

Policy Council Meeting Minutes

Mountain States Early Head Start

Zoom

March 7, 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 & 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., March	
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, Karen Dapron, Sandra Menegas, Mikayla Brown, Sarah Howell, Teresa Rains, Melissa Bennett.

Call to order: Kendra called the meeting to order at 10:05 a.m.

Roll Call/Membership Attendance: Completed by Melissa B.

Connection Time: Are you a Waffles or a Pancake person? Group shared responses. 😊

Previous Meeting Minutes: Members reviewed minutes from the January meeting and February auxiliary meeting.

Brandy M. motioned to approve the January meeting minutes; Tara M. seconded and the motion for approval carried.

Brandy M. motioned to approve the February auxiliary meeting minutes; Tara M. seconded and the motion for approval carried.

Table “Report Outs”/Training

IHSA 2024 Conference Information Sharing:

- There was a new director for this year's conference.
- Kendra shared her experiences and especially enjoyed listening to a speaker about burnout in the workplace environment. She also enjoyed “The Parent Trap” – a presentation on positive childhood experiences and shared its similarity to ACEs (Adverse Childhood Experiences). One takeaway was the good things in an environment took longer to see, while the negative things were immediately noticed.
- Kendra shared one disappointment about this year’s conference which was the lack of Parent Cafes. These have typically been part of the annual conference and provide time and space for parents to share with each other about issues related to parenting and discuss EHS/HS in their areas.
- In lieu of their absence, more speakers were added which were informative. However, parents look forward and want time to visit with other HS parents to share, support, feel community, and learn from each other.
- Sarah Howell attended for the first time and enjoyed the content; very engaging. She mainly attended the health track with Jessica Geiger at NIC Head Start and is excited to work with her going forward.
- Aleta thanked the group for attending.
- Karen Y. asked if we could replicate the Parent Café in our area, which Kendra shared that we do with our Coffee Connections.
- LaTanya shared that the new IHSA representative, Monique, is employed next door at the Harding Center. Please feel free to contact her anytime and share your thoughts regarding IHSA.

Program Design & Management Report Out

Director’s Report & Program Updates – Jana Brooks

Grant Updates

- Jana shared our change-in-scope has passed at the regional office and is on its way to the national office for final approval.
- Quality Improvement funding and COLA increases have not been made available yet, and we should hear more information between March and May.

Executive Summary of Continuation Grant

- Policy Council members reviewed the summary together. Jana shared EHS program goals and how they relate to OHS initiatives.
- Employment – our turnover is .5%, and we are 96% staffed with two part-time positions coming up. We have officially hired a Mental Health Specialist to work with our families with complex needs.
- Case Aide positions will be available to provide more support during training and events such as Making Sense of Your Worth (MSOYW), Circle of Security (COS), and upcoming perinatal support groups.
- Wellness Culture – We are decreasing FC loads to ten families as much as possible. Our FC’s serve families with complex needs, spend required time documenting, and drive many miles weekly. Being available to our families is of the utmost importance. We also provide 50 hours per employee of Professional Development.
- Focus on Enrollment – We now have a Community Outreach Specialist working hard on the new CRM (Customer Relation Management) tool and we are achieving a positive return on our investment. It has been helpful to use something that provides

such good data.

- Change-in-scope has been submitted and we are eight months into the year and have 24 community partnerships!
- Equity and Engagement – we are successfully utilizing the Parents as Teachers curriculum.
- Administrative Team has been bolstered and will have one supervisor, Teresa Rains.
- Our Direct Serve Team (Family Consultants, Playgroup Coordinators, Case Aides) will now have one main supervisor, providing continuity for team members.
- Focus on Enrollment – we are continuing to implement a comprehensive marketing plan as advertising is turning more towards social media. Community partners continue to be our most valuable referral/enrollment resource.
- We focus on partnering with parents for positive change and expanding parent education opportunities such as, COS, MSYOW, Darkness to Light (child abuse prevention), Bringing Home Baby, and support groups for parents with children with disabilities.
- We would also like to strengthen partnerships with our other Jannus programs and have done so recently by assisting Economic Opportunity with some of their participants here in North Idaho.
- Cultural Accountability Team will focus on DEI-B (Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, Belonging.)

