Policy Council Minutes

NRCA Head Start Policy Council
9/14/2026 5:30 PMEDT
@ Christiansburg HS - 135 Church St Christiansburg, VA 24073

Attendance

Present:
Members: Jennifer Brown, Roni Fitch (remote), Sarah Huff, Alisha Persinger, Nick Popczun, Sarah Popczun, Beth Rodriguez, Stephanie Smith, Debra Taylor, Gracie Robertson
Guests: Melissa Mullins, Shirley Alls, Charles Jackson, Jade Alton, Jodi Roop, Alison Harris, Sarah Rodden

Absent:
Members: Annie Shaba, Scott Sowder, Paige Walters, Vonetta Williams

I. Call to Order

Sarah Popczun called the meeting to order at 5:39 PM.

II. Agenda Review

The group reviewed the agenda for tonight's meeting.

III. Minutes from Last Meeting

August Policy Council Meeting Minutes.pdf

The group reviewed the minutes from the August Meeting. No corrections noted. Sarah called for a motion to approve the August Meeting Minutes.

Motion:
Motion to approve August Minutes

Motion moved by Jennifer Brown and motion seconded by Gracie Robertson. Motion Carried

IV. Finance

- Copies of the Finance Reports were provided for the meeting.
- Sarah H reviewed the reports and answered questions regarding finances as they were asked.

- Sarah H provided the credit card statements for the board to review which was passed around the room.
- Sarah H explained In-Kind and how it helped meet our program match.

Comment made by Sarah P thanked the program for returning to weekly In-Kind sheets as requested by Council last spring.

- Sarah H reviewed the Parent Fund accounts for each center. There was a short discussion on what parent accounts could be used for by Sarah H & Roni.

V. Director of Early Childhood/Family Services Report

NPRM letter to parents.docx

PIR 2025-2026.pdf

Annual Report 2025-2026 FINAL .docx

PC and Board Report Sept 2026.doc

- Roni introduced herself to the new members telling them that Policy Council was a very important part of our program. The Council is responsible for driving the program. We provide information about what is happening across the program. We want you to ask questions, give us feedback, and help drive the decision.
- Roni gave an update/celebration that our Nutrition Grant submitted last October was funded. We were notified that the program has bee approved for funds. The notice of Award and grant specifics will be reviewed at next month's meeting.
- Roni presented information about the recent NPRM. A link was proved at the last meeting. You may be hearing about this in the news.
    - The proposal changes many of the standards of quality (specifics) and references that the Head Start Act would be the primary source of expectations. These changes are significant to the program reducing the Program Standards down from 120 pages to about 13 pages and included changes to every service area. Information was provided about those changes and where parents could submit a public comment. The comment window is open for 60 days and ends October 6th.
- Integrated Service Area Plans - Plans that tell staff our process and procedures. Annually, they are updated. Right now we don't have any changes but as the NRPM is announced we would be making them aware of the changes needed. We are working on a couple of minor revisions that we will share as we finish.

- Head Start Annual Report - Roni reviewed the Annual Report saying that this is a report of the program outcomes from 2025-2026 program year that is made available to the public. The report area contains information about child outcomes, staff interactions, family services provided, finances and also recognizes the Policy Council and Board of Directors, volunteers and quotes from families about their experiences with our program. Many of the reports or data included are things that are shared with you throughout the program year.

Motion:
Motion to approve the 2025-2026 Annual Report

Motion moved by Gracie Robertson and motion seconded by Jennifer Brown. Motion Carried

VI. Specialists Reports

September 2026 Policy Council Report - Nutrition Health.doc

September 2026 policycouncil.docx

PC Report 9 26.docx

September_2026_Ersea policy council report.docx

- Each specialist present introduced themselves and gave a brief report on their areas report.

VII. New Business

- Additional information from NHSA was presented to parents. Interested parents may sign a national letter asking the Administration to rescind the NPRM. The council voted to send the information out to all Head Start Families attending our stand-alone sites. Council reviewed the letter and agreed to send that information allowing for a few days for parents to act by Sept 25.
- We ended the discussion by Roni telling them about how the process works and that as we know more information and what parts of the NPRM were passed, we will relay those messages.

Motion:
Motion to approve sending home the letter and later sending electronically.

Motion moved by Gracie Robertson and motion seconded by Stephanie Smith. Motion Carried

VIII. Adjournment/Schedule Oct Meeting

- Next Policy Council Meeting will be Oct 19 @5:30. Meeting will be held at the Christiansburg Head Start - 135 Church Street, Christiansburg.
- Meeting was adjourned at 6:39 PM by Sarah P.

Motion:

Motion to Adjourn

Motion moved by Gracie Robertson and motion seconded by Charles Jackson. Motion Carried