

BEAR RIVER HEAD START POLICY COUNCIL 2025-2026 Meeting Minutes

Date: Thursday, March 19, 2026	Start Time: 8:30PM End Time: 9:20PM	Location: Dialpad Meetings: 1-888-602-7505	
2025-2026 Policy Council Members' Attendance		YES	NO
Lacy Rasmussen*	Brigham Representative	X	
David Lengenfelder*	Tremonton Representative	X	
Tyler Forster* (Vice Chair)	Hyde Park Representative	X	
Kalista Leishman*	Logan Representative	X	
Jessica Crook* (Treasurer & UT HSAC)	Hyrum Representative	X	
	Smithfield Representative		
Karli Leonardi* (Secretary & ID HSAC)	Malad Representative	X	
Annika Knorr*	Paris Representative		X
Kristin Fellows*	Preston Representative	X	
Yasmeen Ayala*	Nest/Koop Representative		X
Sharandy Appiah*	Fishpond Representative	X	
Suzie Yeates	Board Representative	X	
	Community Representative		

*Trained & Seated Policy Council Members

Members needed for a Quorum: 6	
Number of Voting Members who attended the meeting: 8	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: Tyler Forster (Policy Council Vice Chairperson) Meeting Facilitated By: Terrah Smith (Administrative Assistant) Additional Staff in Attendance: Sarah Thurgood (Executive Director), Kristie Curtis (Family Services Coordinator), Steph Wood (Centerbased Coordinator), ReNae Torbenson (Homebased Coordinator)	

1. Vote to approve the March 2026 Bear River Head Start Lateral Staff Transfer Requests – Steph Wood		
Yvonne Carranza asked to transfer to an on-call Teacher Assistant. She was our Hyde Park Nutrition Aide but wanted to work less hours to be able to be with her family more and requested to move to the on-call position.		
Motion to approve the March 2026 Lateral Staff Transfer Requests		
Motion: Kalista Leishman	Seconded: Karli Leonardi	Approved: Yes

2. Vote to approve the Bear River Head Start mid-year Preschool Head Start Centerbased Child Development Outcomes – Steph Wood	
We have completed our mid-year Centerbased Child Development Outcomes. The tracking of outcomes is required in our Performance Standards from the Office of Head Start. The outcomes show the developmental progress that each of the children make throughout the year. We also track them by groups. The teachers assess the children at the beginning of the school	

year to determine where they are developmentally when they come into the classroom and this becomes their baseline. From their baseline, child goals are set with the parents for each individual child. The teachers have access to create individual reports for each child which help determine the possible areas of growth to help set the child goals. The individual reports are given to the parents. We use these outcomes in the classroom as the teachers help set goals with the students and their parents. We also use them to guide trainings for our staff and mentor coach trainings, Program Improvement Reports and short and long-term goals. We also post the outcomes on our website as part of the Report to the Public.

The Early Head Start and Preschool Head Start Centerbased classroom outcomes were completed for the fall through the winter of 2026. These reports highlight the progress the children have made throughout the school year. Upon review we can see overall that the children have shown growth across all five developmental areas with the majority falling within the expected developmental range.

In Preschool Head Start, the progress within the English Language Development indicates that the children who are Dual Language Learners are learning English very well. There is good progress in Approaches to Learning, Social and Emotional Development and Science skills. We've made progress in the area of Language and Literacy as well but would like to see greater growth in these areas. We've recently incorporated more training for the teachers and created a plan for more small-group activities focused on these topics.

For the Early Head Start children, in the area of Physical Development the data showed there was a steady increase in all children's skills. We're seeing notable progress in the Language and Literacy Development for our Early Head Start kids suggesting that their daily routines and planned activities are effectively supporting their development in these areas. We would like to see more progress in the areas of Social and Emotional and Cognitive Development. We plan to support this growth. Teachers are implementing and targeting activities in the classroom, modeling these skills throughout the day and providing resources to families to encourage reinforcement at home. Policy Council was asked if they had any questions. No questions were asked.

Motion to approve the Bear River Head Start mid-year Preschool Head Start Centerbased Child Development Outcomes

Motion: David Lengenfelder	Seconded: Karli Leonardi	Approved: Yes
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3. Vote to approve the Bear River Head Start mid-year Early Head Start Centerbased Child Development Outcomes – Steph Wood

See the notes for agenda item 2. Vote to approve the Bear River Head Start mid-year Preschool Head Start Centerbased Child Development Outcomes

Motion to approve the Bear River Head Start mid-year Early Head Start Centerbased Child Development Outcomes

Motion: Karli Leonardi	Seconded: David Lengenfelder	Approved: Yes
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4. Vote to approve the Bear River Head Start mid-year Early Head Start Homebased Child Development Outcomes – ReNae Torbenson

The process of completing child development outcomes that Stephanie explained is the same for Homebased except we are in the homes working with the parents. When we set those goals it is directly with the parents and the Family Educators also plan activities for the weekly home visits that will support those goals.