Brandy M. motioned to approve the Executive Summary of Continuation; Brooke F. seconded and the motion for approval carried.

OHS Correspondence – No new correspondence.

Staff Updates / Hiring

- Aleta shared the new FC/Case Aide job description and presented a draft for Policy Council members to review. This will be presented for a vote today.
- This position will be a combination of Family Consultant and Case Aide, with a childcare piece. This position will be present and available to consistently help during our many events/trainings/meetings. We have already received interest in the position.

Brandy motioned to approve the FC/Case Aide job description; Brooke seconded and the motion for approval carried.

- We are waiting for the background clearance for Krista Haller, our new Mental Health Specialist who will be based in Sandpoint but will be available to our entire program.

Revised Parent Childcare / Mileage Reimbursements

- A new form was presented with updated reimbursement rates for childcare. Parents may notice the intervals look different with vouchers now available in \$10 increments. Data from last year along with today's gas rates have prompted the new stipend rates. We want parents to have the opportunity to attend all events
- Mikayla shared the new mileage reimbursement rate of \$0.67/mile.

- Shoshone parents will still receive plastic cards for gas versus paper vouchers.

Brandy motioned to approve the revised parent childcare/ mileage reimbursement; Tara seconded and the motion for approval carried.

Financial Report & Credit Cards – Jana Brooks

December 2023/January 2024 Financial Report:

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

We are still within our budget with a sizable amount remaining for spend down, mainly due to being short-staffed much of the year. Personnel is our largest budget item and money is available as positions are still open. Our Non-Federal Share must be a minimum of 11% and we are at 11.78%, with administrative costs at 14.19%. The IHSA amount was not entered last month and will be added next month. Highlights include:

- Projects for spenddown include making the CDA center kitchen and meeting room more usable for groups, providing more storage for classes and materials, comfortable seating, and lighting improvements.
- 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.

Brandy M. motioned to approve the December 2023 Financials; Brooke seconded and the motion for approval carried.

Brandy motioned to approve the January 2024 Financials; Brooke seconded and the motion for approval carried.

December/January Credit Card Statements – credit card vote is TABLED due to Robyn's absence.

Jannus Board Report / Updates – Shaura Larson

- The Jannus Board will be in North Idaho April 23rd-26th, visiting the Shoshone, Sandpoint, Lakeland and CDA centers and will hold their meeting on April 23rd.
- Jannus provides shared services to fifteen non-profit organizations and MSEHS is the only one in North Idaho.
- Most of the other Jannus program grants are not as stable as those received by MSEHS. Funding for other Jannus programs can be sporadic and is often one-time only funding. One of Jannus' main goals for their fundraising effort is to create endowments which will help sustain these programs.
- Strategic Planning continues to be their focus as well.

BREAK: 11:05 – 11:15

Child and Family Services Report Out

Health and Safety Services Report: Sarah Howell

- Sarah presented the PY 2023-2024 Health Report reflecting the following: (see attachment)
 - Families with Health Insurance - 90%.
 - Families with a Medical Home - 80%.
 - Families with a Dental Home - 34%.

- Families with current Immunizations - 50%.
- Key Updates included the testing of all MSEHS centers for the presence of lead in drinking water. CDA and Lakeland were tested first and the levels are within range at both centers.
- Shoshone's sample was submitted last week for testing and Sandpoint's sample will be taken tomorrow.
- Sarah shared the experience of attending her first Health Services Advisory Committee meeting on February 2nd and she is looking forward to the next HSAC meeting in June which will be hosted by Jessica Geiger at NICHHS.
- Upcoming Trainings – three workshops for staff in March at CDA, Sandpoint and Lakeland centers. She will introduce updated guidelines and information on calibrating the OAE machines.
- Sarah will be attending a Train-the-Trainer Lead Curriculum in Boise on March 21st and will have more good information to share with families and staff.
- There was a question about radon testing at our MSEHS sites.

