an 18% reduction in numbers, but we are still not reaching 125 enrollments.
- New standards from OHS have alerted us to available options. They strongly encourage submission of a change-in-scope application based on our community needs which would be available immediately and would not require waiting until the end of the 12-month under-enrollment plan period.
- We are looking at another change-in-scope although we are not entirely sure what the number will be (maybe around 100.) Our program has been less than 100 before with just two sites and now we have four sites.
- We continue to enhance trauma informed services and focus on getting every child ready for school and providing more family engagement opportunities. Specialists

have been added to our staff who are leading and are trained in important areas, providing great resources and education for our families. We have increased salaries a little bit and continue increasing our programming.

- Community Assessment has us focusing on Shoshone County as enrollment is steadily increasing there. With no OBGYN services now in Bonner County, Irene, as our Perinatal & Nutrition Specialist, is now available to support families.
- We are reconfiguring jobs to support the staff in different ways such as keeping FC caseloads at 10 and alleviating some of the childcare duties they have. We want to continue providing parent-education opportunities, and hopefully raise staff salaries a bit to reflect the work they are doing.
- Today we will vote for permission to pursue this amendment to our current grant while beginning our continuation grant.
- Executive Summary to Policy Council February 5<sup>th</sup>-February 9<sup>th</sup> and an emergent virtual meeting during the week of February 12<sup>th</sup>-16<sup>th</sup> to vote on proposed change-in-scope for submission.

***Brandy motioned to approve the change-in-scope application; Tara seconded and the motion for approval carried.***

#### **Staff Updates / Hiring**

- Aleta shared updates to the Mental Health job description which has changed from .75% FTE to a full-time position. Performance Standards now place a significant focus on these mental health services and we have aligned our position with proposed updates. Complex support is needed around social emotional issues, support for staff who are supporting families, leadership team, and Child & Family Services team.
- Qualifications – A master’s degree in mental health or a related field (social work, counseling) and a strong background in navigating the system of receiving mental health services. Counseling (clinical services) will not be performed by this position but they will assist in contracting out for clinical services.
- We plan to post this job tomorrow, January 12<sup>th</sup>, with Interviews beginning Friday, January 26<sup>th</sup>. The salary range will be \$55K-\$60K.

***Brandy M. motioned to approve the Mental Health job description; Karen Y. seconded and the motion for approval carried.***

#### **OHS Correspondence (see attachment)**

##### ***Full Enrollment Initiative Follow-Up Letter from the OHS Director***

A recent notice from the US Department of Health and Human Services was shared. The Office of Head Start (OHS) is sending this letter with the intention to provide support with successful implementation of our 12-month plan to reach full enrollment (i.e., at least 97% of funded enrollment). OHS recognizes the challenges created by the pandemic for Head Start grant recipients and the lingering impacts on program operations including, but not limited to, staffing and enrollment.

## **Financial Report & Credit Cards – Jana Brooks**

### **November Financial Report:**

Jana shared the report by line item and explained the process to council members.

- Personnel is our largest budget item and money is available as positions are still open.
- Travel and supplies are as expected with spend down coming at the end of our program year.
- Rent and building maintenance is on track as we have just started paying on our Shoshone Center.
- In Kind (NFS) must be 11% of total federal dollars awarded, and our percentage is 9.7%.
- Any PC members traveling to IHSA later this month, all your volunteer time including your travel is allowable In-Kind. Please remember to turn the In-Kind document in to Aleta.
- Administrative expenses can be no more than 15% and our percentage is 14.57% currently. If there is need for a waiver, we would seek PC approval.
- Preparations for opening the new Shoshone Center are almost complete and we will also be making updates to the CDA Center in the new year.

### **November Credit Card Statements** – Robyn M. reviewed November statements and approved.

***Brandy motioned to approve the November Financials; Tara seconded and the motion for approval carried.***

***Brandy motioned to approve the November Credit Card statements; Tara seconded and the motion for approval carried.***

## **Jannus Board Report / Updates – Shaura Larson**

- The Jannus Board has not met since last month. Our quarterly meeting will be happening virtually next week.
- Jannus has received an offer on their current building on Jefferson Street. They hope to move into a new building soon which would house all programs under one roof.
- The board continues plans for the Jannus' 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary coming in May 2024. More to come!

**BREAK: 11:02 am – 11:12 am**

## **Child and Family Services Report Out – Catie Kotmel**

**Child Development & Disabilities Report:** See attachment.

- **Child Outcomes, Disabilities Services** – The last HELP assessment report was shared and our next checkpoint will be at the end of January. We had 38 out of 70 participants with 32 not completed due to attendance. Our goal is to have more assessments completed next time as all our staff have now been trained in the assessment and we would like to gain more data.
- **Disability Updates** – MSEHS will ensure that children of all abilities, including but not limited to those eligible for services under the Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA) have access to and can fully participate in the full range of activities and services that MSEHS offers. MSEHS specialists (child development and disabilities, health, prenatal, mental health) work collaboratively with each other and staff to ensure that integrated services are in place for all enrolled children.

