

Officer Signature Johanna SmithDate 04-17-2025

## BEAR RIVER HEAD START POLICY COUNCIL

### 2024-2025 Meeting Minutes

<b>Date:</b> Thursday, March 20, 2025	<b>Start Time:</b> 7:00PM <b>End Time:</b> 7:59PM	<b>Location:</b> Dialpad Meetings: 1-888-602-7505	
<b>2024-2025 Policy Council Members' Attendance</b>		<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>
Josie Smith* (Chairperson)	Brigham Representative	X	
Chad Alvey	Tremonton Representative		X
Gilberto Sanchez	Hyde Park Representative		E
Cassidy Macoubrie* (Vice Chairperson)	Logan Representative	X	
	Hyrum Representative		
Haylee Fellows*	Smithfield Representative		E
	Richmond Representative		
Karli Leonardi* (Secretary)	Malad Representative	X	
Zach Johnson* (Treasurer & ID HSAC)	Paris Representative	X	
Kristin Fellows*	Preston Representative	X	
Festus Odunuga*	Nest/Koop Representative	X	
Janeth Ocampo* (UT HSAC)	Fishpond Representative		E
Heather Crockett	Board Representative	X	
Justin Nuñez*	Community Representative		X

#### \*Trained & Seated Policy Council Members

Members needed for a Quorum: 5	
Number of Voting Members who attended the meeting: 6	Number of Non-Voting Members who attended the meeting (including the Policy Council Officer conducting the meeting): 1
Do we have a Quorum? YES	
Meeting Called to Order By: Josie Smith (Policy Council Chairperson) Meeting Facilitated By: Terrah Smith (Administrative Assistant) Additional Staff in Attendance: Sarah Thurgood (Program Director), Kristie Curtis (Family Services Coordinator), Steph Wood (Centerbased Coordinator), ReNae Torbenson (Homebased Coordinator), Cassie Petersen (Child Development Manager & Facilities Coordinator)	

#### 1. Vote to approve the hire request of Lindsey Bingham as an EHS Nest/Koop Infant/Toddler Teacher Assistant – Steph Wood

Lindsey is seeking approval to be hired for the EHS Infant/Toddler Teacher Assistant position. She has experience working with children ages 0-3 through babysitting jobs and running a day care at a gym. Lindsey is excited to learn more and help the children and families.

#### Motion to approve the hire request of Lindsey Bingham as an EHS Nest/Koop Infant/Toddler Teacher Assistant

Motion: Karli Leonardi	Seconded: Cassidy Macoubrie	Approved: Yes
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#### 2. Vote to approve the hire request of Mackayla Maness as a PHS Logan Nutrition Aide – Steph Wood

Mackayla has her Bachelor's Degree in Food Science which mainly involves food processing and food safety. She was an English Teacher in Taiwan and mainly taught children ages 2-4 years old.

**Motion to approve the hire request of Mackayla Maness as a PHS Logan Nutrition Aide**

<b>Motion: Festus Odunuga</b>	<b>Seconded: Heather Crockett</b>	<b>Approved: Yes</b>
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**3. Vote to approve the hire request of Cambria Stevenson as a PHS Logan Extended Day Aide – Steph Wood**

Cambria is seeking approval to be hired as a Day Aide at the Logan Center. She is graduating with her Bachelor's Degree in Psychology and has several years of experience working with kids as a CNA on a pediatric unit, a Day Aide at a Preschool, a Summer Camp Counselor with Elementary School kids and right now she is tutoring First Grade. Policy Council asked Cambria what her favorite part is about working with kids. Kids can be so funny and make the funniest comments. It brightens up her day so much more than if she's just working with adults.

**Motion to approve the hire request of Cambria Stevenson as a PHS Logan Extended Day Aide**

<b>Motion: Karli Leonardi</b>	<b>Seconded: Cassidy Macoubrie</b>	<b>Approved: Yes</b>
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**4. Vote to approve the hire request of Natalie Levi as an EHS Pond Infant/Toddler Teacher – Steph Wood**

Natalie has her Bachelor's Degree in Education. She taught preschool for about 13 years in Syracuse and then went on to Thomas Edison where she taught Second Grade Special Education and was a Classroom Aide for four years. She then moved to Tremonton where she taught Kindergarten full time and this year she started teaching in Fourth Grade. Natalie is really anxious to get back to her roots and her littles. She's excited to be in this position. Policy Council asked Natalie what her favorite part is about working with kids. She loves it when the kids say "Ooooh, "and have an 'aha' moment. It's her favorite sound in the whole entire classroom but really every part of kids is pretty amazing. They are miraculous little creatures.