Enrollment, Community Outreach and Engagement Report:

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

- January was very busy with ten enrollments completed!
- We reported 94 actual with three within 30 days, so 97 reported to HSES. If we can stay at 90 by mid-April we will be doing very well.
- Exits in February – Two (2) due to families being too busy for visits.
- Anticipating 13 exits upcoming in March.
- Referral sources for enrollments include Family Promise (2), Enrolled Families (2), School District Flyer (1). Two families enrolled with new pregnancies who were previously enrolled and one family transitioned over from over-income with highest need.
- We have eight pregnancies enrolled program wide.
- 22% of enrolled children have active IFSP's.

Eligibility Percentages:

- SNAP / SSI / TANF – 38%
- Over Income – 9%
- Income Below 100% - 20%
- Income 100-130% - 2%
- No Permanent Housing – 21%

County Snapshot:

- Bonner – 22 (1 within 30-days)
- Shoshone – 18
- Kootenai – 57 (2 within 30-days)

Community Outreach Report – Mikayla Brown (see attachment)

- Mikayla shared graphs generated from our CRM tool showing enrollment info and introduced the referral sources leading to enrollments from 9/12/23 – 3/4/24 with ITP and Friend/Family the largest sources.
- Family Enrollments by County – Kootenai largest, Shoshone, then Bonner. A large amount of time has been spent in Shoshone county this year with the opening of the new center.

- Irene shared that our Community Assessment reflects families are moving out of the Bonner area.
- Graph showing Breakdown of Enrollments by Category – More than half are coming from our community partners. In 2023, 300 working hours were spent, but created just six enrollments. We can take that energy and time and focus it on our relationships with community partners.
- Graph - Known enrollments from events 2023.
- Graph – Reason Not Enrolled: No response from families once contacted was largest. Families seeking childcare smallest.
- Mikayla shared upcoming outreach activities: Perinatal Team/OBGYN & Pediatric Plan, Cookie Team/Snack Drop-offs to partners, Strengthening Families, continue meeting with partners.
- Bubble-Paloozas will be happening this summer and Karen Yother offered to place these dates on the library's community calendars.
- Tara shared the idea of holding an event in conjunction with a larger local event, such as Art on the Green.
- We do need to emphasize we are an in-home program that differs from Head Start and we do not provide daycare services. Much of the population believes we are a daycare when we first make contact.

Parent Education & Engagement Opportunities – Aleta

- March 14th – Coffee Connections – Paint & Sip in Sandpoint
- March 13th – MSOYW concludes at the CDA center.
- March 21st – Coffee Connections - Paint & Sip in Kellogg
- April 3rd to May 15th – Circle of Security Parenting Class in Sandpoint (8 weeks).
- April 9th to May 21st – Circle of Security Parenting Class via Zoom (8 weeks).
- June 13th – Coffee Connections in Shoshone, activity TBD.
- June 20th – Coffee Connections in Sandpoint – activity TBD.

Community Happenings – Karen shared these upcoming library events:



- LaTanya – NIC Head Start is preparing for their federal review next week.

Next Parent Project Meeting (week of March 11th – 15th) Aleta

- Orders have arrived for our parent project bags and we now need volunteers to help fill up 500 bags! Please contact Aleta if you can help.
- Aleta will send an invite for a Parent Project meeting on Tuesday, March 12th, 10-Noon at the CDA Center.

Meeting Wrap-Up:

The meeting was adjourned by Kendra at 12:00 pm

- Next Policy Council Meeting will be April 4, 2024, at 10:00 am at the CDA Center / Zoom.