

Officer Signature Johanna SmithDate 03-20-2025

BEAR RIVER HEAD START POLICY COUNCIL 2024-2025 Meeting Minutes [Combined with Board]

Date: Thursday, February 20, 2025	Start Time: 7:00PM End Time: 8:00PM	Location: Dialpad Meetings: 1-888-602-7505	
2024-2025 Policy Council Members' Attendance		YES	NO
Josie Smith* (Chairperson)	Brigham Representative	X	
Chad Alvey	Tremonton Representative		X
Gilberto Sanchez	Hyde Park Representative		X
Cassidy Macoubrie* (Vice Chairperson)	Logan Representative		E
	Hyrum Representative		
Haylee Fellows*	Smithfield Representative	X	
	Richmond Representative		
Karli Leonardi* (Secretary)	Malad Representative		E
Zach Johnson* (Treasurer & ID HSAC)	Paris Representative		X
Kristin Fellows*	Preston Representative	X	
Festus Odunuga*	Nest/Koop Representative	X	
Janeth Ocampo* (UT HSAC)	Fishpond Representative	X	
Brooks Bodily	Board Representative	X	
Justin Nuñez*	Community Representative		E

*Trained & Seated Policy Council Members

Members needed for a Quorum: 5	
Number of Voting Members who attended the meeting: 5	Number of Non-Voting Members who attended the meeting (including the Policy Council Officer conducting the meeting): 1
Do we have a Quorum? YES	
<p>Meeting Called to Order By: Josie Smith (Policy Council Chairperson) Meeting Facilitated By: Terrah Smith (Administrative Assistant) Additional Staff in Attendance: Sarah Thurgood (Program Director), Andy Hernandez (Fiscal Officer), Kristie Curtis (Family Services Coordinator), Steph Wood (Centerbased Coordinator), Cassie Petersen (Child Development Manager & Facilities Coordinator), Denise Ayala (ERSEA Manager)</p>	

1. Policy Council vote to approve the hire request of Grace Hutchinson as a PHS Teacher Assistant (Paid Internship Position) – Steph Wood

Grace is from St. Louis, Missouri but has been living in Utah for about three years. She loves it here. Grace is going to Utah State University and will graduate in about a year. She is studying Early Childhood Education and Communications. It's a lot of fun. Grace has had some experience with Preschool aged kids in high school. She had a class where she taught a few lessons a week and did observations. It was her favorite. Grace is excited to get back in the classroom and thinks this will be such a good fit for her. She loves this age group so much. It's time for a change and Grace feels this will be awesome! We are very lucky to be able to have Grace work with us at Bear River Head Start. She is awesome. We're glad she applied for this position.

Policy Council motion to approve the hire request of Grace Hutchinson as a PHS Teacher

Assistant (Paid Internship Position)		
Motion: Haylee Fellows	Seconded: Festus Odunuga	Approved: Yes

2. Policy Council vote to approve the hire request of Faith Croshaw as an EHS Teacher Assistant (Paid Internship Position) – Steph Wood

Faith is requesting to be approved for the Infant/Toddler Intern position for Early Had Start. She is currently going to school in Human Development. Faith has many years of experience working with children and families. She was a nanny for a family with an 18 month old and worked as a Medical Assistant in a pediatric office. Currently, Faith is an America Reads Tutor at Adams Elementary. She volunteers for Welcome Baby where she visits low income families to educate them on child development and connect them with community resources. Faith is very excited to contribute to Head Start and support the children and families in the program. We're lucky to have Faith too. Welcome!

Policy Council motion to approve the hire request of Faith Croshaw as an EHS Teacher Assistant (Paid Internship Position)

Motion: Festus Odunuga	Seconded: Kristin Fellows	Approved: Yes
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3. Policy Council vote to approve the transfer request of Yvonne Carranza from On-Call Teacher Assistant to PHS Hyde Park Nutrition Aide – Steph Wood

Yvonne has been at Head Start for a little over two years. She started out as a Classroom Assistant in Smithfield and then transferred to the Teacher Assistant position there. Yvonne has loved every minute of working for Head Start. This opportunity as a Nutrition Aide would be perfect. She loves the schedule and working at the Hyde Park Center.

