

**SOUTHERN SEVEN EARLY HEAD START/HEAD START
POLICY COUNCIL - MEETING MINUTES
Vienna Masonic Lodge - Vienna, IL
February 22, 2010
5:30 p.m.**

I. Call to Order

Grace Dalla, Policy Council Chairperson, called the meeting to order at 5:40 p.m.

II. Roll Call

Roll call was taken by Martha Garrett, Policy Council Secretary. A quorum was declared present.

III. Introductions and Welcome to Members

Grace Dalla, Policy Council Chairperson, thanked everyone for attending and serving on the Policy Council.

IV. Approval of Minutes

Members were asked to review the Policy Council Minutes from January 25, 2010, which were mailed out previously in the Policy Council Member Packets. Grace Dalla, Policy Council Chairperson, asked if there were any questions or corrections to the minutes. There were none.

Grace Dalla, Policy Council Chairperson, asked for a motion to approve the minutes from January 25, 2010.

Martha Garrett, Pulaski County Parent Representative, moved to approve the minutes from January 25, 2010. Shannon Moore, Union County Parent Representative, seconded. All in favor. Motion carried.

V. Reports

A. Personnel Report - Diana Swinford, Human Resources Administrator

1. Personnel Report

Diana reviewed the Personnel Report, which was mailed out previously in the Policy Council Packets. Diana reported on new employees. There were two new hires. The four people who have asterisks by their names are on the waiting list to be hired as soon as their DCFS Background Checks are returned. We did receive a background check today on one of the four people on the waiting list. Diana reported on terminations. There were none.

Diana reported on the other personnel changes and vacant positions. One employee received a temporary assignment as Teacher; one employee received a reduction of hours from 35 to 7 per week; one employee received a lateral transfer from p.m. Teacher to a.m. Teacher; one employee received an increase in hours from 35 to 40 per week; one employee received a step increase due to completion of a Bachelor Degree; two employees received 2 Years of Service Increases; two employees received a status change from partial year, full-time to regular full-time; and one employee's position changed from Bus Driver to Sub Bus Driver. Vacancies listed on the report are: a Site Supervisor/Parent Coordinator Position at Pope County Head Start; one Teacher's Aide Position at Mounds Head Start; a Health Services Specialist Position at the Administrative Office; two Substitute Teacher Positions; two Early Head Start Teacher Positions and one Program Assistant Position at Cairo Head Start; and Sub Bus Drivers are always needed.

Diana reviewed the list of Head Start Applicants, which was mailed out previously in the Policy Council Packets. Diana asked if there were any questions. There were none.

Grace Dalla, Policy Council Chairperson, asked for a motion to approve the Personnel Report.

Sharon Burris, Board of Health/Policy Council Crossover Representative, moved to approve the Personnel Report. Martha Garrett, Pulaski County Parent Representative, seconded. All in favor. Motion carried.

B. Financial Report - Debbie Musgraves, Fiscal Officer

1. Budget Comparison

Debbie reviewed this report. The report covers the period January 1st through January 31st. Debbie stated that next month she will provide the final financial statements for 2009. We do have three months to close out the grant. We like to wait as late as possible to make sure everything is turned in. Debbie asked if there were any questions. There were none.

2. Early Childhood Division Head Start Programs

Debbie stated that this is a detailed report of the Budget Comparison. For the month of January, we have spent \$279,794. We have received revenue in the same amount. Debbie asked if there were any questions. There were none.

3. Early Childcare Division EHS Expansion (ARRA Funds)

Debbie reviewed this report. Debbie stated that this is a new report that reflects the Early Head Start Expansion Grant ARRA Funds. This grants run from December 1, 2009, through September 29, 2010. There is a second phase that begins on September 30, 2010, and will run to September 30, 2011. This grant is not quite a full two-year grant. We were awarded \$134,772 which includes start-up funds, a van, and some Early Childhood Supplies. We have spent \$3,487. Debbie asked if there were any questions. There were none.

4. Early Childcare Division ARRA Award

Debbie reviewed this report. Debbie stated that this report reflects ARRA Grant Funds spending. The ARRA Grants run from July 1, 2009, through September 30, 2010. This report covers the period July 1st through January 31st. Two of these grants will end on June 30, 2010. The other two will end on September 30, 2010. We have received noticed from the federal government that the 1.84% Grant will continue after this year. The Quality of Improvement will not continue at this time. We have had expenses of \$166,719. Debbie asked if there were any questions. There were none.

