



STEP Head Start Policy Council Minutes

ZOOM Meeting	9:00 AM	April 15, 2021
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I. Call to Order: Carolyn Hawk called the meeting to order at 9:34 am.

II. Attendance and Introductions:

Parent Representatives (Voting Members):		Site	Attendance		
Maritza Pena		Cherry (RH)	R		
Malena Dunn		Past Parent	P		
Erica Blair		Muncy PreK	E		
Tracy Shade		LH #1 (CCCC)	E		
Alicia Leathers		LH #4 (CCCC)	P		
Canda Boatman		Past Parent	T		
Community Representatives (Voting Members):					
Patti Wylie		WASD	E		
Angie Sees		BLaST IU #17	P		
Ruth Love-Schooley		CareerLink	E		
Aron Carter		JSSB	P		
Staff (Non-Voting):					
Carolyn Hawk		Boyd Street	P		
Shannon Cohick		Boyd Street	P		
Denise Baney		Boyd Street	P		
Melissa Edmonds		Boyd Street	P		
Staff and Parent Guests (Non-Voting)					
Angela Mahonski		Kitchen	P		
Jim Plankenhorn		STEP	P		
Melissa Fornwalt		RH	P		
STEP Board Representatives					
Aron Carter		See above			
Canda Boatman		See above			
Key:	P= Present	E= Excused absence	U= Unexcused absence	T= Notice of Termination	R= Resigned

Agenda Review: No new items were added.

III. Approval of Minutes: Aron made a motion to approve February and March minutes. Alicia seconded the motion. Motion carried.

IV. Reports



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A. Treasurer's Report- February's budget is included in the packet. It looks like we are underspent as of the report; however, leadership and fiscal continue to work together to spend the remainder before the grant period ends. Now that we have resumed face to face instruction, March's budget will show an increase in spending.

B. STEP Board Report- The grant was submitted to the board and approved to continue the application process. We are still encouraging residents to complete the Community Needs Assessment (CNA). Community Action Agencies are required to complete a CNA every three years. The results help the agencies plan inter-agency programming as well as programs developed with community partners. Head Start also utilizes this CNA to meet Head Start Performance Standard Requirements. STEP has secured Emergency Rent Assistance Program (ERAP) funds for Lycoming County. This program provides rental payments for any delinquent amounts, as well as help with utility bills to make them current. Applications can be completed on the STEP website. The Clinton County Housing Coalition holds the grant for Clinton County; applications can be completed using the COMPASS website. Enrollment in our PreK/HSSAP classes continues to increase.

C. Director's Report- STEP Head Start received a CARES Act grant for \$366,463 which we have been working to spend. We are mindful of the spending and we want to be sure that it is appropriate for the program and the items will be used. We have until July 30th to spend the funds in this grant. We have also received additional CARES Act funds in the amounts of \$125,000 and \$450,000. These grants will run on a two-year grant cycle. Possible expenditures include paving the parking lot at Round Hills. The application process for these grants was discussed. Director will be asking for Policy Council input during the next meeting.

D. Family and Community Engagement Report – Two parent meetings have been held. Working with staff to improve attendance at the meetings for the remainder of the program year and the upcoming year since we will most likely be maintaining a virtual model. Preparing for summer registrations and working with team to make any necessary changes to paperwork and procedures. Have begun the food pantries at each location. Round Hills went very well; Lock Haven did not have as many parents participate as anticipated. Fall Fest/PBIS Kickoff planning has begun; we are speaking with all staff and have started to pull together the activities.

Approval for the reports as read. Aron made a motion to approve the reports. Alicia seconded. Motion carried.

