

Officer Signature David LengenfelderDate 09-24-2026

BEAR RIVER HEAD START POLICY COUNCIL 2025-2026 Meeting Minutes

Date: Thursday, August 20, 2026	Start Time: 8:30PM End Time: 9:18PM	Location: Dialpad Meetings: 1-888-602-7505	
2025-2026 Policy Council Members' Attendance		YES	NO
Lacy Rasmussen*	Brigham Representative		X
David Lengenfelder* (Chair)	Tremonton Representative	X	
Tyler Forster* (Vice Chair)	Hyde Park Representative		X
Kalista Leishman*	Logan Representative	X	
	Hyrum Representative		
	Smithfield Representative		
Karli Leonardi* (Secretary & ID HSAC)	Malad Representative	X	
	Paris Representative		
Kristin Fellows*	Preston Representative	X	
Yasmeen Ayala*	Nest/Koop Representative		X
	Fishpond Representative		
Suzie Yeates	Board Representative	X	
	Community Representative		

*Trained & Seated Policy Council Members

Members needed for a Quorum: 4
Number of Voting Members Attending the Meeting: 5
Do we have a Quorum? YES

Meeting Called to Order By: David Lengenfelder (Policy Council Chairperson)
 Meeting Facilitated By: Terrah Smith (Administrative Assistant)
 Additional Staff in Attendance: Sarah Thurgood (Executive Director), Kristie Curtis (Family Services Director), Steph Wood (Center Based Director), Cassie Petersen (Early Head Start Center Based Coordinator, Facilities Coordinator & CACFP Coordinator)

1. Vote to approve the hire request of Alexa Dawson as a PHS Logan Teacher Assistant – Steph Wood

Alexa is from Cache Valley. She studied Communicative Disorders in school and has her Bachelor's degree. She has worked with kids in a lot of different settings. Alexa has worked as a nanny and at a daycare. She provided Speech Therapy at an elementary school and Early Intervention where she worked with toddlers and their parents. She also worked at a summer camp as a counselor and a director. Alexa loves working with kids. She also loves camping, hiking, rock climbing and reading. Alexa is excited to work with the kiddos at Bear River Head Start.

Motion to approve the hire request of Alexa Dawson as a PHS Logan Teacher Assistant

Motion: Kristin Fellows **Seconded:** Karli Leonardi **Approved:** Yes

2. Vote to approve the hire request of Annie Schellenberg as the On-Call PHS Hyde Park, Smithfield & Preston Teacher Assistant – Steph Wood

Annie is from Utah Valley. She will be a sophomore at Utah State University and is really excited to have this opportunity. Annie has always loved working with kids. She babysat since she was 12 years old. She also ran a kids' camp during the summer. For a couple of hours

during the day, a bunch of kids would come over to her house and do a lot of activities. Annie taught piano to some kids and was a nanny for some of them. She comes from a big family and is number five of six kids. Annie is studying Elementary Education and Special Education and is really excited about that.

Clarification was asked for regarding the position Annie is being hired for. If she is in school full time, how will we be able to use her for the schedule we need to use her for? She does not have class every day. We ask during the interviews and she either has classes on only Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays or only Tuesdays and Thursdays. We will be able to use her the full day on days she does not have class. Will we have someone to fill in for her on the days she's in class? There are some months where subs are needed every day. Yes, we will stagger the on-call staff and we also have interns who are also in school. We have two interns per center. We stagger people based on the days they can work. Because she can work the opposite days of the interns, we will have people to cover every day. We try to make sure to not have too many that are only available certain days. It works out well.