**Motion to approve the hire request of Natalie Levi as an EHS Pond Infant/Toddler Teacher**

<b>Motion: Festus Odunuga</b>	<b>Seconded: Kristin Fellows</b>	<b>Approved: Yes</b>
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**5. Vote to approve the transfer request of Paula Smith from PHS Disability Aide to PHS Smithfield Classroom Assistant – Steph Wood**

Paula is requesting a transfer from a Disability Aide on the SET Team (Social/Emotional Team) to the Smithfield Classroom as a Classroom Assistant.

**Motion to approve the transfer request of Paula Smith from PHS Disability Aide to PHS Smithfield Classroom Assistant**

<b>Motion: Karli Leonardi</b>	<b>Seconded: Cassidy Macoubrie</b>	<b>Approved: Yes</b>
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**6. Vote to approve the Mid-Year Homebased Child Development Outcomes – ReNae Torbenson**

ReNae is the Homebased Coordinator. She and Steph Wood, the Centerbased Coordinator, gave a brief explanation of what outcomes are. The Head Start Performance Standards mandate that we track outcomes on children a minimum of three times per year. Outcomes is the term used to track the developmental progress of each child and groups of children. For Early Head Start we track outcomes for over 29 different skills and for Preschool Head Start we track outcomes for 56 skills. The Teachers assess the children at the beginning of the school year in the classroom to determine where they are developmentally and the Home Visitors do so while on Home Visits. From this baseline, child goals are set with the parents for each individual child. Staff have access to create a report for each child to determine areas needed

for growth and development. We then set goals with the parents and hopefully the children achieve those goals by the next check point. A copy of the individual class report and a page describing the widely held expectations are given to the Teacher or Family Educator. They are expected to use that report to determine which areas of development they need to focus on with more time and effort within their teaching either in the classroom or on homebased visits. Outcome reports are reviewed after each collection period in the Fall, Winter and Spring. That information is used to identify needed training for staff to increase their skills in planning activities across the domain areas. Individual child reports are shared with the parents and a new child goal is set to reflect areas the child may need support in. We also try to tie the outcomes report to the staff and mentor coaching for those who need specialized support in individualizing for each child. The Outcome Reports are included in the program's annual Program Improvement Report. We also provide an annual report on Child Outcomes to the community on our website.

For the Homebased Outcomes, as a group the children showed growth across all of the domains with the greatest gains in the Approaches to Learning, Self-Regulation and Social/Emotional Development domains. Overall our Dual Language Learners showed gains on par with children who are not Dual Language Learners even with the Dual Language Learners having a lower starting baseline. Children with IFSPs (Individualized Family Service Plans) or IEPs (Individualized Education Plans) had equal growth with children who are not on IFSPs or IEPs from the Fall to the Winter checkpoint. An interesting data point we saw is that the children with ISFPs started with a higher baseline point than those children who did not have an IFSP. We have not seen that before so we looked into each child and it appears to be an anomaly. This group of children on IFSPs actually did start the year with a higher baseline. As mentioned, we provide parents with an individual chart and set new child development goals. We encourage the parents to spend a few minutes each day on those goals. It makes such a difference to the growth of these children. We also plan trainings and give mentor coaching help to those staff who need additional information or help on how to implement the curriculum in a different manner that these children can grow and develop throughout the year.

#### **Motion to approve the Mid-Year Homebased Child Development Outcomes**

**Motion: Karli Leonardi**

**Seconded: Cassidy Macoubrie**

**Approved: Yes**

#### **7. Vote to approve the Mid-Year Centerbased Child Development Outcomes – Steph Wood**

For more information see the minutes for agenda item 6. Vote to approve the Mid-Year Homebased Child Development Outcomes.

The Centerbased Preschool Head Start kids also showed progress within English Language Development for our Dual Language Learners. We're also seeing a great deal of progress with Approaches to Learning, Social/Emotional Development and Science skills.

In our Early Head Start we're seeing a lot of growth in Approaches to Learning and showing gains in Social/Emotional Development. We work with parents to set goals and provide trainings and curriculum to individualize to each child's needs so we can see growth in outcomes.

