Board/Policy Council Joint Planning Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, June 17, 2026, 2:30 pm
490 S Paw Paw St, Lawrence, MI 49064

Section #	Topic
1.	**Welcome and Preliminaries** • **Board Members in Attendance:** Brian Saxton, Michael Mompremier, Linda Tinsley, Stacey Stephens • **Board Members Voting Through Email:** Danielle Persky, Arthur Havlicek • **Policy Council Members in Attendance:** Betsy Bradley Strong Beginnings Family Liaison, Sherry Bennett Van Buren GSC • **Policy Council Members Voting Through Email:** Sara Parkhurst Cass EHS, Kristin Survoy New Buffalo HS, Destinee Wadkins Dowagiac HS, Sydney Whittker Watervliet EHS, Annie O'Connell New Buffalo EHS, Destiney Walston Mattawan HS, Evelyn Garcia Bangor EHS, Khyra Kimble Millburg HS, Amelia Espinosa Bangor HS, Micah McCree-Davis Benton Harbor DEC HS, Kadeejah Lee-Rodgers Benton Harbor DEC EHS, Jennifer Russell Watervliet HS, Mary-alice Wirick Home Visiting • **Guests in Attendance:** Laura Burtis Interim CEO/CFO, Kevin Wordelman COO, Mandy Orlando Head Start Education Director, Patty Masters Early Head Start Education Director, Maureen Ovington Director of Philanthropic Innovation, Marybeth Johnson Human Resources Director, Cindy Thomas Health & Mental Health Services Director, Elmira Morales Family Advocate, Ana Moreno Family Advocate, Belinda Russell Family Advocate, Tiffany Perkins Family Advocate, Amanda Raymond Family Advocate, Juanisha Young Family Advocate, Laura Brugh Family Advocate, Tiffany Costner Family Advocate, Rut Vargas Enrollment & Recruitment Assistant, Stacey Spencer ERSEA Manager, Evelia Alcaraz Family Advocate, Holly Pomranka Family Services Manager, Ivette Bucio Communications & Engagement Coordinator **Quorum was met.** Brian called meeting to order at 2:33pm
2.	**Approval of Agenda** A. * Approval of Excused Absences a. Daniel Persky, Sarah Parkhurst Cass EHS, Annie O'Connell New Buffalo EHS, Destinee Wadkins Dowagiac HS, Mary-alice Wirick Home Visiting, Sydney Whittker Watervliet EHS Linda mentioned; Michael seconded. Motion carried. B. * Approval of Agenda a. Addition to section 6 – resignation of Kacee Dochenetz Michael motioned; Linda seconded. Motion carried.
3.	**Financial Audit Presentation** • * Kruggel Lawton ○ Alex Schaeffer CPA at Kruggel Lawton presented the results of the financial audit, which received an unmodified opinion, the highest rating possible in a financial audit. Michael motioned; Linda seconded. Motion carried.
4.	**Consent Agenda Items** A. * Board Minutes – March Meeting B. * Policy Council Minutes – March Meeting C. * Director Reports – March/April/May • FA1 review – compliant in every area • Improper payment study phase two has been submitted a. HR Dashboard i. Currently employing 179 staff members

	ii. 26 positions remain vacant iii. Staff absenteeism has increased by 14% iv. 24 active apprentices are currently participating in the apprenticeship program b. Family Services Report i. Distributed 6,096 handouts, door hangers, and flyers c. Development Report i. Presented funding proposal to Corewell Health ii. Grant applications have been submitted, with additional opportunities currently in progress iii. Flowers of the Future tours continue to engage community members and build awareness of the organization's mission. d. Education Report e. Health & Mental Health Services Report i. More than 20% of enrolled children have an active IEP or IFSP ii. Access to and completion of dental services continues to be a challenge D. * 321.3 Eligibility Determination E. * 401.4 Bus Route Safety F. * 412.2 Transporting Children G. * 145.3 Vehicle Safety H. * 141.2 Parental Leave I. * 124.6 Employee Absences J. FA1 Monitoring Results K. HSAC Meeting Minutes a. AEDs have been installed at the Millburg and McCleary sites, thanks to support from the American Heart Association b. The Decatur Kitchen now has garden beds, made possible through a partnership with MSU Extension Linda motioned; Michael seconded. Motion carried.
5.	**Report from the Finance Committee** A. * Finance Reports – March/April/May a. In-kind i. No in-kind wavier will be granted for the 2026-2027 program year ii. Annual in-kind contribution goals are: 1. Head Start: $2,130,803 2. Early Head Start: $923,144 B. * Board Account Michael motioned; Linda seconded. Motion carried.
6.	**Board Decisions (Motions)** A. * Kacee Resignation Michael motioned; Linda seconded. Motion carried. B. * Annual Report Michael motioned; Linda seconded. Motion carried. C. * Community Assessment Linda motioned; Michael seconded. Motion carried. D. * Self-Assessment Michael motioned; Linda seconded. Motion carried. E. * Family Handbook Michael motioned; Stacey seconded. Motion carried. F. * Employee Handbook