V. Old Business



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A. Operating Under COVID

- **Building Closures-** Staff have returned to a five-day weekly schedule. The buildings are still closed to parents and other outside persons.
- **Virtual Programming-** Home Visitors will continue with virtual visits through the end of their program years. Preschool center-based children go to their classroom two days a week and continue virtual services the other three days. This allows for class size to be capped at 9 students. If a class exceeds 9 enrolled children, the teacher will have class for the additional students the opposite two days. Wednesdays are virtual for everyone; staff spend the day doing material drop-offs, sanitizing classrooms and materials and holding virtual Zoom sessions.
- **Food Service-** Angela Mahonski was present at the meetings and will share Food Service information during Success Stories.
- **Transportation-** We have made the decision not to resume transportation until the Fall. Currently all staff are needed to complete health screenings and accompany children from drop off locations to the classroom and be in the classroom with the children while they wait for class to begin. We do not have enough staff to carry this process and ride the bus and complete the screening process.
- **Enrollments-** We continue to enroll children for this year; HSSAP and PreK want all programs to be as close to 100% enrollment as possible. Federal Head Start classes are still allowing for enrollment flexibility which will carry into the beginning of the 21-22 school year. We will stop accepting children in May when the 30-day rule comes into effect (enrollment stops 30 days from the last day of school). Registrations for the next year have already begun in Early Head Start, preschool Head Start begins in June. We continue to be flexible in planning as guidelines change.

VI. New Business

A. Grant Approval- The STEP Board has approved the grant application process to move forward. Policy Council approval is needed. Letter from OHS regarding this grant is in the attachments. Grant application is due by May 1st.

B. COLA Approval- Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) application is included in the upcoming grant. The STEP Board has approved this, Policy Council approval is needed. The letter from OHS is also attached.

Motion to approve the grant application made by Alicia. Seconded by Angie. Motion carried.



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C. Self-Assessment- The self-assessment was completed by staff and will be included in the grant. Policy Council members asked for any additions.

D. Policies for Approval- A goal set for the last year's grant cycle was to update our policies and procedures manual. Policies to approve are attached; Aron Carter inquired about the original policies to see what changes and/or additions have been made. These changes will be sent via e-mail.

E. Canda Boatman Resignation: Canda has sent in her letter of resignation for both Policy Council and the STEP Board.

F. Board Representative Opening: Canda was on the STEP board, her position will need filled. Meetings are the 3rd Monday of each month and last from 1-1 ½ hours.

G. Success Stories: Food Service

- Provide breakfast and lunch to enrolled children.
- Breakfast is put together by staff; lunches are delivered by Frey's.
- Costs are reimbursed by the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP).
- CACFP has certain requirements meals have to meet like components, serving size and ingredients.
- We have had to make changes due to COVID-19.
 - Children's meals are now pre-portioned
 - Meals can be delivered to homes, picked up at centers and/or sent home
- When meal service first started, all children were virtual and parents had to 'preorder' meals and pick them up at centers. A survey that was completed by families indicated that families were interested in the meals, but transportation is an obstacle. Transportation was added using our school buses and the number of meals served increased from an average of 30 meals a week to 60-75 meals a week.
- When we resumed face-to-face instruction, meals are sent home with every child to supplement the days they are not attending class.
- Home Based children are now eligible to receive meals funded through COVID grants.
- Children who would not typically be served twice now receive an additional meal (example: Almond classroom is 3 hours, so they leave before lunch is served but they take 5 days' worth of lunches and 3 days of breakfast each week.) This is also available due to COVID grants.

VII. Trainings: Will resume in May

VIII. Good of the Order:



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Aron Carter was a presenter at the April Parent Meeting and looks forward to doing more presentations.

IX. Meeting Schedule: Next Meeting is May 12th, 2021 at 9:30 am.

X. Adjournment: Meeting adjourned at 10:54 am.

Enclosures:

1. Policy Council Budget- February 2021
2. Federal Head Start Budget – February 2021
3. Early Head Start Budget – February 2021
4. HSSAP Budget- February 2021
5. Pre-K Budget – February 2021
6. MIECHV Budget- February 2021
7. Early Learning Pathway Report – March 2021
8. STEP Head Start Program Information Summary: March 2021
9. STEP Early Head Start Program Information Summary: March 2021
10. PreK Counts Program Information Summary- March 2021
11. OHS Grant Application Letter- February 1, 2021
12. OHS COLA Grant Letter- March 17, 2021
13. Self-Assessment Final Report
14. Policy: Home Visits- Preschool Center Based
15. Policy: Transportation
16. Policy: Inclusion
17. Policy: Child Drop-Off and Pick Up- Head Start
18. Policy: Weather Related Program Closures and Delays
19. Policy: Cell Phone Use
20. Policy: Family Goal Setting
21. Policy: Parent Orientation
22. Policy: Community Referrals
23. Policy: Family Assessments



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