We have also decided as a Centerbased program that we would like to focus on School Readiness more. In our free choice time, we have dedicated a time for the Teachers to spend approximately 15 minutes with each child in small group time in order to help the kids individualize and work on specific School Readiness goals. This includes things like learning the alphabet, numbers, social skills as well as different skills and areas they need to show growth in so we align with the school district to get them ready for school. We're also working on School Readiness books so that when the Teachers are completing the outcomes, they are better able to track the progress of each child. The books show upper and lower case letters, numbers, shapes, etc. This gives the Teachers a better opportunity to ensure we look at each child as an

individual, and then we are able to go into the outcomes section in ChildPlus and document their progress. This will also give us a better opportunity to work with parents to show what the children have passed off in school, what they are working on in the classrooms and set goals based on those assessments. We're hoping to really hit this harder in those small group minutes during self-select time. However, this is not the only time during the day the Teachers are working on child outcomes. It's not just fifteen minutes. Free play or free choice time is about an hour and 15 minutes, and the children have the ability to go to all of the different centers during this time such as playing in the block area, the water table, reading, dress ups for dramatic play, etc. The Teacher will be at the table and will end up working with each child in the class during that time for about 15 minutes in small groups of kids working on a specific child outcome goal such as writing letters, counting to 20, etc.. The Teacher will also assess how well a child is doing a skill out of the assessment book through play during the whole day and will mark the child off on that skill later on. In our Head Start classrooms, we are doing child outcomes, goals and focusing on School Readiness through play every day. There's also other small group times during the day along with large group and gross motor time. There's several different opportunities throughout the day for Teachers to focus on this but we wanted to add one more and be very intentional with it. If we see that there's something on the outcomes from last assessment that a few children in the class are behind on we can pull them in and use that time for intentional teaching. As has been mentioned, the children learn through play and we incorporate all types of learning into the play. In our dramatic play area they're seeing written words and are writing while playing there. This is the same with the block area, with different signs, etc., and throughout small and large groups. We're just layering in one more group opportunity to learn.

**Motion to approve the Mid-Year Centerbased Child Development Outcomes**

**Motion: Kristin Fellows**

**Seconded: Cassidy Macoubrie**

**Approved: Yes**

**8. Vote to approve the Mid-Year Family Development Outcomes – Kristie Curtis**

Tracking Family Outcomes with our program families is also a Head Start Performance Standard mandate. We also complete them three times of year at the beginning, mid and end of year. We follow the PFCE (Parent, Family and Community Engagement) Framework. That helps us support families in working toward positive family outcomes in areas such as Family Well-Being, Positive Parent-Child Relationships, Families as Lifelong Educators, Families As Learners, Family Engagement in Transitions, Family Connections to Peers and Community and Families as Advocates and Leaders. We recognize parents as the children's first and most important teachers. We help the families set and achieve family goals, follow up on health and share available community resources. Positive family outcomes lead to positive child outcomes which is the overall goal. We collect our data in our ChildPlus database system. We review topics such as housing, safety and School Readiness. All areas showed gains for the mid-year outcomes. Outstanding gains were seen in the overall health and family areas as well as School Readiness for the children and transitions.

**Motion to approve the Mid-Year Family Development Outcomes**

**Motion: Cassidy Macoubrie**

**Seconded: Heather Crockett**

**Approved: Yes**

**9. Vote to approve the Bear River Head Start Organizational Charts – Sarah Thurgood**

The Organizational Charts are brought to Policy Council each year to be approved. They outline program positions, which positions are under whose supervision and which area of the program they are part of. We do not include staff names on the charts but the positions so you can see how our staff are organized. Not all staff are under Sarah's supervision. We have good supervisors in place to support each of our staff and the frontline staff are those that work directly with the children and families.

<b>Motion to approve the Bear River Head Start Organizational Charts</b>		
<b>Motion: Cassidy Macoubrie</b>	<b>Seconded: Festus Odunuga</b>	<b>Approved: Yes</b>

<b>10. Vote to approve the February 20, 2025 Policy Council Meeting Minutes – Josie Smith</b>		
Policy Council was asked if they had any questions or anything that needed to be changed in the meeting minutes. No questions were asked or changes made to the February 20, 2025 Policy Council Meeting Minutes.		
<b>Motion to approve the February 20, 2025 Policy Council Meeting Minutes</b>		
<b>Motion: Cassidy Macoubrie</b>	<b>Seconded: Festus Odunuga</b>	<b>Approved: Yes</b>

<b>11. Vote to approve holding Interim Policy Council Meetings prior to the next scheduled Policy Council Meeting, as needed – Josie Smith</b>		
Policy Council was asked if they had any questions or discussion about holding interim meetings. No questions were asked or discussion held about this agenda item.		
<b>Motion to approve the holding of Interim Policy Council Meetings prior to the next scheduled Policy Council Meeting as needed</b>		
<b>Motion: Karli Leonardi</b>	<b>Seconded: Festus Odunuga</b>	<b>Approved: Yes</b>