Policy Council motion to approve the transfer request of Yvonne Carranza from On-Call Teacher Assistant to PHS Hyde Park Nutrition Aide

Motion: Haylee Fellows	Seconded: Festus Odunuga	Approved: Yes
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4. Policy Council and Board vote to approve the Bear River Head Start ERSEA – Recruitment & Enrollment Policy – Kristie Curtis

Kristie Curtis is the Family Services Coordinator. Each year we bring our ERSEA Policy to Policy Council and Board for approval. ERSEA stands for Eligibility, Recruitment, Selection, Enrollment and Attendance. Bear River Head Start makes sure to follow the Performance Standards the Office of Head Start provides us in determining, verifying and documenting eligibility. We take this very seriously. We make sure to gather all of the required documents and document a child's eligibility correctly. There were a few changes or additions made to the policy this year. On page 8, in the section for Children Eligible for Services under IDEA (Individuals with Disabilities Education Act) we changed the word 'funded' to 'actual' per the new Performance Standard. Actual funded enrollment refers to the real number of children enrolled in the program and not the funded capacity. On page 11, we added the bullet where it says "See Suspension and Expulsion Procedure". That procedure can be viewed at the end of the policy. On page 13, we included the updated selection criteria that gives staff members who work at Bear River Head Start 45 points if they apply for their child to be enrolled in the program. This has been done to help with staff retention. On page 17, we added the Procedure for Housing Cost Adjustments that helps families spending 30% or more of their income on housing costs per the new Performance Standard.

We have an ERSEA Code of Conduct that staff are trained on and sign every year. If any staff member personally knows someone that is applying for the program, we would not have that staff member help them with their application or gather their documents. We would make sure another staff member helps that family to avoid a conflict of interest. Policy Council and Board were asked if they had any questions. No questions were asked.

Policy Council motion to approve the Bear River Head Start ERSEA – Recruitment & Enrollment Policy		
Motion: Haylee Fellows	Seconded: Janeth Ocampo	Approved: Yes

5. Policy Council and Board vote to approve the Bear River Head Start Impasse Policy – Terrah Smith

The Impasse Policy has not changed since it was last approved. As a quick training, an impasse occurs when both the Board and Policy Council do not agree on a decision. Neither governing body has more power than the other. The Impasse Policy outlines the process we would follow if an impasse were to occur.

As the first step, each body would submit written documentation to the other regarding their decision.

For the Second Step, a Mediation Committee would be formed. This consists of the Chair and Vice Chair from both bodies as well as our Head Start Attorney. If a Chair or Vice Chair is unavailable for mediation, an alternate candidate can be chosen from the Executive Committee for that governing body. The Mediation Committee has 30 calendar days to resolve the dispute and take a solution back to both bodies for approval.

If the dispute is not resolved within 30 calendar days, the third step in the process is to form an Arbitration Board. This will consist of the Chairs from each governing body and three community representatives chosen by the Head Start attorney and agreed upon by both Chairs. The Arbitration Board has 10 calendar days to decide on a solution. The decision of the Arbitration Board is final. In my time working with Board and Policy Council, an impasse has not occurred. Policy Council and Board were asked if they had any questions. No questions were asked.

Policy Council motion to approve the Bear River Head Start Impasse Policy		
Motion: Festus Odunuga	Seconded: Kristin Fellows	Approved: Yes

6. Policy Council vote to approve the January 16, 2025 Policy Council Meeting Minutes – Josie Smith

Policy Council was asked if they had any questions or changes that needed to be made to the meeting minutes. No questions were asked or changes made to the January 16, 2025 Policy Council Meeting Minutes.

Policy Council motion to approve the January 16, 2025 Policy Council Meeting Minutes		
Motion: Festus Odunuga	Seconded: Haylee Fellows	Approved: Yes

7. Policy Council vote to approve holding Interim Policy Council Meetings prior to the next scheduled Policy Council Meeting, as needed – Josie Smith

If we have to hold an interim Policy Council Meeting, we are voting to approve that. Policy Council was asked if they had any questions. No questions were asked.

