

# Policy Council Minutes February 2024

Submitted on: April 11, 2024

Policy Council Meeting  
February 13, 2024

Members Present: Roxanne Wakefield, Angela Brown, Carl Powe, Jennifer Ward, Nyasia Starks, Sharika Bull, Brandi Reese, Demetria Hall, Rosalind Moss, Quentoria Jones, Donna Mansell, Kanisha Davis

Members Absent: Crytalyn Dogan, Keisha Bryant, Kristi Smith, Deneisha Burkett, Kandace Hairston, Sarah Prater, Joseph Filip Antoine, Avis Neal

Excused Absences: Eric McCullough, Emily Stice

Mini Training: Ms. Hawthorne provided a mini training on the importance of the Community Needs Assessment. Our agency is responsible for updating our community needs assessment each year. A full community assessment is conducted every five years. The purpose of the community needs assessment is to identify the needs of our customers as well as identifying trends within our four county service areas. We need to identify where our eligible children and families are located. The assessment helps us to understand the needs of families, such as, transportation, education, employment, health concerns, language barriers, to name a few. Ms. Hawthorne provided information on items identified in a thorough community needs assessment. She informed the council that we are currently working on identifying trends related to racial and ethnic compositions, gender, ages, which will help us determine the families that we need to serve. We are also looking at the income levels of families, particularly, families that are below poverty guidelines. We know that housing and homelessness is an issue throughout our four county service areas. The community assessment will help us determine where the majority of homeless families are located in each county and the type of resources and supports that are available to them. Ms. Hawthorne shared the Management Systems Wheel with the council. She informed the council that the Community Needs Assessment is one of twelve items listed on the wheel. As mentioned beforehand, our agency is responsible for conducting a thorough assessment every five years and updating yearly.

The meeting was called to order by Angela Brown, Chair. A quorum was met.

### APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

The minutes from the last meeting were reviewed by the Policy Council [See Attachment]. Jennifer Ward made a motion to accept the minutes from the previous meeting. Brandi Reese seconded the motion. Motion carried.

### APPROVAL OF PERSONNEL REPORT:

The Personnel Report was given by Melissa Botsoe, Information Coordinator II. Mrs. Botsoe noted that the number of applicants had been trending positively, with more qualified candidates to fill open positions. She detailed the candidates that were presented to the Council for approval. The personnel committee reviewed the applicants on the report in advance of the meeting. All Prospective New Employees have been interviewed and been recommended for employment with our program. All applicants are subject to Background Investigation as mandated by the S.C. Department of Social Services. This includes State and Federal Background Investigation and the Child Registry Search to determine if any abuse or neglect has been made against a child and Pre-employment Drug Screenings. Reference checks will also be conducted on all prospective new employees. Appointments are conditional based upon the receipt of satisfactory references, state, and federal background investigation and approval from the Head Start Policy Council. Each full-time employee must serve a three-month introductory probationary period before obtaining regular appointment status. Substitutes are on an as needed basis. After discussion, NyAsia Starks made a motion to approve the prospective employees as presented. Roxanne Wakefield seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Program	Name	Position	Location	Educational Requirements
Head Start	Amelia Jernigan	Family Advocate III	Seneca	Bachelor's degree and 5 years of experience in district.
Head Start	Ayaunna Archie	Cook	Rutherford Road	High School diploma, experienced long-term preparatory
Head Start	Cherika Hall	Classroom Aide	Willis H. Crosby	GED. She works at a local
Early Head Start	Nyhia Geer	Classroom Aide	Willis H. Crosby	Bachelor's degree. She has 1 children.

### APPROVAL OF COMMUNITY WIDE STRATEGIC NEEDS ASSESSMENT:

The Policy Council received a copy of the 2024-2029 Community Wide Needs Assessment [See Attachment]. Shannon Vaughn presented and reviewed the document and shared the following information. We have completed our community needs assessment. The results are based on what is happening with the demographics of our community. It includes what we do as an agency for our children, families and clients on the community services side. The assessment gives us a lot of information about where children are located, the income of families and different types of needs of families. Some of the strengths that we recognize this past year with our program is that we have gotten more fully enrolled and our enrollment continues to grow. We are hiring more staff. We're doing a lot more with post-COVID preventive health care requirements for our children. We're very close to meeting our 10% disabilities requirement. We have raised staff salaries, given incentives and significantly decreased the number of positions that we had compared to last school year. Some of the areas that we see that we need to continue to improve upon is to continue to recruit and hire qualified staff. We will continue working towards our full enrollment initiative. Ms. Vaughn highlighted some of the needs identified in the assessment to include affordable daycare for toddlers and infants, therefore; there's a great need for Early Head Start. Positive birth outcomes are still a need in our community, which reinforces our pregnant women's program. Other challenges identified are healthy weights for adults and children, substance abuse, maternal mortality, homelessness and affordable housing, food insecurity, transportation for families and livable wages. After discussion, NyAsia Starks made a motion to approve the Community Wide Needs Assessment. Demetria Hall seconded. Motion carried.

