

# Policy Council Minutes

## 04.01.2021 via Zoom

**Voting Members Present:** Brandi Galarneau, Misty Krouse, Cody Hoferer, Dana Webb-Lewis, Miranda Kay, Tami McGreevy, Sherri LaFollette, Sarah Crowley, Kim Dykes, Lindsey Sellers

**Non-Voting Present:** Mandy Stephenson, Alaina Ryan, Linda Lorette, Scott Gardner, Sherrie Scott, Lesa Larson, Rhonda Smith, David Powell, Shanna Rector

**Call to Order** – David Powell called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m.

**Changes & Additions to the Agenda:** Brandi Galarneau motioned to approve the agenda as presented. Lindsey Sellers seconded the motion and the motion carried.

**Approval of Consent Agenda Items:** Brandi Galarneau motioned to approve the Consent Agenda Items as presented. Lindsey Sellers seconded the motion and the motion carried.

### **Training: Kindergarten Transition**

#### **Sherrie Scott (Salina FCS)**

Heartland is intentional about Kindergarten transitions and Heartland works to make the transition as smooth as possible for students, parents, and the elementary schools. We begin gathering student transition information in January. A spreadsheet is created to track where each child will be attending kindergarten. The Heartland teachers complete kindergarten transition forms with parents to provide to the kindergarten teacher which gives important information needed for each child. Cumulative files are organized and provided to the elementary school after the child is enrolled in kindergarten. Between January to the end of the school year, the Family Consultant Specialist updates information gathered for elementary schools. The information is provided to the elementary school so they know which Heartland children should be attending their school in the Fall.

Many transition activities are different this year due to COVID-19. Typically, we hold kindergarten transition meetings for parents. Due to COVID-19, family consultants are providing information to parents about the virtual Kindergarten Round-Up and guides parents through the enrollment process. Family Consultants provide the USD #305 Parent's Guide to Kindergarten Readiness pamphlet to each parent, as well as a book we purchased to help the parent have conversations with their child about kindergarten.

Our classrooms begin instituting transition activities near the end of the school year for transitioning preschoolers. End-of-school social/emotional curriculum begins, children practice with lunch trays and are encouraged to work more independently.

#### **Mandy Stephenson (Outlying Sites FCS)**

Due to the smaller school sizes in outlying Sites, Heartland has the opportunity to meet with elementary school principals; teachers, FCs, and mental health staff visit and provide important information about families and children heading their way. Outlying sites do not complete formal cumulative files, but the same information is provided to kindergarten schools in outlying sites, including birth certificates, Kan-Be-Healthy forms, and immunization records. Classrooms participate in the same transition activities to help preschool children prepare for kindergarten.

**Director’s Report:**

Lesa Larson submitted the last and final grant today.

**Old Business: None**

**New Business:**

**Coaching Update**

Heartland’s education coach Rhonda Smith started coaching eight teachers at the beginning of the year. Due to COVID-19, one of the teachers was not able to complete the coaching. Another teacher successfully completed her goals and exited the coaching program. A coaching evaluation was completed when the teacher exited and she had great things to say. It improved connections in her classroom. One things she’s doing differently after receiving coaching is connecting with children more intentionally and frequently. She said the coach was cheerful, helpful and had a knowledge of curriculum. Rhonda is currently coaching six teachers. As a result of coaching, we are seeing increased connections in the classroom. Rhonda has seen a lot of growth in teacher pride as they accomplish action steps and complete goals. They have collectively achieved 15 goals this year. We have been focusing on CLASS domains for coaching. Conscious Discipline and behavior management, practicing assertiveness, and making connections with students has been a large focus for teachers this year. When they are making those connections, teachers are growing in other ways as well. The program is benefiting the teachers, which in turn, benefits the children. Brandi asked if teachers are required to participate in coaching? Rhonda reported that the program has been voluntary this year. There has been discussion about required coaching if a teacher’s CLASS scores are low or if outcomes show an area of weakness in the classroom, but so far, teachers are coached voluntarily.

**OHS COLA of 1.22% Grant Approval Request**

Heartland Early Education is applying for COLA funding from the Federal Department of Health and Human Services Administration for Children and Families for the Head Start and Early Head Start grant that serves qualifying low-income families.

Heartland Early Education provides services through center-based programming and home visitation for children ages 0-5 in Saline, Dickinson, and Ellsworth Counties.

The funding increase was approved under the Consolidated Appropriations Act for Fiscal Year 21-22. COLA funds awarded are 1.22%.

Approved funding amounts are:

- \$ 41,767.00 – Cost of Living Adjustment Head Start
- \$ 21,689.00 – Cost of Living Adjustment Early Head Start
- \$ 63,456.00 – TOTAL

The Federal Supplemental Grant for COLA does not require a 25% match.

It was recommended the Policy Council approve the Federal Head Start and Early Head Start Grant Application as presented.

Brandi Galarneau motioned to approve the OHS COLA of 1.22% Grant Request as presented. Dana Webb-Lewis seconded the motion. The OHS COLA of 1.22% grant was approved.

