

Policy Council Minutes Oct. 2025

Submitted on: December 12, 2025

Tuesday, October 9, 2025

Members Present: Carl Telford, Makiya Cowan, Tajae Smith, Carl Powe, Rosalind Moss, Maisha Delph, Jelsa Hendrix, Chekeia Hunt, Harriett Hunt, Tene Mathis, Rita Hunter, Elizabeth Otoski, Eric McCullough, Cathy Breazeale

Members Absent: Adiah Franklin, Bobby Allison, Terail Dorn, Jordan Machen, Diamond Neal, Cheyenne Beasley, Joyce Smith, Thomasina Watson, Z'Quoia Blessingame

Excused Absences: Angela Brown, Neco Hester

Mini Trainings:

Patrice Hawthorne provided updates on SNAP benefits, Medicaid and affordable housing. Ms. Vaughn informed the council that updates are being made to our **Community Assessment** to reflect current economic conditions impacting families. Reductions in **SNAP, Medicaid, and affordable housing programs** under the current federal administration could significantly affect families served by Head Start and other community services. Families in the **Upstate region** (Greenville, Spartanburg, Anderson, Pickens, and Laurens counties) are particularly vulnerable due to rising **food costs and housing expenses**. As of mid-2024, approximately **11.5% of South Carolina households** were food insecure, and more than **650,000 residents** received SNAP benefits. We really wanted to bring this to your attention and let you know that things that are happening at the national level in DC has a trickle-down effect, and this will definitely affect our families.

A quorum was met. The meeting was called to order by Carl Telford, Chairperson.

Officers for the 2025-2026 year are the following:

<u>Carl Telford</u>	Chairperson
Rita Hunter	Vice Chairperson
Maisha Delph	Secretary
Makiya Cowan	Assistant Secretary

Patrice Hawthorne revisited the community representatives that were submitted and approved by the council at our orientation. Patrice informed the council that Roxanne Patterson had to resign due to personal circumstances. The council was informed that Carl Powe was selected to replace Ms. Patterson. After discussion, Tajae Smith made a motion to approve Carl Powe as a community representative. Chekeia Hunt seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Approval of Minutes:

The minutes from last month's meeting were reviewed by the Policy Council (See Attachment). Tajae Smith made a motion to accept the minutes as presented. Rosalind Moss seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Approval of Parent Activity Funds:

Patrice Hawthorne, Family Partnership Facilitator, discussed with the Policy Council the importance of the Parent Activity Fund. The Policy Council received a copy of the Parent Activity Guidelines. Ms. Hawthorne explained that these funds are set in the program budget to provide parents the opportunity and experience in planning, developing and implementing their own projects. The Policy Council agreed on a \$10.00 per child parent activity allotment. These funds will be spent according to the Parent Activity Fund Guidelines. After discussion, Maisha Delph made a motion to approve the Parent Activity Fund allotment of \$10.00 per child this budget year. Jelsa Hendrix seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Personnel Committee:

Melissa Botsoe, Information Coordinator II, informed the council that we are seeking members to serve on the personnel committee. There is a sign-up log for any council member that would like to serve on the committee. The Personnel Report was given by Mrs. Botsoe. We are recommending hire for 5 perspective new employees (See attachment). 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. Also, we will conduct reference checks on all perspective 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, Maisha Delph made a motion to approve the perspective new employees as presented. Tene Mathis seconded. Motion carried.

Head Start Program

- **Mary Macleran**, Health Coordinator, Greenville Main Office. She holds an Associate's Degree in Nursing and has over 12 years of experience working as a nurse and teaching nursing classes at the high school level.
- **Anais Farciert**, Classroom Aide, Clemson. She holds an Associate Degree in Science and has two years of experience providing ABA therapy to young children.
- **Kachina Bowens**, Classroom Aide, Parker. She holds a High School Diploma and has two years of experience working with special needs children in a local school district.

Early Head Start Program

- **Stacy Gregory**, Classroom Aide, BHW. She holds a High School Diploma and does not have prior childcare experience. She is a current SHARE Head Start parent.
- **Sara Keith**, Classroom Aide, Tommie C. Brooks. She holds a High School Diploma and has four months of experience working with young children in a daycare center.