The Early Head Start Homebased winter outcomes have also been completed. As a group the Homebased kids showed growth across all domains with the greatest gains in Approaches to Learning, Social/Emotional and Cognition. Our Dual Language Learners also showed gains across all five developmental domains. Our children with IFSP's and IEPs did show growth as a

group in three of the five domains but showed little growth in the Social/Emotional and Cognition. There are only six children in this group so it is a very small group. When we look at their individual charts, four out of the six children show growth in either four out of the five or five out of the five domains. That is really encouraging. The remaining two showed growth in three out of the five domains. We will be supporting the Family Educators who serve these families to get more detailed and specific in the goals they set with the parents for the next quarter so we can see growth in the spring. We provide all parents with an individualized chart of their child's growth and help the parents set goals for their children for the next quarter. We're always encouraging the parents to spend a few minutes each day working on these goals. It's so important for the children to have frequent exposure for developing these skills. We also plan trainings for our staff and Mentor Coaching for those who need individualized help in planning for those individualized activities and getting more specific for each child's, and their family's, needs. Policy Council was asked if they had any questions about these outcomes. No questions were asked.

Motion to approve the Bear River Head Start mid-year Early Head Start Homebased Child Development Outcomes

Motion: David Lengenfelder	Seconded: Karli Leonardi	Approved: Yes
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5. Vote to approve the Bear River Head Start mid-year Family Development Outcomes – Kristie Curtis

Our Family Outcome data is collected three times each year just like the Child Development Outcomes. We measure how Bear River Head Start supports families in achieving positive outcomes. We use the Parent, Family and Community Engagement (PFCE) framework for the Office of Head Start. Mid-year data helps identify family progress, strengths and areas where additional support may be needed. Advocates continue to work with the families on their family goals. This information guides program data, planning, training efforts and helps strengthen our family partnerships that lead to positive child and family outcomes and long-term school readiness.

Our Mid-year data shows overall improvement across most outcome areas with the largest gains in Health, School Readiness and Transitions. The overall program score increased by at least 2 points indicating continued progress as families work toward these goals. Most areas did show a steady, incremental growth reflecting ongoing support from staff in our family engagement efforts. Policy Council was asked if they had any questions. No questions were asked.

Motion to approve the Bear River Head Start mid-year Family Development Outcomes

Motion: Kristin Fellows	Seconded: Kalista Leishman	Approved: Yes
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6. Vote to approve the February 19, 2026 Policy Council Meeting Minutes – Tyler Forster

Policy Council was asked if they had any questions about the meeting minutes. No questions were asked or changes made to the February 19, 2026 Policy Council Meeting Minutes.

Motion to approve the February 19, 2026 Policy Council Meeting Minutes

Motion: Karli Leonardi	Seconded: Lacy Rasmussen	Approved: Yes
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7. Vote to approve the March 10, 2026 Interim Policy Council Meeting Minutes – Tyler Forster

Policy Council was asked if they had any questions about these minutes. No questions were asked or changes made to the March 10, 2026 Interim Policy Council Meeting Minutes.

Motion to approve the March 10, 2026 Interim Policy Council Meeting Minutes

Motion: Karli Leonardi	Seconded: David Lengenfelder	Approved: Yes
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8. Vote to approve holding Interim Policy Council Meetings prior to the next scheduled Policy Council Meeting, as needed – Tyler Forster		
Policy Council was asked if they had any questions or anything to discuss regarding this agenda item. No questions were asked or items brought up for discussion.		
Motion to approve holding Interim Policy Council Meetings prior to the next scheduled Policy Council Meeting, as needed		
Motion: David Lengenfelder	Seconded: Karli Leonardi	Approved: Yes