<b>12. Mental Health Team Updates – Steph Wood</b>		
Our Mental Health Team is also called the SET Team (Social Emotional Team). They go into every classroom, as needed, helping the Teachers and children. They mentor on Conscious Discipline for our Teachers and also work with the students. Our program really values children and adults' mental health, enough that we have staff whose entire job responsibility is to go into the classrooms and work with the kids and the Teachers. This is something that is really unique to our program. Most programs do not have these positions and we have three mental health staff. We feel like it's so important that we have staff whose full time job is to work with the children and Teachers on behaviors and any type of trauma or mental health issues. We feel really lucky as a program and the SET Team are doing a really great job supporting the Teachers and children in those classrooms. We recognize that life is hard and we want those kids who struggle to get as much help as they possibly can before they go to school.		

<b>13. Approve the 2025 annual contract with Jones Simkins to provide certain Fiscal Officer consulting services and provide oversight responsibilities. This item falls under Board responsibility and is listed as information only for Policy Council – Sarah Thurgood</b>		
Two years ago we brought Andy Hernandez and his firm in to oversee our Financial Management. Andy is a partner at Jones Simkins, CPA firm and our Fiscal Officer. He handles everything to do with the funding, drawing down funds, the money coming in and the money going out. Our staff in the Fiscal Office gather all of the documentation and information necessary and send it to Andy and a bookkeeper he works with, Sydnee. They take care of the fiscal responsibilities that have to do with the expenditures such as Accounts Payable, the required federal financial reports that need to be turned in, tax returns and reports, everything that needs to be turned in to the Office of Head Start. They take care of audit prep, setting up the audit and working with the auditing firm. All of this is under Andy's jurisdiction. This set up is really nice because this is Andy's area of expertise and he is really good at doing his job and Sydnee is fabulous. The first couple of years have been a big learning curve for Andy. There has been a lot to learn but he has continued to learn and grow and does really well as our Fiscal Officer. We are renewing his contract. He is well worth every penny we pay him, as well as Sydnee. The Policy Council Treasurer shared, from his experience talking with Andy, that Andy is well versed in his department and stated that renewing his contract is a very good choice.		



**14. Approve the 2024-2025 SEP distribution of up to 15% of wages for eligible staff. Estimated SEP for 2024 - 2025 fiscal year is 7.5% - 9%. The actual number is dependent upon the completion of the annual financial audit currently scheduled for May 2025. This item falls under Board responsibility and is listed as information only for Policy Council – Sarah Thurgood**

Every year at this point in time, we make a SEP Distribution for our staff. Our grant year goes from February 1 to January 31. It takes time to close out a grant year. There's still bills coming in, etc. We have to make sure we accrue all of the correct information to each grant year. Once everything has been finalized and paid we can use any left over funding from our grant to make a SEP Distribution into our employees' retirement accounts. We always bring this information to Policy Council and get approval from Board to do so as we close out the grant year. During this last Budget Meeting Andy said he'd like to take care of the SEP Distribution within the next month which will be earlier than last year. He'd also like to have the audit completed earlier this year and before summer as he will be busy with his other job responsibilities outside of Head Start then. We want to be sure Policy Council is aware of this process. We will go ahead and make the distribution as soon as everything is finalized.

**15. Program Performance Report – Sarah Thurgood**

As outlined in the Director's Report, we cooperate with any investigations necessary with DCFS (Department of Child and Family Services). Sarah does not share a lot of detail about these situations unless something occurs that needs to be reported to Board and Policy Council. She will report if there is anything legal that needs to be shared with Board and Policy Council. There isn't anything that needs to be reported at this time. We are mandatory reporters. Any time the police or DCFS subpoena us, or require that we participate in an investigation by law, we have to do so. Usually these situations are fairly minor.

We've already discussed the change in the Centerbased curriculum that focuses more intentionally on child goals during free time.

We're starting to work on enrollment for next year. If you know of anyone in need of services for next year, please refer them to us. Policy Council was asked if they had any questions about anything. Policy Council thanked Sarah for all she does. They can tell we have a very hard working team. We do have really good employees.