5. Early Childhood Division Illinois State Board of Education and Childcare Grants

Debbie reviewed this report. Debbie stated that this report shows the remainder of our Early Childhood Programs, which are DHS Daycare, Parent Co-Pays, Vienna, Jonesboro and Goreville Pre-K's and Prevention Initiative. These grants run on a July 1st through June 30th grant year. The report lists our expenses and revenue for the period July 1, 2009, through January 31, 2010. We have received approximately \$70,000 from the state for Goreville and Jonesboro Pre-K and Prevention Initiative. Unfortunately, this was not enough to bring us up to where we need to be. If the state keeps on the payment schedule, we should have a payment for the Vienna Pre-K. Total revenue was \$139,134. Total expenditures were \$179,916 for excess revenue over expenditures of -\$40,783. Debbie asked if anyone had any questions. There were none.

6. USDA Report

Debbie reviewed this report. Debbie stated this report runs from October 1st through September 30th. This report lists our expenses and revenue for the period October 1, 2009, through January 31, 2010. At the time of this report, Debbie had not received the revenue for January. The total for revenue is \$91,697. We had expenses of \$113,380. We have excess of revenue over expenditures of \$-21,682. We are running under policy. This has never happened before and Debbie's not sure how it is happening. The number of meals served for the month of December is listed at the bottom of the USDA Report. Debbie asked if anyone had any questions. There were none.

Grace Dalla, Policy Council Chairperson, asked for a motion to approve the Financial Report.

Karen Cox, Massac County Community Representative, moved to approve the Financial Report. Sharon Burriss, Board of Health/Policy Council Crossover Representative, seconded. All in favor. Motion carried.

7. Head Start In-Kind Report

Debbie reviewed the In-Kind Report. Debbie stated that it seems we discuss In-Kind a lot but when we go to the Assessment Meeting in Chicago in June, they are going to want to know that we are doing something to work on In-Kind this year so

we won't have to request another waiver. This report is for January, 2010. We have earned \$104,758. Our 20% requirement is \$88,051. We are over by \$16,707. Even though this looks good now, this amount will not be enough to cover the summer months of May, June, and July. Debbie asked if anyone had any questions. There were none.

Grace Dalla, Policy Council Chairperson, asked for a motion to approve the In-Kind Report.

Sharon Burris, Board of Health/Policy Council Crossover Representative, moved to approve the In-Kind Report. Julie Brookshier, Massac County Parent Representative, seconded. All in favor. Motion carried.

8. Credit Card Report

Debbie reviewed this report. Debbie stated that this report lists staff who are 100% Head Start that have credit cards. This report also includes the staff that purchase anything for our Administrative Office Building that also benefits Head Start. This is a requirement of the Head Start Reauthorization Act that we have to have credit card expenses approved. There will also be larger expenses on certain staff, like our Purchasing Agent, and Information Technology Director. Debbie asked if anyone had any questions. There were none.

Grace Dalla, Policy Council Chairperson, asked for a motion to approve the Credit Card Report.

Karen Cox, Massac County Community Representative, moved to approve the Credit Card Report. Sharon Burris, Board of Health/Policy Council Crossover Representative, seconded. All in favor. Motion carried.

C. Enrollment Report - Terri Stewart, ERSEA Specialist

1. Enrollment

Terri reviewed the Southern Seven Head Start Enrollment Report. Terri stated that each site is listed in the first column. If you follow the numbers across, we have children that are enrolled and children that are entered. The enrolled

children are the ones we have accepted and their parents are working on completing their health requirements before they can walk through the door. The entered children are the ones who have their health requirements met and have attended at the site. The enrolled and entered children are broken into two groups: income eligible and over-income. The total number of children is 549. We are funded for 550 children. At the time of this report, we have one opening at Rustic Head Start. The federal government allows us 30 days to fill an opening. We are serving 7% of over-income children; we are allowed 10%.