Policy Council motion to approve the holding of Interim Policy Council Meetings prior to the next scheduled Policy Council Meeting as needed

Motion: Janeth Ocampo	Seconded: Kristin Fellows	Approved: Yes
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8. Board vote to approve the January 2025 Board Meeting Minutes – Brooks Bodily

The January 2025 Board Meeting Minutes were approved by Board. See the February 20, 2025 Board Meeting Minutes for more information.

9. Board vote to approve the Audit Engagement Letter from Rudd & Company for 2024-25 audit services. This includes the audit of both financial and eligibility requirements. This item falls under Board responsibility and is listed as information only for Policy Council – Andy Hernandez

The Audit Engagement Letter from Rudd & Company for 2024-25 audit services was approved by Board. See the February 20, 2025 Board Meeting Minutes for more information.

10. The Utah Head Start Association (UHSA) has asked each Head Start agency in Utah to ask if 1 parent will volunteer to attend a quarterly UHSA Meeting. This is not an assignment but on a volunteer basis – Kristie Curtis

We have someone attend the Utah Head Start Association (UHSA) meetings and they have asked that each Head Start agency in Utah ask one parent to volunteer to attend a quarterly UHSA meeting. The last meeting just happened in February so the next one won't be until May and then the next one will be in August. From our understanding, the meetings will be virtual and will be a parent panel type discussion once a quarter. We wanted to bring this to our Policy Council to see if any of you are interested in doing that, but if not that is just fine. It is not an assignment. It is not required. What if we don't have a parent volunteer to attend? We would let UHSA know that no one can attend for Bear River Head Start. Josie Smith volunteered to attend these meetings and clarified that they are held virtually. Yes, they are virtual meetings. We will put Josie down to attend and get in touch with her to make sure her information is shared with UHSA.

11. Active Supervision Assessment Updates – Steph Wood

Right now our Centerbased Managers are in the process of conducting Needs Analysis and Risk Assessments for each of our Preschool Head Start and Early Head Start classrooms. Along with the assessments, we also complete Health and Safety Facility Checks for each classroom and facility. When these checks are completed, we make sure anything that needs to be addressed or fixed, is taken care of immediately. All of these assessments identify any safety or other concerns of the classrooms and facilities, if any. Individual support is given to the Teachers and Teacher Assistants by working directly with them to address all concerns including any active supervision issues identified. That support comes from Steph as the Centerbased Coordinator, the Centerbased Managers, the Mental Health and Disabilities Manager and the Mentor Coaches. Once the Risk Assessment is complete, a copy is placed in the sub folder in each classroom. We use all of this information to make sure we're constantly improving and in compliance with our active supervision requirements. We also use the information for goals and program improvement. How are the findings reported to both Board and Policy Council so they are aware of the status of these assessments? All of the reports are kept in our ChildPlus database system. If there are health or safety issues, we have our maintenance workers address those through a work order. Any big concerns, including concerns with active supervision, are always discussed with Sarah and the Managers and reported to Board and Policy Council at their meetings as well as to the Regional Office. The results of these assessments are also included in our Program Improvement Report that goes to Policy Council and Board.

12. Program Performance Report – Sarah Thurgood

We are hitting all of our milestones and are not behind in anything. We just had our Focus Area 1 (FA1) Review and made sure to be up-to-date as we prepared for that.

13. Budget Committee & Fiscal Report – Andy Hernandez

Andy started his report with the highlights from Budget Committee Meeting. Budget Committee meets each month on the Tuesday prior to Policy Council. Our Fiscal Year at Bear River Head Start ends 1/31 so we are closing down the Fiscal Year that ended 1/31/25. We leave the month of January open a bit longer in our system to make accruals and final adjustments in preparation for the audit coming up in a couple of months. We are looking to have all of the

budget reports to the Coordinators by early March. We renewed our insurance coverage and increased some of our in-kind rates including the mileage rate to be in lock step with the federal government IRS reimbursement rate.