	Linda motioned; Michael seconded. Motion carried. G. * Program Options • 17 Head Start slots will be relocated to Benton Harbor • 8 Early Head Start slots will be relocated to New Buffalo Linda motioned; Michael seconded. Motion Carried. H. * 2026-2027 Calendar • We will return to the schedule outlined in the original grant, operating as a four-day program, Monday-Thursday, 8:00am – 4:30pm) • To meet required program hours, there will be a 10% reduction in paid holidays, with most observed holidays scheduled on Fridays to minimize classroom closures. Michael motioned; Linda seconded. Motion carried.
7.	**Board & Policy Council Joint Planning** A. Full Enrollment Initiative / Family Engagement Plan Update a. Full Enrollment Letter: Awaiting additional guidance regarding the anticipated Full Enrollment Letter. The timing and specific requirements are currently unknown. b. Policy Council Reengagement & Family Leadership Initiative i. Implementing a three-level family engagement structure: 1. Family Committees 2. Family Advocates 3. Policy Council Representatives ii. Supporting the Full Enrollment Initiative through monthly family touchpoints and check-ins. iii. Parent Power Pilot Initiative: Maureen submitted a grant application with PNC to support launching his parent leadership initiative. c. Enrollment & Recruitment Strategies: i. Launching a word-of-mouth referral campaign ii. Expanding community visibility through a yard sign campaign iii. Increasing outreach efforts by expanding recruitment areas d. Keeping Classrooms Open: i. Morning meetings have been redesigned to provide focused discussion topics and support ii. Daily themes will guide conversations and planning iii. Support teams will assist in maintaining classroom operations and minimizing closures e. Community Outreach Plan: i. Reintroducing and strengthening relationships with local governments, school boards, and community organizations ii. Increasing community presence by attending local meetings, inviting partners to events, and conducting door-to-door informational canvassing B. Facilities Update C. Tuition Based Update
8.	**Board Education** A. Child Outcomes Report a. Students have demonstrated consistent, continuous growth throughout the year in School Readiness Goals and developmental domains aligned with the Head Start Early Learning Outcomes Framework b. Priority Area: continue strengthening support for dual language learners, their teachers, and their families across all areas of development

	c. Utilizing Training and Technical Assistance resources through the "Planned Language Approach: Big 5 for Dual Language Learners" training to enhance strategies and supports for Dual Language Learners and their families B. Kindergarten Transition a. Each year, teachers and students visit local kindergarten classrooms to better understand the skills and expectations children need for a successful transition to their next school experience. b. These visits provide valuable insight into kindergarten readiness expectations and help guide classroom instruction and support. c. Data highlights the percentage of 4-year-old Flowers students meeting or exceeding expectations in key kindergarten readiness skill areas, including: i. Independence & Self-Help Skills ii. Social-Emotional Skills iii. Communication & Language iv. Early Academics v. Fine Motor Control d. While many students are demonstrating strong readiness skills, the results also identify opportunities for continued growth and targeted support to help every child succeed. C. CEO Search Committee Update a. The search committee anticipates having a final list of candidates available during the first week of August.
9.	**Board Process Review** A. Pleasure of the Floor
10.	**Executive Session**
11.	*** Adjournment and Post Meeting Assignments** Linda motioned; Michael seconded. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 5:00pm

*Denotes approval needed.

Next Meeting **Policy Council: Wednesday, September 23, 2026, 5:30pm – 775 Hazen St, Paw Paw**

Next Meeting **Board: Thursday, September 24, 2026, 3:00pm – 775 Hazen St, Paw Paw**

Board and Policy Council Training: **Required for all Board and Policy Council members annually, all at 775 Hazen St Paw Paw**

Four options to choose from, **pick one**:

- Wednesday, September 9 10am
- Tuesday, October 20 at 5pm
- Thursday, November 12 at 1pm
- Tuesday, December 1 at 5pm