

Policy Council Committee Meeting

April 19, 2022

Motion to: Open the meeting.
Motion by: Lisa Fountain
Seconded: Rajel Hippler
Vote: AIF

1. Introductions & Roll Call

Representatives:

P Mary-Gene Rumery (Educare Full-Day)	_P_ Ashley O'Brien (Community Rep)
P Rick Dugal (Educare Full-Day)	_P_ Glenn Mercier (Community Rep)
P Rajel Hippler (Educare (Part-Day))	_E_ Maria Kuntz (Community Rep)
P Jessica Vienneau (North Elementary)	_E_ Michael Mosley (Community Rep)
P Ashley MacDonald (Mill Stream)	_P_ Michelle Gonya (Community Rep)
P Lisa Fountain (Fairfield Preschool)	_P_ Richard Yocum (Community Rep)
E David Hall (HomeBased)	
A Danielle Allen (EHS:CCP Partner)	

Staff:

Tracye Fortin, Chief Operating Officer, KVCAP Child & Family Services
Jennifer Pare, Executive Administrative Assistant

Welcome to new Policy Council representatives, Rajel Hippler. Rajel received Policy Council Orientation, joined by Michele Gonya. Just a reminder that confidentiality is of utmost importance for all of us to remember.

2. Review/Approval Policy Council Meeting Minutes

Motion to: Accept and approve meeting minutes of 3/15/2022.
Motion by: Richard Yocum
Seconded: Lisa Fountain
Vote: AIF

3. Family Engagement

Miriam Jacobs, Family Engagement Manager, was unable to join the meeting, but provided a written report which highlighted:

- Family Survey Update: Finalized and ready to go. Thank you to the parents who participated in the Committee to update the survey.
- Health Advisory Committee: Ayla Allen, the Child & Family Services Health Coordinator, will be reaching out to Policy Council members to strengthen parent participation on the Committee.
- Recruitment Day Update: This year's annual kickoff event will take place May 20th at the Skowhegan Recreational Center. Parents are welcome to join!
- Week of the Young Child: Discussion focused on activities that happened at sites to celebrate. The Child care bill passed the day everyone went to the State house and Governor Mills was on hand. Week of the young child is nationally recognized and Maine has truly stepped up the focus of the week.
- Head Start Goes to Augusta Success: Was held thru Zoom, the group was LARGE and so informative.
- Family Engagement Requests: One member asked if engagement has increased? Mary-Gene responded and shared the success of a new group for Foster/Kinship/Adoptive Families at Educare, where six families attended that have never before participated in family engagement possibilities.

4. Draft Grant Packages (Early/ Head Start and Early Head Start: Child Care Partnerships)

Mary-Gene, along with Tracye Fortin, shared key details of the draft Early/Head Start and Early Head Start:Child Care Partnerships (EHS:CCP) Continuation Grants, noting that the program is currently in Year 3 of a 5-year grant, therefore only a continuation application is due for each grant on June 1st. Key changes were highlighted, including:

Goals

Our five-year broad program goals continue to align with our program's primary focus areas. We have added an objective to strengthen knowledge and skills in Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Access (DEIA).

Training & Technical Assistance

We continue to assure staff receive mandatory training and our interdisciplinary leadership team coordinates additional and ongoing embedded professional development to advance staff's knowledge and skills to meet co-created individual professional development plans and advance program goals. With the child care staffing crisis, new hires generally have limited experience, training or education. Focused staff-facilitated training and coaching activities are necessary to rebuild staff capacity.

Program Design and Approach to Service Delivery

There is one major change in service location. Regional School Unit #74 (RSU #74) has experienced a continual reduction in enrollment; population decreases, including Head Start eligible families. RSU #74 determined that the cost of operating a comprehensive preschool program in partnership with KVCAP Head Start was not probable due to the district funding constraints. In order to retain preschool services in both communities, RSU #74 has determined they will operate a standard public school preschool at a lesser cost. The decreased enrollment trend, coupled with budgetary challenges of annual operating costs, are a clear indication of the need to pursue a Head Start Change in Scope. Reducing a cumulative classroom total of 16 Head Start children across RSU #74's two preschool locations in Solon and Anson, yet retaining the same Head Start funding, is a necessary strategy to better match the annual Head Start funding allocation to the Head Start enrollment. The KVCAP Head Start staff will be offered positions in other KVCAP Somerset County Head Start programs and they also have the opportunity to apply for RSU #74 employment.

Additionally, anticipating there would be a challenge with continuity of service from Early Head Start to Head Start in the Home Visiting option, five Head Start enrollment opportunities were planned for our Home Visiting option in our current program year. However, data indicates that children are enrolling in public preschool programs, a testament to the influence Head Start has had to enroll both three and four year olds in public preschool partnership programs.

Policy Council Recommendation: Reduce Head Start enrollment by 21.

In the EHS:CCP program option, four provider partners have ended their Early Head Start contracts due to the vaccine mandate. Although we have been successful in securing new provider partners amid the pandemic, we are not yet meeting our funded enrollment. We continue efforts to recruit families following the Office of Head Start eligibility criteria. It is increasingly challenging to identify eligible families given Maine's increased minimum wage and the federal Head Start income guidelines. With increased focus on DEIA, all operational locations will embrace inclusion; abilities, income, and race.

Policy Council Recommendation: Include a minimum of two private slots at the Skowhegan Early Head Start:Child Care Partnership location, as funding allows, retaining the full 100 slots in other partnership locations.

Head Start / Early Head Start Budgets

Head Start/EHS COLA 2.28%/Quality Improvement	\$	104,760
EHS:Child Care Partnership COLA 2.28% /Quality Improvement	\$	62,559
Training & Technical Assistance Head Start	\$	30,904
Training & Technical Assistance Early Head Start	\$	17,147
Training & Technical Assistance EHS: CC Partnership	\$	51,718

Head Start/Early Head Start Base Grant	\$ 3,812,784
Early Head Start:Child Care Partnership	<u>\$ 2,305,229</u>
	\$ 6,385,101

Motion to: Accept and approve the draft grant packages, which includes a draft budget, program service and delivery, Goals and Objectives, Training and Technical Assistance Plans, and Recommendations for Change and recommend to the KVCAP Board of Directors.

Motion by: Rick Dugal

Seconded: Mary-Gene Rumery

Vote: AIF

5. Reports:

Due to timing and rich discussion about the draft Federal Head Start grant application packages, a recommendation was made to table the reports to the May Policy Council meeting.

Motion to: Recommendation to table reports until next month.

Motion by: Michele Gonya

Seconded: Rajel Hippler

Vote: AIF

6. Upcoming Meeting Plan

The Council voted to hold future meetings in-person. The next meeting will be held on Tuesday, May 17th at Educare Central Maine. Childcare and dinner will be provided. If any member has a transportation barrier, other members shared their willingness to help. As well, the program can provide a transportation stipend.

Motion to: Adjourn.

Motion by: Lisa Fountain

Seconded: Rajel Hippler

Vote: AIF