- **School Readiness Goals for 2024-2025:**

We set goals each PY collected from assessment and surveys, things come up from committees, we set intentional activities through events/resources. We hope all enrolled children will make progress. Each goal is set within each developmental domain. Shared goals on screen (see attachment). Aligns with EHS and Idaho Early Learning Guidelines and assessment. Parent educator resources and activities to help support the goal. Rationale:

***Brandy M. motioned to approve the School Readiness Goals for 2024-2025; Tara M. seconded and the motion for approval carried.***

**Enrollment, Community Outreach and Engagement Report:**

**ERSEA December Enrollment Report and Infographic–** Sandra Menegas (see attachment)

- Current enrollment as of today is 86. We completed eight new enrollments last month with six from SNAP and two over income. As of today, we already have three January enrollments, one from a family who attended a Book Babies event at the Hayden library!
- Exits in November – Four children aged out after celebrating third birthdays.
- We have had one opening within the past 30 days and three follow-ups from HubSpot and 20 enrolled children currently have active IFSPs. We are continuing to work in HubSpot to track contacts with interested families from websites, community referrals, and from recruitment events.
- We have nine pregnancies enrolled program wide. It is wonderful to have Irene as our new Perinatal and Nutrition Specialist, which will be a tremendous help.

**Eligibility Percentages:**

- SNAP / SSI / TANF – 39.5%
- Over Income – 8.1%
- Income Below 100% - 25.6%
- Income 100-130% - 1.2%
- No Permanent Housing – 22.1%

**Community Outreach Report –** Mikayla Brown

- Outreach activities were shared including a HubSpot update with data from 9/12/23 through 1/5/24. We held a “meet and greet” with ICARE - St. Vincent de Paul and attended a Fostering Idaho Christmas party – more to come on enrollments!
- Snack and recruitment boxes were given to 30 community partners which included a snack box and a brief introduction/conversation about our services. Who do we really want to connect with at schools?
- ITP continues to be our number one referral source. All referral sources are listed on graph (see attachment.)
- We are making plans for OBGYN outreach with our new Perinatal and Nutrition Specialist.
- We will host a “meet and greet” in Bonner County in February, along with two open houses in Shoshone on January 22<sup>nd</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup>.
- Jennifer scheduled an upcoming “meet and greet” with the Department of Health & Welfare’s Child and Family Services division in all three counties.
- Finally, we are working with Chapter and Verse on a social media marketing campaign. They can help our MSEHS website pop up online more often and help with marketing on YouTube and other social media platforms.

**Parent Education & Engagement Opportunities – Jennifer H.**

- January 10th to March 6<sup>th</sup> – Making Sense of Your Worth Class with TBRI team in CDA.
- March 14<sup>th</sup> – Coffee Connections – Paint & Sip in Sandpoint
- March 21<sup>st</sup> – Coffee Connections - Paint & Sip in Kellogg
- April 3<sup>rd</sup> to May 15<sup>th</sup> – Circle of Security Parenting Class in Sandpoint (8 weeks).
- April 9<sup>th</sup> to May 21<sup>st</sup> – Circle of Security Parenting Class via Zoom (8 weeks).
- June 13<sup>th</sup> – Coffee Connections in Shoshone, activity TBD.
- June 20<sup>th</sup> – Coffee Connections in Sandpoint – activity TBD.
- Please send Jennifer your Coffee Connection ideas!

**Perinatal & Nutrition Specialist Presentation – Irene D.**

Irene is an International Board-Certified Lactation Consultant (IBCLC) and is currently attending graduate school studying Human Nutrition and Functional Medicine. She is available for birth and breastfeeding support and will be providing prenatal lactation education and postpartum lactation consultation.

**Review Program Eligibility and Selection Criteria for 2024-2025 – see attached (vote Tabled)**

*Aleta will follow up with an email. Please look this document over carefully and if you have any questions or suggestions about changes or additions, she will open that up through the email conversation. As there will be an emergency meeting in February to address the change-in-scope, we could take a vote at that meeting if needed.*

**Meeting Wrap-Up: IHSA** – Aleta will be reaching out to those traveling to IHSA to make sure everyone has what they need before the January 30<sup>th</sup> annual conference in Boise!

***The meeting was adjourned by Kendra at noon.***

- Next Policy Council Meeting will be March 7, 2024, at 10:00 am at the CDA Center.
- We plan to have an emergent virtual meeting in February the week of February 12-16<sup>th</sup> to vote on change-in-scope proposal and eligibility criteria if needed.