

## Policy Council Meeting Minutes

465 S McCord St, Benton Harbor, 49022

September 27, 2023

### 1. Welcome & Introductions

- a. **Policy Council Members in Attendance:** Amanda Simpson (New Buffalo), Efrain Chavez (Bangor), Serina Newton (DEC), Michelle Hedgespeth (Mattawan), Samantha Litaker (SMC), Ashely Jaffee-Montgomery (Cass), Ebone Wilborn (South Haven), Hailey Marbut (Watervliet), Mellody Buzalski (GSC Cass)
- b. **Policy Council Members who voted through email:** Mary-alice Wirick (Niles)
- c. **Guests in Attendance:** Chanda Hillman (CEO/ Executive Director), Laura Burtis (CFO/Finance Director), Kevin Wordelman (Human Resources Director), Ana Moreno (Family Advocate), Laura Brugh (Family Advocate), Holly Pomranka (Family Services Manager), Trecia Davis (Family Advocate), Amanda Raymond (Family Advocate), Tiffany Perkins (Family Advocate), Rut Vargas (Enrollment and Recruitment Assistant), Stacey Knuth (ERSEA Manager), Crystal Hayes (Family Advocate), Nona Newbon (DEC Director)
- d. **Quorum was met**

### 2. Call to Order

- a. Amanda Simpson called the meeting to order at 5:48pm

### 3. Elections

- a. Chair – Ashely Jaffee-Montgomery
- b. Vice Chair – Michelle Hedgespeth
- c. Treasurer – Amanda Simpson
- d. Secretary – Serina Newton
  - i. Elections were done through an anonymous ballot

Tri-County Head Start Mission: *To be a vibrant and progressive educational agency supporting the development of children 0-5 years of age while promoting healthy family functioning for Head Start children and families in Berrien, Cass, and Van Buren Counties.*

- ii. Mellody Buzalski motioned to approve the election results, Michelle Hedgspeth seconded, election passed.
4. \* Approval of Minutes – August 2023
  - a. Amanda Simpson motioned, Mellody Buzalski seconded. Motion passed.
5. \* Directors Report – August
  - a. Mellody Buzalski motioned, Michelle Hedgspeth seconded. Motion passed.
6. \* Finance Report – August
  - a. Michelle Hedgspeth motioned, Mellody Buzalski seconded. Motion passed.
7. \* Maintenance Technician Job Description
  - a. Due to looking to buy our own centers, we need to update the maintenance job description to include experience like HVAC so we do not have to call in technicians every time something in the building goes wrong.
    - i. Samantha Litaker motioned, Michelle Hedgspeth seconded. Motion passed
8. \* Economic Development Administration (EDA) – Recompete pilot program in coordination with Southwest Michigan Planning Commission (SWMPC) – up to \$50,000,000
  - a. Southwest Michigan Planning Commission approached us to help us create a competitive grant that will help us with the purchase and renovation of the Calvin Brittian building and a building in the Cassopolis location. This is a highly competitive grant, but we want to make sure that we at least put our names in for consideration.
    - i. Michelle Hedgspeth motioned, Serina Newton seconded. Motion passed.
9. EHS Summer Student Analysis Report
  - a. This report shows the outcomes for our Early Head Start students from the summer months. Looking at the data you can see that the Early Head Start students are right where we would expect them, and need them to be. There are no concerns.
10. enFocus Report

- a. enFocus is helping to create a new data-informed business plan that will ensure organizational sustainability into the future. They have several surveys out in the community currently to gather community feedback.

11. Rake A Difference

- a. Community event through United Way that TCHS is participating in. We wanted to invite our Policy Council members to attend, as well as their parent committees.

12. Family and Engagement Conference Drawing

- a. Four names were drawn, we will go down the list to see if the parents are able to attend the conference. They were drawn in the following order. Kaylah Contreas, Jasmine Boxx, Lovie Lloyd, Amanda Simpson.

13. Report from Centers

- a. Michelle Hedgspeth asked how to get parents more involved for the committee meetings
  - i. Holly Pomranka answered that the Family nights are a great first meeting because a lot of families will attend the activities.
  - ii. Chanda Hillman suggested meeting for 10minutes at drop off or pick up to just start to gain interest and then build larger and longer meetings from there.

14. Report from Great Start Collaboratives

- a. Mellody Buzalski reported that her resource fair was a large success with other 100 families attending, which was double from previous years. They are working on getting story walks in three different locations, and will have launch events once they get the signage in place.

15. Pleasure of the floor

16. Next Meeting Date – October 25, 725 Center St, Cassopolis, MI 49031, 5:30pm

17. \* Adjournment

- a. Samantha Litaker motioned to adjourn the meeting, Michelle Hedgspeth seconded. Meeting adjourned at 7:07pm.

\*Denotes approval needed