Approval of By-Laws:

The Policy Council By-Laws were reviewed and discussed (See Attachment). Patrice Hawthorne, Family Partnership Facilitator, explained that the Policy Council By-laws are the written rules by which an organization is governed. They set forth the structure of the board and the organization. They determine the rights of participants and they determine the procedures by which rights can be exercised. Patrice informed the council that membership is 27 members. A quorum is 1/3 (9 members) of the total membership. We are asking to update the bylaws to include all centers in Greenville County with EHS program options instead of two centers (TCB and Watkins). After discussion, Jelsa Hendrix made a motion to approve the by-laws as presented. Tajae Smith seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Approval of Timeline:

A yearly timeline of items to approve or disapprove was submitted to the council. After discussion, Chekeia Hunt made a motion to approve the timeline as presented. Maisha Delph seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Approval of Procedures for Hearing & Resolving Community Complaints:

The Procedures for Hearing and Resolving Community Complaints were reviewed by the Policy Council. After discussion, Tajae Smith made a motion to accept the Procedures for Hearing and Resolving Community Complaints as presented. Maisha Delph seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Approval for Internal Dispute Resolutions/Impasse procedures:

The Internal Dispute Resolution was reviewed by the Policy Council. The Policy Council was informed that the Internal Dispute Resolution is put in place as a written procedure for resolving internal disputes between the SHARE Board and the Head Start Policy Council. After further discussion. Tajae Smith a motion to accept the Internal Dispute Resolution as presented. Rosalind Moss seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Approval of Standards of Conduct:

The Standards of Conduct was presented to the Policy Council by Ms. Patrice Hawthorne. She explained to the Policy Council that in accordance with the Head Start Performance Standards and the SHARE Policies and Procedures, all staff, consultants, and volunteers must abide by and have a signed copy of the Standards of Conduct on file. After further discussion, Maisha Delph made a motion to accept the Standards of Conduct. Rosalind Moss seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Approval of Parent Codes of Conduct:

The Parent Codes of Conduct was presented to the Policy Council by Patrice Hawthorne. She explained that courteous and respectful behavior between and among all program participants is essential for SHARE Head Start/Early Head Start to achieve the program's mission and to provide a safe and positive environment for the children, families and staff. Employees, parents/guardians, volunteers, participants, and anyone else involved with the program are expected to follow the Codes of Conduct. After discussion, Jelsa Hendrix made a motion to approve the Parent Codes of Conduct as presented. Elizabeth Otoski seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Approval of Confidentiality Policy:

The Confidentiality Policy was presented to the Policy Council by Patrice Hawthorne, Family Partnership Facilitator. She explained to the Policy Council that maintaining confidentiality is very important. She distributed and discussed with the Policy Council that each member should be serious and respectful of everyone's privacy. After discussion, time was given for the Policy Council to read and sign the confidentiality document. Tene Mathis made a motion to accept the Confidentiality policy as presented. Tajae Smith seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Approval of 2024 Self-Assessment Report:

Ms. Vaughn informed the council that the annual self-assessment has been completed, covering all service areas, including fiscal and human resources. The report identifies areas of strength and concern. Strengths noted include improved staff retention through incentives, increased use of the Employee Assistance Program, continued strong budget monitoring, and another positive audit with no findings. Family engagement has risen following the pandemic, and both the Policy Council and Board remain active in program oversight. The program also showed progress in maintaining attendance, implementing curriculum, completing individualized health and dietary plans, and expanding community partnerships, which now total about 70 agreements. Areas of concern include the previous year's corrective action plan related to a center incident, which continues to be monitored to ensure corrective measures remain in place. Other challenges involve retaining qualified staff amid competitive wages in the Upstate, requirements due to fewer families and volunteers after COVID. Additional focus is needed on timely screenings and services with local school districts, especially for speech services, as well as ensuring immunization records, growth assessments, and health screenings are updated promptly in ChildPlus. Continued efforts are underway to strengthen family engagement across all centers. After discussion, Tajae Smith made a motion to approve the 2024 Self-assessment as presented. Tene Mathis seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Approval of Data Exchange and Sensory Policy Updates 2025-2026

Ms. Shannon Vaughan presented updates to the Data Exchange and Sensory policies for approval. Items seven and eight on the agenda were combined, as both involve new or revised policy forms. The Data Exchange update revises the family consent form used to share information about children with outside entities such as doctors, early interventionists, or courts. The new version is clearer, more detailed, and will replace the previous form in parent registration packets.