### APPROVAL OF SELECTION CRITERIA AND POINT SYSTEM:

Shaylunn Tolbert, Social Services Facilitator, presented and reviewed the selection criteria and point system that we use to score children coming into the program. There is an application that is completed by parents and the selection criteria is used to score the most needed families. With data from our community needs assessment, we are able to see if there are any additional things that needs to be taken in consideration as it relates to our point system which is based on prioritizing the needs of families. We always look at income levels of families in relation to the Federal Poverty Guidelines. We consider the age of children. We made a change in our previous year to allow more points for younger three-year old's who now receive more points. Children with diagnosed disabilities is always going to be a section that remains with us because of the fact that we are required to have at least 10% of our who have a diagnosed with a disability. Other factors are families that receive TANIF, SSI and recently added is SNAP benefits and homelessness. Now, foster children and food insecurity are also being considered as other factors. Lastly, we consider foster children, having the greatest points, then working single parents, kinship care and non-working parents. After discussion, NyAsia Starks made a motion to approve the 2024 Selection Criteria and Point System as presented. Roxanne Wakefield seconded the motion. Motion Carried.

### APPROVAL OF 2024 SURVY AND RECRUITMENT PLAN:

The Policy Council reviewed the Survey Plan for program year 2024-2025 [See Attachment]. Shaylunn Tolbert, Social Services Facilitator, discussed our Survey and Recruitment Plan. Ms. Tolbert informed the Policy Council that our program options would not be changing. We will continue with the center-based option. We currently have 21 Head Start / Early Head centers throughout our four county service areas operating 5 days per week. Our enrollment is 1082. We will recruit by word of mouth, sharing information in the community, and those returning will receive a registration packet. Children returning for a third year will have to complete a new application. We will continue to use social media and recruitment fairs to recruit children and families. Ms. Tolbert shared that our recruitment formula tells us how many applications and children are needed to meet full enrollment. We always want to have 10% more than what is needed. This will help us maintain a waitlist. Our Head Start enrollment is 748 and EHS is 334 which is a funded enrollment of 1082. We also serve pregnant women who have to complete an application and provide necessary documents to be enrolled in our program. After discussion, NyAsia Starks made a motion to approve the Survey and Recruitment Plan (target areas, center locations and program options) as presented. Rosalind Moss seconded the motion. Motion carried.

### DIRECTOR'S REPORT:

Ms. Vaughn discussed we have met our 10% Disabilities goal for Head Start. We have met 9.5% with EHS. Hopefully, by next month we will have met our 10% for the year. For physical examinations, EHS has increased from 40% to 80%. It is sometimes difficult to get the well-baby checks completed. Head Start is at 92% and EHS is at 78%. KidoKinetics is new to the Greenville area. They provide physical health development to children. They are currently providing services for children at North Franklin after school program at no cost. They are now going to expand services to other classrooms during regular school hours. This is great in-kind to us, and a wonderful opportunity for our children. Some of our families attended the USC Women's Basketball Game held at the Colonial Arena in Columbia. This was a great opportunity for families to enjoy a free basketball game and to share with other Head Start programs throughout the state. Congratulations to Tiffany Lomax who won a \$50 gift card for participating in Financial Literacy workshops. Ms. Vaughn informed us that we have met 92.3% for funded enrollment. We are pleased and thank the ERSEA team for a job well-done. We will continue reaching our goal of 97%. We are working to maintain 85% attendance. We fell short in December due to children being sick. Overall, we are doing a great job with maintaining 85% or greater attendance. After discussion, NyAsia Starks made a motion to approve the Director's report. Demetria Hall seconded the motion. Motion Carried.

### Budget Review:

The Budget Review was provided by Tammy Gore, Assistant Director of Business & Finance. The Policy Council received copies of the financial reports, CACFP and credit card expenditure reports. The time that has expired for our program is 58%. Ms. Doris reviewed reports with the Policy Council and explained that year-to-date, we have spent roughly 56.02% from our overall budget for Head Start and roughly 50.29% for Early Head Start. We have spent 53.82% of our budget for the two combined. We have collected 31.79% in in-kind. Ms. Tammy reviewed and discussed expenditures for credit cards. She asked if there were any questions. After discussion, Nyasia Starks made a motion to approve the budget review as presented. Roxanne Wakefield seconded the motion. Motion carried.

### ADJOURNMENT OF MEETING:

Patrice Hawthorne closed the meeting by informing the Policy Council on upcoming Financial Literacy and Triple P workshops. She will send a zoom link to join the workshops virtually. After discussion, Brandi Reese made a motion to adjourn the meeting. NyAsia Starks seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Recorded by.....Angela Brown, Chair