The next page of the report shows enrollment for Early Head Start. Listed new on the report are the numbers for the ARRA Early Head Start Expansion Classroom at Cairo Head Start. We have 8 slots for this classroom. We are in the hiring process for staff in that classroom. On the waiting list for Cairo Head Start, we have enough children to fill those 8 slots in the new classroom. These numbers have to be reported on separately from the Early Head Start Grant. The total funded enrollment is 62; we have 62. We are at 8% of the 10% of over-income children allowed. We have 4 children who are enrolled in daycare only. Three of those children are 6 weeks to 3 years old and one child is 3 to 5 years old. The total funded enrollment for Pre-K is 60, and we have 58. March 2nd is the last day to accept children for the 2009-2010 School Year for Traditional Head Start. Head Start states that when we have less than 60 school days left of the school year, we do not have to fill slots. Early Head Start is a year round program so when a child drops, we will continue to fill the slots. Terri asked if there were any questions. There were none.

Grace Dalla, Policy Council Chairperson, asked for a motion to approve the Enrollment Report.

Julie Brookshier, Massac County Parent Representative, moved to approve the Enrollment Report. Sharon Burris, Board of Health/Policy Council Crossover Representative, seconded. All in favor. Motion carried.

2. Average Daily Attendance

Terri reviewed the attendance report for the month of January. Terri stated that our goal is to have 85% daily attendance. For Traditional Head Start, we had 81.11%. For Early Head Start, we have 73.35%. Rustic Early Head Start will always have a low attendance due to the college students and their class schedules. For the Pre-K Programs, we have 82.32%. Terri stated that when our enrollment falls below the 85% daily attendance, we are required by the Office of Head Start to analyze the causes of the low attendance when a child misses more than three

consecutive days. Terri will put the reasons for the children's absence in our ChildPlus System so that she can monitor this more closely. Terri has also put this in a report for the Policy Council to review. Terri asked if there were any questions. There were none.

Grace Dalla, Policy Council Chairperson, asked for a motion to approve the Average Daily Attendance Report.

Sharon Burris, Board of Health/Policy Council Crossover Representative, moved to approve the Average Daily Attendance Report. Martha Garrett, Pulaski County Parent Representative, seconded. All in favor. Motion carried.

3. Prenatal Application

Terri stated that with our Early Head Start Expansion Grant, we will be serving pregnant moms. We created a new Prenatal Application for this purpose. The first page of the application is very similar to the regular Head Start Application. It asks for information on the parents. On the second page, we added questions regarding their pregnancy information. This is only a two page application and parents are required to send in their income information with it. Terri asked if there were any questions. There were none.

Grace Dalla, Policy Council Chairperson, asked for a motion to approve the Prenatal Application.

Karen Cox, Massac County Community Representative, moved to approve the Prenatal Application. Sharon Burris, Board of Health/Policy Council Crossover Representative, seconded. All in favor. Motion carried.

D. Community Updates - Kevin Bohnert, Early Childhood Director

1. Fishing Day

Kevin stated that each year our agency host a Family Fun and Fishing Day. This year it is scheduled for Saturday, April 24th on the campus of Shawnee Community College from 9 a.m. till noon. We are partnering again with the Fish and Wildlife Service, who will be celebrating nature week, April 18th through the 24th. We are

also inviting the Illinois Federation of Families, which is an advocacy group for children and families with special needs. We will have fishing, a treasure hunt, kite flying, etc. We will close the day with a sack lunch. This is the only activity during the school year where all of the families we serve can get together for a day of fun. Janice Taylor, Family Involvement Coordinator, stated that their will also be face painting and a fire truck.

2. Community Assessment

Kevin stated that every three years our Head Start Agency is required to submit a Community Wide Strategic Plan and Needs Assessment. This is a blueprint of our Head Start Agency. It lists the programs and services we offer, and the demographics of the counties and communities we serve. This assessment serves as a plan, a procedure, and goal setting for ways to improve services for our families. We submitted one in 2009. As an agency, we are required to do annual updates to this assessment. We are in the process of reviewing the sections that need updating. As parents, the information you provide is vital to us. The results of the Parent Surveys, which are in the process of being distributed, guides us as to the quality of our programs, what decisions we need to make, and what goals we need to set. When you receive these surveys, please take the time to fill them out. Some information and ideas that we collected from the parent surveys from last year were Healthy Lifestyles, First Aid Training, and Financial Planning. As a response to those requests, our agency now offers CPR/First Aid Classes to our families, at our Parent Meetings we have provided cooking demonstrations on healthy lifestyles and planning nutritious meals and we have assisted families and provided information on financial planning. Another area that we look at to update the assessment is transportation. Last year was the first year we partnered with Pope County School District to provide transportation for the children. We also look at the unemployment rates for our community to show how this affects our families. These are very high in all of the seven counties that we serve.