The Sensory Equipment Accommodation policy outlines how the equipment is used and requires parental consent for the use of weighted sensory items such as vests, blankets, or stuffed animals. These supports are increasingly used to help children with sensory needs or challenging behaviors. The new policy ensures transparency and parent awareness.

Following discussion, Jelsa Hendrix a motion was made and approved to adopt the updated Data Exchange and Sensory policies. Elizabeth Otoski seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Approval of Triple P Parenting Curriculum:

Patrice discussed the importance of the Triple P Parenting Curriculum. During orientation, the Triple P (Positive Parenting Program) curriculum was reviewed. This evidence-based program meets Head Start performance standards and provides parents with practical strategies for managing challenging behaviors and building strong family relationships. For the past school year, 14 group sessions were held by certified practitioners, serving 117 families, with 11 impact surveys completed. We are proposing to continue with the Triple P curriculum for the 2025-2026 school year. After discussion, Tajae Smith made a motion to approve continuing with the Triple P Curriculum. Harriett Hunt seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Director's Report:

The Director's Report was given by Shannon Vaughn, Director of Children & Family Development. She highlighted volunteer efforts at the North Franklin Road Center, where Ms. Samantha, a classroom aide, worked with church member Mr. Jerry Hughes to upgrade deteriorating gardening beds. Their volunteer time and donated materials are counted as In-kind contributions, providing educational benefits for the children and supplemental food for menus or families without any cost to the program.

Ms. Vaughn addressed the improvements in health screenings. In previous years, screenings such as vision and hearing had been inconsistent, partly due to reliance on nursing students from local colleges/universities. Returning to direct oversight by program staff and nurses has improved compliance with 45- and 90-day timelines, ensuring the program is meeting the required timelines. She emphasized the importance of the self-assessment to identify and resolve issues proactively.

October was recognized as Head Start Awareness Month, with various events and fall festivals planned. A fatherhood and male engagement tailgate event is scheduled to encourage male role models to participate in children's education, emphasizing the value of male figures for mentorship and security. Additionally, the program continues to focus on financial literacy, addressing parents' concerns about budgeting, savings, credit repair, and home ownership. The first meeting had 32 families participating, marking significant engagement.

Enrollment updates showed that Early Head Start reached 97% capacity, while Head Start was slightly lower at 94.7%, bringing the total program enrollment to 95.4%. Recruitment efforts involve community referrals tracked via QR codes, and staff encouraged Policy Council members and the broader community to assist in reaching full enrollment. Ms. Vaughn also acknowledged the Reedy River Missionary Baptist Church's Young Women's Auxiliary for sponsoring a baby shower for or pregnant woman participants, providing baskets for babies and personal care items for the mothers.

She highlighted the importance of career day events at centers, encouraging local entrepreneurs and community members to expose children to a variety of career paths beyond traditional roles like firefighters, police officers, or healthcare professionals. After the presentation, the Director's Report was approved with a first motion by Maisha Delph and a second motion by Chekeia Hunt. Motion carried.

Budget Review

The budget review presented by Ms. Tammy Gore, Assistant Director of Business & Finance. She reported that 20.16% of Head Start and 17.57% of Early Head Start funds had been spent, with total program spending at 19.17% and 8.74% of in-kind collected. Ms. Gore discussed credit card expenditures. After discussion, Maisha Delph made a motion to approve the budget review as presented. Chekeia Hunt seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Patrice informed the council on our upcoming Governance training which will be held on November 25th. Participation is encouraged.

No further business. Tajae Smith made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Jelsa Hendrix seconded. Motion carried.

Recorded by Maisha Delph, Secretary
Carl Telford, Chair