To go over the Fiscal Report, Andy attached the financial statements to the report that was sent out to Policy Council and Board. We have outsourced payroll to Gusto and they got W2's out to staff last month. We are in the process of sending out 1099's to all of our vendors in accordance with the IRS guidelines. We've had quite a bit of correspondence lately from the ACF (Administration for Children and Families) and the Office of Head Start. There are a few different notices we received that were attached to the Fiscal Report for your review. Any time we get correspondence from the Office of Head Start, which includes official guidance, reports or notices, they are included in the Fiscal Report. Many of these items in the Fiscal Report have to do with housekeeping and our correspondence with ACF.

We had our FA1 Review this last month which was performed remotely by someone from the Office of Head Start. We passed the review and the correspondence and results from the review were included in the packets as well.

We also got some correspondence today from another person from the Office of Head Start stating he needs documentation showing that some required federal reports were filed, which they were. They were just filed late last year. Andy will get this information to him. Andy was asked how this finding was classified. This is the same finding we had on our audit last year. Andy has already provided Cheryl Lutz at ACF with the necessary documentation as well as the person that conducted our FA1 Review. There's proof of filing these reports on HSES (the Head Start Enterprise System) and in emails between Andy and Cheryl Lutz. This is not a new concern that we weren't already aware of and we have addressed it.

Sarah explained that when a review is conducted, as the reviewers finish up their reports, the verbiage they use states how they classify a finding. The program and fiscal portions of the review are conducted, reports are created separately and then compiled at the end. It may be that they know the reports were filed but because they were filed late, they are classifying this concern as a finding. From the email, it sounded like they just needed proof of filing these reports. This person cannot see where or if they have been filed. Sarah and Andy will follow up to clarify what is needed and make sure this person gets the documentation needed. We will let Board and Policy Council know the status of this at their meetings next month.

Updates on prior month enrollment numbers and CACFP report numbers were included in the Fiscal Report. For the rest of February and into March we will continue closing last year's grant and work on some CACFP Quarterly Reports.

14. Director's Report – Sarah Thurgood

Sarah shared information throughout the meeting and during the Fiscal Report about the FA1 Review that occurred. She also shared some about the need to increase the Early Head Start Teachers' salaries. There is no additional funding right now and they are making a couple thousand dollars less per year than our part-day Preschool Head Start Teachers. There are 20 Early Head Start Teachers so this will take a significant amount of money due to the overhead included for benefits, etc. One of the ways we've identified being able to pay for this is using the funding from 10 of the Homebased children slots up in the rural part of Idaho as well as the salary from one Homebased Family Educator. We've had an Educator resign that was in the southeastern Idaho area and we haven't been able to fill the slots there. Homebased slots are not sustainable in the future, as has been discussed at prior meetings. We've received direction from the Office of Head Start to look toward Centerbased down the road. This would be a good way to fund increasing the Early Head Start Teachers' salaries but now is not the best time to do it with all of the recent changes. We are going to wait and see how everything plays out and will possibly address this in the summer. We recently wrote for our grant and just got that application and funding approved for this next grant year. Also, we just completed the FA1

Review and did well. We don't want to add another thing to be followed up on right now. We want to continue doing well and carry on. Sarah brought this up so everyone will be aware when we have conversations regarding this at future meetings. We always try to plan six months to a year out so we have something in place to address things we can see coming up. Policy Council and Board were asked if they had any questions about the FA1 Review or anything else going on. No questions were asked.

15. Board Report – Brooks Bodily

Brooks went over the highlights from the last Board Meeting. They reviewed and voted to approve the Board Member Job Description; nothing had changed on it. They also voted on the Board & Policy Council Code of Conduct which was approved. Board voted on and approved the November 2024 Board Meeting Minutes; there were no concerns with those. They discussed and reviewed the information shared during the Suspension & Expulsion Training and discussed the annual salary review for Sarah, our Director. Policy Council was asked if they had any questions. No questions were asked.

16. Policy Council Concerns & Other Discussion Items – Policy Council Representatives

Policy Council was asked if they had any concerns or items to discuss. No items were brought up for discussion.