E. Head Start Report - Angie Messmer, Early Childhood Administrator

1. Triennial Review Updates/Background Checks/Plan of Action

Angie distributed the official results of the Triennial Review. Angie stated that this report shows information on the two non-compliances, which were the storage sheds at Rustic and Joppa that had peeling paint. These were both corrected on-site. Page 4 of the report, describes the deficiency that was found in the area of

criminal background checks. We will be required to have obtained results of the DCFS Background Check before we offer employment to anyone. We have always done the DCFS Background Check and we have always followed the rules set by DCFS and their laws for the state of Illinois. The rule states that staff can be hired but cannot be left alone with children until fingerprinting results are returned. First, we would conduct a criminal background check that would return in a 24 to 36 hour time period. Then we would do the DCFS Fingerprinting. After the Triennial Review, the team concluded that we had to have the DCFS Fingerprinting results back before the applicants could be offered employment. Results of DCFS Fingerprinting take six to eight weeks to return. We can conduct interviews and the applicant can get their fingerprinting done, however we have to change the hiring process so any vacant positions will remain vacant until results of the fingerprinting is returned. The concern is that we will have trouble filling positions if potential employees have to wait six to eight weeks before they know for sure if they have a job or not. We have talked with our Regional Office in Chicago and they have talked with the state DCFS about this situation and they have assured us that they will put measures in place to rush our fingerprinting results through, however we do not know how that will work. On page 5 of the report it states that in an interview, the Early Childhood Administrator acknowledged the IntelliCorp criminal background check did not meet State Licensure requirements. Angie stated that this is absolutely not true. She did not agree with them at all. Also, she provided the team with all the information that spelled out what the state requirements are and it was not included in this final report.

The next section of the final report is the results from the CLASS Observations. The team decided they would use an observation tool of the classrooms called the CLASS. This is the first time this observation tool has been used on our classrooms. This observation tool was not something that we use to train staff on. We have used the ECERS and Creative Curriculum. This tool is a new tool that is out and they are going to be putting this into place. Angie asked the Policy Council to please keep the results of this report confidential. We have five staff who are going to a CLASS Observation Training this week. We will receive information on how this observation is to be implemented and the proper training techniques to be put into place for the classrooms and teaching staff. This will be introduced at Pre-Service Training in August, 2010. Angie asked if there were any questions. There were none.

When a Head Start Program receives a deficiency, they have 30 days to respond. We have to send a response by March 5th. At this point, we have no potential staff who have been hired without the DCFS Fingerprint Results. We will submit the following as our response: a page listing the Head Start Act and Performance Standards the team was referring to which includes the written response from

Angie; employee list verifying DCFS clearance; process for interviewing applicants; process upon hiring applicants; personnel/payroll action request; personnel policies; policy council minutes; and board of health minutes.

A new procedure that we are going to put into place will be an employee waiting list. When we interview applicants and they can potentially fill positions, we will send them to be fingerprinted. We then will hire one and hire the others as substitutes for different positions so their fingerprints will remain active so when we have job openings, we can put the substitutes in permanent positions. DCFS Fingerprinting results are only good for six months to one year and then you have to be re-fingerprinted. At this time, there is no cost to have the DCFS Fingerprinting done. It does cost money for the Criminal Background Check that has the return time of 24 to 36 hours. After this is approved, we will no longer be conducting the Criminal Background Check.

Also, due to this deficiency, the new classroom at Cairo Head Start is sitting empty because it is taking so long to hire staff. We cannot collect In-Kind on the classroom because there are no parents to come to volunteer. This is a big disservice to the children and families.

Grace Dalla, Policy Council Chairperson, asked for a motion to approve the response to the Triennial Review.

Karen Cox, Massac County Community Representative, moved to approve the response to the Triennial Review. Julie Brookshier, Massac County Parent Representative, seconded. All in favor. Motion carried.

VI. New Business

None

VII. Questions/Concerns/Comments

None

VIII. Next Meeting Date

The next Policy Council Meeting will be held on Monday, March 15, 2010.

IX. Adjournment

With all business being concluded, Grace Dalla, Policy Council Chairperson, asked for a motion to adjourn.

Sharon Burris, BOH/PC Crossover Representative, moved to adjourn. Martha Garrett, Pulaski County Parent Representative, seconded. All in favor. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 6:40 p.m.

Policy Council Chairperson