

Policy Council Meeting Minutes

August 12, 2025

1. Open Meeting

Motion to: Open Meeting

Motion by: Ryan S.

Seconded: Tram

Vote: AIF

2. Roll Call and Attendance (identify additional Orientation needs)

P=Present A=Absent E=Excused Z=Zoom

Representatives:

P	Karrie Breton (Educare 3-5 Part-Day)	E	John Massey (Community Rep)
P	Cearra Cater (HomeStart)	E	Ryan Riopell (Community Rep)
P	Shaunda Cunningham (North El)	P	Mary-Gene Rumery (Educare I/T Full-Day)
P	Lauren Fox (Mill Stream)	P	Ryan Savery (Community Rep)
E	Lauren Lancaster (Educare 3-5 Full-Day)	A	Tabetha Thomas (Educare Float)
P	Tram Martin (Community Rep)	E	Janalynn White (SEHS)

Staff:

P	Sarah Lavallee, Head Start Director	P	Kristin Ludwig, Program Assistant
E	Miriam Jacobs, Family Engagement Manager		

3. Review / Approval of July Policy Council Meeting Minutes

Motion to: Accept and approve meeting minutes from 7/8/2025.

Motion by: Lauren F.

Seconded: Cearra

Vote: AIF

4. Family Engagement

- Family Survey results and planning: Reviewed recent Family Survey results. Teachers/staff were mentioned frequently with families appreciating the positive impacts they make, and the help they provide to support children and families in times of need. Procure is the preferred means of communication of most respondents. Areas to improve include: making families more aware of the mental health consultant services, volunteering and leadership opportunities, offering more opportunities for families to interact, and providing photos and short bios of all teaching staff in each classroom, particularly when new staff are hired. Two families requested a contact back, which will occur soon. We discussed the low response rate overall and strategies to gather family feedback throughout the year. A plan will be developed and piloted in the new program year.
- Policy Council Facebook page: Connections have been slow to start overall. The page will be shared more as the Council works to broaden its reach, including a posting to Procure.
- Parent Summer Summit update: Karrie shared about the panel she was on with 4 others talking to educators about their experiences in the school systems. Overall, the parent panel expressed the need for more communication and greater accessibility/involvement as they shared their stories.
- October Meet & Greet planning: Discussed the upcoming Meet & Greet planned for October. PC would like to again recognize staff who have helped them on their journey, as well as thanking childcare staff. Mary-Gene will email PC members for staff recognition recommendations. We will explore OnlyPans for catering the Meet & Greet as the Educare kitchen will be unavailable.
- Recruitment updates: There have been lots of opportunities for community presence as we recruit for all locations. We have joined Colby Family Fun Day, National Night Out, Oakfest, and many others! Recruitment is going well overall with applications continuing to come in for fall services.
- Other Parent Topics: New Fatherhood Meet-up flyer was shared, noting new time for monthly connections.

5. Head Start Director Updates

- Reports/Updates
 - Program Information Summary: We are currently fully enrolled. There is 1 Head Start opening and 17 EHS openings for fall. Focused outreach to fill EHS slots at Hight and in HomeStart is underway, with numerous applications in process. Open staffing positions are being filled and the program year will start with fewer openings than the past few years. Kudos to staff for supporting new hires! Our budgets are

on track to be fully spent, and in-kind collections should meet requirements without a waiver. We are continuing to monitor these closely.

ii. Credit Card Expenditures: We reviewed the report, there were no questions.

b. Program, State, and National landscape updates:

i. HFELC Ribbon Cutting: The event held on August 5th had a great turnout and was an overall success! We are looking forward to serving children in the new building soon.

ii. Preservice Breakfast: A reminder that PC members are all invited to join our C&FS staff Preservice breakfast gathering at Educare on 8/15.

iii. KVCC Ribbon Cutting: September 30th at 4:00 pm. An invite will be shared with PC members.

iv. One-Time funding opportunity for Nutrition and Healthy Eating: Discussed ideas for a funding application, including healthy snacks for family engagements, meal kits and cooking demonstrations for families, and staff time to start-up the new kitchen collaborations and meal deliveries in Skowhegan. This application will be prepared and submitted by the August 22nd priority deadline.

v. Measles in the news: Discussed news reports of increased Measles cases in other states. There have been no cases in Maine so far in 2025. Kudos to Christina Stafford for her diligence with appointment reminders that help keep children up-to-date on their immunizations!

vi. Early/Head Start grant: We received outreach from our Northeast Region Grants Management Specialist, clarifying a question he had regarding our current budget, as any unspent funds would be rolled into the next grant year award. We will be fully spent this program year so we expect our award notice to arrive soon, with a full funding allocation.

c. ERSEA Policy: The version presented last month was edited to reflect Superintendent agreements needed for any children with an IEP to assure that special education funding is allocated to the district/partnership location where the child is receiving services.

d. Policy Council Bylaws: Need to change Bylaws to reflect 3 HFELC seats (combining the 2 currently assigned to North El and 1 assigned to SEHS). A revised version will be shared next month for review/approval. We also discussed the recruitment of new members from sites not represented this year.

Motion to: Accept and approve Head Start Director Reports, including approval of the ERSEA policy.

Motion by: Ryan S.

Seconded: Tram

Vote: AIF

- 6. KVCAP Board Meeting: No July Meeting.** Two staffing updates were shared in a special August meeting. KVCAP's CFO, Doug Mitchell, will be leaving his position on August 15th to return to a previous role with the State of Maine. We wish Doug the best with this change. We have a strong finance team who will keep all systems operating while a new CFO is hired. Also, KVCAP's CEO, Suzanne Walsh, announced a change as her family is relocating to Florida in July 2026. There are no changes expected until that time, with a future hybrid work arrangement being discussed with the KVCAP Board.

7. Meeting Highlights

- a. Family Survey results were reviewed. The gift card winner is Nakesha Warren. Congrats!
- b. Like our Head Start Policy Council Facebook page!
- c. Open Houses and Ribbon Cuttings (spread on FB).
- d. Fatherhood Meet-Up flyer with new time.

- 8. Treasurer's Report:** Beginning Balance: \$200.00, Paid Out: \$78.00, Remaining Balance: \$122.00.

Motion to: Approve the Treasurer's Report as given.

Motion by: Ryan S.

Seconded: Tram

Vote: AIF

9. Adjourn

Motion to: Adjourn.

Motion by: Ryan S.

Seconded: Carrie

Vote: AIF