17. Community Report – Policy Council Representatives

-Friday, February 21: Friday Night Out put on by The Family Place from 5:30-7:30pm at the Cache Valley Bible Fellowship Church (1488 N. 200 W. Logan). You must register ahead of time. It is a free event and a class is provided for the kids while the parents attend. These are put on monthly. Information was sent out in the packet for this event.

18. Parent Committee Meeting Report – Policy Council Representatives

Policy Council Members who attended their Parent Committee Meeting (PCM) were asked if they'd like to report. The Policy Council Chairperson attended her center's PCM this last month and asked what the purpose is of the Parent Committee Meetings. We follow the Head Start Program Performance Standards and the Office of Head Start has asked us to hold parent meetings. We want Head Start to be parent driven and to have a lot of cross communication. Not everyone serves on Policy Council, but every parent in the program is part of a Parent Committee. Most parents have chosen to hold Parent Committee Meetings virtually. We hold the PCM first and then a Conscious Discipline Workshop afterwards. There are two different events occurring on the same night because it flows better with attendance. The purpose of Parent Committee Meetings is to make parents in the program aware of what occurred during Policy Council which is reviewed during the Policy Council Report. There is also a Parent Committee Report that gets sent out in the newsletters. The purpose of these forms of communication is to keep people informed, let them know about activities going on, what has been approved and what's happening in our program. We will have the Family Advocates follow up with their families and share more about what these meetings entail. The Policy Council Chairperson provided some feedback for PCM's. The Parent Committee Meeting they attended was not very interactive nor did it include much discussion. Keeping the meetings simple is good but adding more interaction would help. This is really good feedback. We will follow through on implementing this and report back at the next Policy Council Meeting. Our Next Parent Committee Meetings are scheduled for:

- Tuesday, February 25: Spanish speaking virtual PCM at 6:00pm
- Wednesday, February 26: English speaking virtual PCM's at 10:00am & 7:00pm

19. Calendar Review – Terrah Smith

- Wednesday, March 5: Early Head Start Homebased Socializations: Preston area at the Larsen-Sant Library from 10:00am-12:00pm; Tremonton & Brigham City area at the Tremonton Center from 3:30-5:30pm; Cache & Logan area at the Logan Center from 4:00-6:00pm
- Thursday, March 6: Early Head Start Homebased Socializations: Soda Springs area at the Soda Springs Library from 10:00am-12:00pm; Malad area at the Malad Center from 1:00-3:00pm
- Thursday, March 13: Early Head Start Homebased Socializations: Soda Springs area at the Soda Springs Library from 10:00am-12:00pm
- Tuesday, March 18: Budget Committee Meeting at 10:00am (Policy Council Treasurer to attend)
- Tuesday, March 18: Spanish Virtual Parent Committee Meeting at 6:00pm
- Wednesday, March 19: Early Head Start Homebased Socializations: Preston area at the Larsen-Sant Library from 10:00am-12:00pm; Tremonton & Brigham City area at the Tremonton Center from 3:30-5:30pm; Cache & Logan area at the Logan Center from 4:00-6:00pm
- Wednesday, March 19: English Virtual Parent Committee Meetings at 10:00am & 7:00pm
- Thursday, March 20: Early Head Start Homebased Socialization: Malad area at the Malad Center from 1:00-3:00pm
- Thursday, March 20: Policy Council at 7:00pm
- Monday, March 24-Friday, March 28: Malad & Preston Spring Break
- Tuesday, March 25: Board Meeting at 5:00pm (Policy Council Chairperson to attend)
- Monday, March 31-Friday, April 4: Cache, Logan, Box Elder & Paris Spring Break

20. Policy Council and Board vote to adjourn the February 20, 2025 Combined Policy Council & Board Meeting – Josie Smith

With no other business to conduct, the February 20, 2025 Policy Council Meeting was adjourned at 8:00pm.

Policy Council motion to adjourn the February 20, 2025 Policy Council Meeting

Motion: Haylee Fellows	Seconded: Janeth Ocampo	Approved: Yes
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