We had an employee who was exited before their 90 day introductory period was complete. Hires are approved by Policy Council. All new staff have a 90 day introductory period but sometimes if an employee is not a good fit, we will not extend their employment past that 90 days. It is not a termination. When this occurs, we will let the Policy Council Executive Committee know. Because it is not a termination, we do not need to follow the full termination process. This does not happen very often.

You guys are awesome. We have great Policy Council people and we love our parents.

**16. Budget Committee & Fiscal Report – Zach Johnson & Sarah Thurgood**

Zach was unable to attend the last Budget Committee Meeting. They discussed a lot of the same information already discussed during this meeting tonight. They discussed getting out budgets and Andy asked the Coordinators if they had any questions on their budgets or if they wanted anything changed. Andy and Terrah received some T&TA (Training & Technical Assistance) training on the HSES system (Head Start Enterprise System) which is difficult to navigate. Andy and Terrah both benefitted from that training. This information will help Andy as he continues forward this year. Staff at the Regional Office are worried about their jobs because they are all federal employees as are the people at the Office of Head Start. Bear River Head Start staff are not federal employees but private non-profit. All of the federal employees have

been called back into their offices. They are all commuting back in and it's been interesting to see how that's been going for them. They also discussed the SEP distribution which has already been discussed tonight.

#### **17. Director's Report – Sarah Thurgood**

There was nothing else to add to this. Sarah discussed all of the information necessary throughout the meeting.

#### **18. Board Report – Heather Crockett**

Last month, Board joined the Policy Council Meeting. Board and Policy Council have a combined meeting each year in February. There is nothing new to report.

#### **19. Policy Council Concerns & Other Discussion Items – Policy Council Representatives**

Policy Council was asked if they had anything to bring up at this time. No concerns were shared or questions asked.

#### **20. Community Report – Policy Council Representatives**

Policy Council was asked if they had anything to share for the Community Report. Nothing was shared during this agenda item.

#### **21. Parent Committee Meeting Report – Policy Council Representatives**

Policy Council was asked if anyone attended their Parent Committee Meeting this last month and would like to report on it. No report was given.

#### **22. Calendar Review – Terrah Smith**

- Monday, March 24-Friday, March 28: Preston & Malad Spring Break
- Monday, March 31-Friday, April 4: Cache, Logan, Box Elder & Paris Spring Break
- Wednesday, April 2: Early Head Start Homebased Socialization for the Preston area at the Larsen-Sant Library from 10:00am-12:00pm
- Thursday, April 3: Early Head Start Homebased Socialization for the Soda Springs area at the Soda Springs Library from 10:00am-12:00pm
- Wednesday, April 9: Early Head Start Homebased Socializations: Tremonton & Brigham City area at the Tremonton Center from 3:30-5:30pm; Cache & Logan area at the Logan Center from 4:00-6:00pm
- Thursday, April 10: Early Head Start Homebased Socialization for the Malad area at the Malad Center from 1:00-3:00pm
- Tuesday, April 15: Budget Committee Meeting at 10:00am (Policy Council Treasurer attends)
- Tuesday, April 15: Spanish Virtual Parent Committee Meeting at 6:00pm
- Wednesday, April 16: Early Head Start Homebased Socialization for the Preston area at the Larsen-Sant Library from 10:00am-12:00pm
- Wednesday, April 16: English Virtual Parent Committee Meetings at 10:00am & 7:00pm
- Thursday, April 17: Early Head Start Homebased Socialization for the Soda Springs area at the Soda Springs Library from 10:00am-12:00pm
- Thursday, April 17: Policy Council Meeting at 7:00pm
- Tuesday, April 22: Board Meeting at 5:00pm (Policy Council Chair attends)
- Wednesday, April 23: Early Head Start Homebased Socializations: Tremonton & Brigham City area at the Tremonton Center from 3:30-5:30pm; Cache & Logan area at the Logan Center from 4:00-6:00pm
- Thursday, April 24: Early Head Start Homebased Socialization for the Malad area at the Malad Center from 1:00-3:00pm

-Thursday, May 1: Early Head Start Homebased Socializations: Soda Springs area at the Soda Springs Library from 10:00am-12:00pm; Malad area at the Malad Center from 1:00-3:00pm
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<b>23. Vote to adjourn the March 20, 2025 Policy Council Meeting – Josie Smith</b>
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With no other business to conduct, the March 20, 2025 Policy Council Meeting was adjourned at 7:59pm.
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<b>Motion to adjourn the March 20, 2025 Policy Council Meeting</b>
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<b>Motion: Karli Leonardi</b>	<b>Seconded: Heather Crockett</b>	<b>Approved: Yes</b>
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