9. Elect the 2025-2026 Policy Council Chairperson for the remainder of the Policy Council Year – Terrah Smith		
<p>Our Chairperson, Aurora, moved out of our service area and her child is no longer attending the program so we need to elect a new Chairperson for the remainder of the year. All officers will remain seated in their positions from now until next September when the new Policy Council elects their officers for the new Policy Council year. We usually ask the Chairperson to attend that meeting to help conduct as we bring on the new Policy Council and train them. All Policy Council officers are expected to follow the Code of Conduct, which means being professional and working together toward problem-solving.</p> <p>The main duties of the Chairperson include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Reviewing and approving the agenda put together by the Administrative Assistant each month -Conducting each Policy Council Meeting -Not voting at Policy Council Meetings unless needed to break a tie -Signing any policies or items that get approved by Policy Council to record Policy Council approval after meetings and -Holding a seat on the Board and attending those meetings as a voting member. Our Board of Trustees meets on the fourth Tuesday of each month at 5:00pm in-person at our Administrative Offices in Logan. The option to join the Board Meetings by calling in is available. The Policy Council Chairperson shares a short report at Board Meetings about what happened at Policy Council so there is good communication between both governing bodies. The Chairperson can also share any questions that came up during Policy Council while voting on different items. Board and Policy Council vote on almost all of the same items. The Policy Council Chairperson can share what the parent perspective was so Board is aware of that as well. -When we need to schedule any interim meetings, the Administrative Assistant will work with the Policy Council Chair to get those scheduled. <p>Policy Council was asked for volunteers to put forth their names to be the Chairperson for the rest of this Policy Council year. David Lengenfelder put forth his name. Further nominations were asked for. No other nominations were made. David was asked to leave the call during the voting process. David rejoined the meeting after the voting was completed. Congratulations, David. You were elected and thank you for volunteering to fill this position. We appreciate it. Terrah, as the Administrative Assistant, will reach out to David with information regarding the training necessary to attend the Board Meetings. Our next Board Meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, March 24 at 5:00pm. Terrah will also reach out to schedule a time to hold a brief Policy Council Officer training to make sure David is comfortable with the duties required of the Chairperson.</p>		
Motion to approve David Lengenfelder as the 2025-2026 Policy Council Chairperson for the remainder of the Policy Council Year		
Motion: Karli Leonardi	Seconded: Tyler Forster	Approved: Yes

10. Approve the 2026 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		
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Thurgoood

Andy Hernandez works for Jones Simkins and is our Fiscal Officer. He does a really great job. His contract is approved by the Board yearly. When Andy started as our Fiscal Officer he had a lot to learn. We have no concerns with him and enjoy working with him. He has a lot of expertise. Policy Council clarified that they do not need to vote to approve this item. This is an item that falls under Board responsibility. We bring it to Policy Council so they are also aware. Board will vote to approve this contract for Andy's services next week at their meeting. Policy Council asked how they will know if this contract is approved. A Board member will attend the Policy Council Meeting next month and share a report on what happened at this month's Board Meeting. They can share about approving Andy's contract and the SEP distribution. We will also be sure to report on if this contract was approved by Board during Policy Council next month.

11. Approve the 2025-2026 SEP distribution of up to 15% of wages for eligible staff. Estimated SEP for 2025 - 2026 fiscal year is 3% - 7.5%. The actual number is dependent upon the completion of the annual financial audit currently scheduled for May 2026. This item falls under Board responsibility and is listed as information only for Policy Council – Sarah Thurgoood

Every year, we make both Policy Council and Board aware that built into our grant, we have the ability, at the end of each fiscal year when we're closing everything down, to make a SEP distribution to all eligible employees from any moneys that are left over from the grant. There may not be any funding left over but in case there is some left, we want everyone to be aware that we can use it for this purpose. We will take the number of eligible employees and the amount of funding that is left over and give each of the employees a percentage of the money to go into their retirement account. This is one of the benefits we offer to our staff. We aren't able to pay higher salaries so anything we can do as a perk, we try to do. The distribution is approved by Board as up to 15% of wages and this year Andy has estimated that it could be between 3%-7.5% depending on how the fiscal year closes out. Because we have fixed funding, which means our funding does not increase each year, it is hard because the cost of everything continues to go up, rent, food, etc. With fixed funding, every year spending gets a little tighter. Board approves this each year in the event a distribution can be made. We'll let you know if there is the ability to make a distribution after we fully close out last fiscal year. Policy Council was asked if they had any questions. No questions were asked.

12. Budget Committee & Fiscal Reports – Sarah Thurgoood

During the last Budget Committee Meeting we discussed a lot about budgets for this year and made sure everyone had received their budgets. A few small tweaks were made to the budgets to make them easier for everyone to read. The Coordinators were asked if they were okay with the budgets and, if they had any questions, to let Andy know and he could still tweak them a bit. We want to make sure our management team gets their budgets in a timely manner and that they are readable and make sense so they can track their money all of the way along. We discussed different strategies to try to save money due to the fixed funding issues that Sarah already mentioned. We discussed things we can do to combine things or different areas we can identify to save money. When we talk about saving money and budgets, we want Policy Council to know that we never take money away from the children and their learning experiences whether in the classrooms or the Homebased program. Kids come first in our world. We never do anything that takes away from the quality of their education. Budget Meeting was pretty short this month.

13. Program Performance & Director's Reports – Sarah Thurgoood

Everything is going well for Program Performance. We're hitting all of our milestones. ReNae Torbenson puts the Program Performance Report together every month. She is our data guru as well as being over Homebased services. She pulls the data off our ChildPlus database tracking system.