**One-Time Activities in Response to COVID-19 – 04/01/21 – 03/31/23:**

Heartland Early Education is applying for supplemental funding from the Federal Department of Health and Human Services Administration for Children and Families authorized under the Consolidated Appropriations Act for additional one-time activities in response to COVID-19.

Approved Funding amounts are:

\$ 143,562.00 One-Time Activities in Response to COVID-19

The Federal Supplemental Grant for COVID-19 response does not require a 25% match and does not require Policy Council approval due to the short turn-around time for submission.

**Potential Community Representatives Discussion:**

The Potential Additional Policy Council Community Representatives list for 2021-22 was shared. The list provides potential representatives to replace outgoing community members. Policy Council members are limited to five years of service according to Head Start regulations. Heartland would like to see community representatives who partner with Heartland or are in a service organization in the community. Lesa Larson asked members to submit recommendations for future community representatives during next month’s meeting.

**T/TA Plan:**

The 2021-2022 T/TA Plan was presented to the Policy Council. The plan describes ways Heartland will provide training to meet Five Year Goals, address OHS priorities and individualized training needs, and Head Start Mandatory Training for 2021-22.

**Past Parent Discussion:**

Each year, Heartland elects a past parent to serve on next year’s Policy Council. The past parent becomes a community representative and provides support and leadership for newly elected parents.

Current past parent, Kim Dykes said, “being a past parent provides an opportunity to be involved in what’s happening with younger kids. As a grandparent, whose kids are in elementary school, it keeps you in touch with Head Start. Being a Past Parent gives you a chance to have a voice about what might be coming up for children. Also, if new Policy Council parents have doubts or questions, you may be able to speak to it because you have already been through it.”

The Past Parent Election will take place during the May meeting and Lesa asked Policy Council parents to consider running for past parent if they would like to continue serving on the council, even if their child will no longer be in the program.

**Five Year Goals Update – Year One:**

Lesla Larson presented the Five Year Goals Update. The update describes ways Heartland has met goals and strategies to complete goals in process for Year-One of the Five-Year grant. Goals became very COVID central this year as a necessity to keep children and staff safe, so there were some things we needed to do differently. Head Start gave us flexibility this year because of the challenges. Many of our goals are carry over goals from the previous five-year grant, because we always want to continue improving and providing quality education in these areas.

**Goal 1:** Heartland is committed to attracting and cultivating staff who inspire and empower children and families.

**Expected Outcome:** Qualified and trained staff will be knowledgeable and effective in their specific roles.

**Goal 2:** Heartland will intentionally integrate communication practices to strengthen relationships.

**Expected Outcome:** Communication will flow and staff will be more knowledgeable in all areas of the program.

**Goal 3:** Heartland is responsive to the needs of children, families, staff and community.

**Expected Outcome:** Heartland will provide quality services based on a strong understanding of the impact of trauma and align with the district in terms of early childhood needs and opportunities.

**ACF-PI-HS-21-02 Head Start Center-Based Service Duration Requirement for 45 Percent of Slots**

This Program Information instruction from the Office of Head Start states:

“by August 1, 2021, each Head Start program must provide at least 1,020 annual hours of planned class operations over the course of at least 8 months per year for at least 45 percent of Head Start center-based funded enrollment or submit a request for a waiver of this requirement.”

These requirements are outlined in the Head Start Program Performance Standards (HSPPS) at 45 CFR 1032.21(c).

Grantees have the flexibility to design programs with varying hours per day and days per year, as long as at least 45 percent of children in center-based slots receive at least 1,020 annual hours of planned class operations over the course of at least 8 months or, where appropriate.

These requirements were waived during the 2020-21 school year due to the COVID-19 pandemic, but are required for the 2021-22 school year.

Linda reported, Salina will return to providing School Day School Year classrooms and Abilene Head Start will be increasing from a 4-day to a 5-day classroom in 2021-22, which will bring Heartland’s duration percentage to 51%, above the 45 percent requirement.

**Parent and Community Member Reports:**

Brandi Galarneau reported Jakoby has been having epileptic seizures. Next Friday, he is scheduled to go to Wichita to complete stress tests to figure out what is triggering the seizures. Casy Ziegler said she’s going to visit with Brandi’s Family Consultant to talk to our nurses about supporting the family. Brandi is currently using Door Dash to supplement income and can take Jakoby with her and keep an eye on him.

Dana Webb-Lewis reported Carson is coming home from school with cool projects to complete at home. It’s been good to see all the things Cindy comes up with to help engage the kids. He likes to look at the activities even though he’s been in school all day. April is World Autism month. Her son has autism, and tomorrow is his 5<sup>th</sup> birthday and National Autism Day! This weekend they are going to the Rolling Hills Zoo. He is really interested in animals, both in school and at home. The Easter Bunny is coming on Sunday and are looking forward to holiday activities.

Miranda Kay reported her family has a Zoo pass this year and it has been worth it.

David Powell reported they went to the Zoo last weekend.

Brandi Galarneau motioned to adjourn the meeting at 5:49 p.m. Miranda Kay seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned.

The next meeting is scheduled for May 6, 2021.

Respectfully submitted by Alaina Ryan, Administrative Assistant and Sarah Crowley, Policy Council Secretary