

Policy Council Meeting Minutes Wednesday, January 22, 2025, 5:30pm **Zoom**
<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/86173322863?pwd=nTMwAFdByvjzbSozKR3A8nG0Pqb79e.1>

1. Welcome and Introductions

Policy Council Members attending via Zoom: Hailey Marbut (Bangor EHS), Sherry Bennett (VB GSC), Samantha Litaker (SMC - HS), Sydney Whittker (Watervliet EHS), Jen Moody (Berrien GSC), Megan Mallory (Mattawan HS), Amelia Espinosa (Bangor HS)

Policy Council Members approving via email: Mary-alice Wirick (Niles HS), Amanda Simpson (New Buffalo HS), Kahli Lorenz (Cassopolis EHS), Mellody Buzalski (Cass GSC), Kyra Kasiewicz (Gobles), Khyra Kimble (HS - Millburg), Kristen Survoy (New Buffalo EHS), Sarah Newman (Decatur), Katherine Arnett (Paw Paw HS)

Quorum was met.

Guests: Chanda Hillman – CEO, Ivette Bucio – Communications and Engagement Coordinator, Gloria Walter – Family Services Director, Laura Burtis – CFO, Maureen Ovington – Development Director, Malissa Acosta – Community Guest, Jodi Curran – Family Advocate, Ana Moreno – Family Advocate

Sydney Whittker called the meeting to order at 5:39 PM.

2. Approve Minutes - November Meeting

Samantha Litaker motioned to approve. Hailey Marbut seconded. Motion passed.

3. Directors Report- November/December

- a. HR Dashboard
- b. Family Services Report
- c. Fund Development Report

Samantha Litaker motioned to approve. Megan Mallory seconded. Motion passed.

4. Finance Report - November/December

- Laura Burtis explained the updated format of Donations by Funding Category spreadsheet.
- Sherry Bennet asked if previous training done by parents could count as In-Kind.
- Laura Burtis stated personal development days can count as they can be donated as In-Kind.

- a. * 401k TPA

Hailey Marbut motioned to approve. Samantha Litaker seconded. Motion passed.

- b. * 401k Record Keeper

Hailey Marbut motioned to approve. Samantha Litaker seconded. Motion passed.

c. * CACFP Fund Codes

Hailey Marbut motioned to approve. Amelia Espinosa seconded. Motion passed.

d. * Line of Credit

Hailey Marbut motioned to approve. Amelia Espinosa seconded. Motion passed.

5. 2025-26 Fundraising Priorities

- Sydney Whittker asked about fundraising for family committee events.
- Chanda Hillman said family committee events are covered under classroom funds.
- Megan Mallory asked about the outlook on opening a tuition-based center.
- Chanda Hillman explained that start-up funds are needed before steps can be taken, but the Millburg campus has the capacity to fill four infant and toddler tuition-based slots. She also explained that a current storage space could be used as classroom space for 34 slots.
- Maureen Ovington stated that roughly \$160,000 would be needed to renovate this space, thus the continuing need for start-up funds.

Hailey Marbut motioned to approve. Amelia Espinosa seconded. Motion passed.

6. * 702.2 Fundraising and Grant Writing Authorization Policy

Samantha Litaker motioned to approve. Hailey Marbut seconded. Motion passed.

7. * 312.5 Selection and Enrollment Policy

Samantha Litaker motioned to approve. Hailey Marbut seconded. Motion passed.

8. * Three Oaks Letter of Intent - *Item removed from agenda*

9. * 2025-26 Board/PC Dates

- Correction made by Chanda Hillman, dates including January and June of 2026 incorrectly included the year 2025.

Hailey Marbut motioned to approve. Samantha Litaker seconded. Motion passed.

10. * 2025-26 Program Calendar

Samantha Litaker motioned to approve. Hailey Marbut seconded. Motion passed.

11. * 2025-26 Program Options

Hailey Marbut motioned to approve. Samantha Litaker seconded. Motion passed.

12. Education -

a. Absenteeism

- Gloria Walter spoke about the importance of attendance and the intervention process put in place by Family Services to help families with attendance.

13. Communications-

a. Event Schedule Conversation

- b. Wage Scale
- c. San Diego Recap
- d. Governance Screener
- e. Family Committee Training List
- f. Advocacy Plan
- g. 1¹ Marking Period Student Outcomes Report

- Chanda Hillman introduced two potential wage and benefits scales for 2025-2031 in order to match the cost of living in the area. She also explained that a \$6,000,000 funding increase would be needed to achieve this.
- Maureen Ovington stated that tuition-based centers will aid in not having to wait for government decisions such as the currently debated requirement for salaries to match cost of living by 2031.
- Ivette Bucio spoke about her personal experience with the National Head Start Association conference that she attended in San Diego, also introduced Training List for Policy Council members to introduce to families.
- Chanda Hillman added that there are various conferences that can be attended throughout the year, as well as trips made to Washington D.C. to speak with elected officials and lawmakers. She also said there are planned meetings with lawmakers that Policy Council members may be invited to attend in upcoming months.

14. Report from Centers

15. Report from Great Start Collaboratives

- Sherry Bennet spoke about the Family Coalition of Van Buren County, including a planned outing to the Mitten Museum on January 28th from 10 AM to 11:30 AM. They will also be holding a community baby shower on April 29th.
- Jen Moody spoke about getting the Berrien County program back up and running after a change in leadership, as well as potential events scheduled in February and March.

16. Pleasure of the Floor

- Chanda Hillman shared news from Jodi Curran, that the Niles location was able to raise \$600 from Niles Haunted House parent/community volunteers.

17. * Adjournment

Samantha Litaker motioned to approve. Hailey Marbut seconded. Motion passed.

Sydney Whittker adjourned the meeting at 7:14 PM.

Next Meeting: Wednesday, March 26, 2025 5:30pm SMC, 58900 Cherry Grove Rd, Dowagiac, MI 49047

*Denotes approval needed