We passed our Protocol 2 Review. Sarah included a lot of information in her Director's Report about everything that went into this monitoring review. This type of review is very intensive and occurs every five years. It covers everything. If Board or Policy Council ever wonder if the program is doing what we are supposed to be doing, if we weren't, the Office of Head Start and the federal review teams would know really quickly. There is no lee-way. A program is either in compliance or not. It is tough but also good because it helps us know where we're at in any given moment. We will use this as our self-assessment this year since this was such an in-depth and thorough review. Years when we do not have a federal review, we perform our own internal self-assessment. Every part of the program passed and we are in compliance. We're glad to have this done and are moving forward. Policy Council stated they learned a lot from Sarah's explanations on these reports.

14. Board Report – Suzie Yeates

Suzie was glad to join the Policy Council Meeting. She had nothing additional to report because Board and Policy Council met together in a joint meeting last month so Policy Council has all of the information. Policy Council was asked if any thoughts or questions came up since that meeting. No questions were asked or items brought up for discussion.

15. Policy Council Concerns & Other Discussion Items – Policy Council Representatives

Policy Council was asked if anyone had any thoughts or concerns. No questions were asked or items brought up for discussion.

16. Community Report – Policy Council Representatives

Policy Council was asked if anyone had anything to report. Nothing was shared for the Community Report.

17. Parent Committee Meeting Report – Policy Council Representatives

Policy Council was asked if they had anything to discuss regarding this report. Policy Council asked for a reminder of what this report is. Anyone who attended a recent Parent Committee Meeting can share how it went, what was discussed, etc. Our most recent Parent Committee Meetings were held this week, the Spanish meeting on Tuesday and the English meetings on Wednesday. If anyone attended those meetings, they can share a bit about them. Policy Council Members stated they were unable to attend the most recent Parent Committee Meetings and said they would like to hear what happened at the meetings. Policy Council asked if we have a recording of the Parent Committee Meetings or could share what happened. We will check to see if we have a recording of the meeting and will make sure to get the parents the information that was reviewed through their Family Advocates.

18. Calendar Review – Terrah Smith

Next week is Spring Break for the Preston area. Preston Centers will be closed and those staff will be off

Monday, March 30-Friday, April 3: Spring Break for Cache, Logan, Box Elder, Malad and Paris; all centers will be closed and those staff will be off

Wednesday, April 8: Early Head Start Socializations for Homebased families: Preston area from 10am-12pm at the Larsen-Sant Library; Brigham City area from 2-4pm at the Brigham City PHS Center; Cache/Logan area from 4-6pm at the Logan PHS Center

Thursday, April 9: Early Head Start Socializations for Homebased families: Soda Springs area from 10am-12pm at the Soda Springs Library; Malad area from 1-3pm at the Malad PHS Center
 Friday, April 10: Early Head Start Centers Closed for Training
 Tuesday, April 14: Budget Committee Meeting at 10am (Policy Council Treasurer attends)
 Thursday, April 16: Policy Council Meeting at 8:30pm
 Tuesday, April 21: Spanish Virtual Parent Committee Meeting at 6pm
 Wednesday, April 22: English Virtual Parent Committee Meetings at 10am & 7pm
 Wednesday, April 22: Early Head Start Socializations for Homebased families: Preston area from 10am-12pm at the Larsen-Sant Library; Brigham City area from 2-4pm at the Brigham City PHS Center; Cache/Logan area from 4-6pm at the Logan PHS Center
 Thursday, April 23: Early Head Start Socializations for Homebased families: Soda Springs area from 10am-12pm at the Soda Springs Library; Malad area from 1-3pm at the Malad PHS Center
 Tuesday, April 28: Board Meeting at 5:00pm (Policy Council Chair attends)
 Friday, May 1: Early Head Start Centers Closed for Training
 Policy Council asked if that was everything scheduled for May. For the calendar review, we share what is coming up in the next month. Next Policy Council Meeting, we will go over what is coming up in May. We also send the calendars out to families through the Family Advocates so parents are aware and post them to our website. On brheadstart.org go to the Resources tab where there is a calendar link and the calendars for each month are posted there. Policy Council asked what the final dates of classes are for the Hyde Park Center. Our part-day Preschool Head Start classes get out in May. Our extended-day classes go a little later. If your child is in part-day, which is a four hour day, their last day is May 14 and if your child is in extended-day, which is a six hour day, their last day is June 10.

19. Vote to adjourn the March 19, 2026 Policy Council Meeting – Tyler Forster		
With no other business to conduct, the March 19, 2026 Policy Council Meeting was adjourned at 9:20pm.		
Motion to adjourn the March 19, 2026 Policy Council Meeting		
Motion: David Lengenfelder	Seconded: Karli Leonardi	Approved: Yes