Motion to approve the hire request of Annie Schellenberg as the On-Call PHS Hyde Park, Smithfield & Preston Teacher Assistant

Motion: Karli Leonardi

Seconded: Suzie Yeates

Approved: Yes

3. Vote to approve the hire request of Emma Carver as an On-Call PHS Logan Teacher Assistant – Steph Wood

Emma is a student at Utah State University studying Landscape Architecture with a minor in Spanish and Residential Design. She has worked with kids in a variety of ways as well. Emma has been a nanny for a family of five and their dog for a couple summers in a row and has had a couple other little nanny jobs here and there. She also worked as a rock climbing coach for groups of kids over a summer where she not only taught rock climbing but entertained them with a variety of games. Emma is from Draper, Utah in the Salt Lake area. She really loves people, speaks fluent Spanish and really likes the outdoors. Policy Council stated it is good she speaks Spanish for the students who speak it.

Clarification was asked for regarding the position Emma is being hired for. If she is in school full time, how will we be able to use her for the schedule we need to use her for? She does not have class every day. We ask during the interviews and she either has classes on only Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays or only Tuesdays and Thursdays. We will be able to use her the full day on days she does not have class. Will we have someone to fill in for her on the days she's in class? There are some months where subs are needed every day. Yes, we will stagger the on-call staff and we also have interns who are also in school. We have two interns per center. We stagger people based on the days they can work. Because she can work the opposite days of the interns, we will have people to cover every day. We try to make sure to not have too many that are only available certain days. It works out well.

Motion to approve the hire request of Emma Carver as an On-Call PHS Logan Teacher Assistant

Motion: Karli Leonardi

Seconded: Kalista Leishman

Approved: Yes

4. Vote to approve the hire request of Bridgette Bluemel as a PHS Child Development Assistant for all areas – Steph Wood

Bridgette recently moved to Cache Valley with her family. She has a teaching certificate in the state of Wyoming, where she moved from, for elementary and special education. Bridgette has done preschool for the last seven or eight years. She has worked with children as young as two weeks old all the way through preschool age. Bridgette has been an aide and an interim teacher and at the front desk area for the school she was at for most of the time. She is grateful and excited to be here at Head Start.

Motion to approve the hire request of Bridgette Bluemel as a PHS Child Development Assistant for all areas		
Motion: David Lengenfelder	Seconded: Karli Leonardi	Approved: Yes

5. Vote to approve the hire request of Katie Bingham as a PHS Brigham City Extended Day Aide – Steph Wood		
Katie is from Brigham City. She volunteered at two different schools over her four years in High School. She worked with children between the ages of three and five. Katie just graduated from Freemont High School this last year and is really excited to work with kids professionally. She is going into Child Psychology at Weber State. Katie is interested in art and teaching kids through creative means. She is excited to help kids grow and prosper as individuals.		
Motion to approve the hire request of Katie Bingham as a PHS Brigham City Extended Day Aide		
Motion: Karli Leonardi	Seconded: Kristin Fellows	Approved: Yes

6. Vote to approve the hire request of Hallie Wardle as a PHS Hyde Park Extended Day Aide – Steph Wood		
Hallie is from Davis County. She just graduated from Utah State University with her degree in Human Development and Family Studies. Hallie has worked with kids of many different ages. She has worked in an elementary school as a Kindergarten aide and worked with kids in groups and individually. She is really excited to work with a different age group, get more experience and to be here.		
Motion to approve the hire request of Hallie Wardle as a PHS Hyde Park Extended Day Aide		
Motion: Karli Leonardi	Seconded: Kalista Leishman	Approved: Yes

7. Vote to approve the hire request of Evelyn Wilde as an EHS Pond Infant/Toddler Teacher Assistant – Steph Wood		
Evelyn was offered this position today after we received all of her information back. With such short notice, she wasn't able to join the meeting today. Policy Council was asked if they were okay with Cassie, the Early Head Start Centerbased Coordinator, introducing Emma. Policy Council said they were okay with it. Evelyn has over six years of child care experience including working as a nanny, day care assistant, babysitter and a summer camp counselor. Evelyn has experience caring for infants and young children, planning age-appropriate activities, supporting daily routines and maintaining a safe environment. We feel she would be a great addition to our team.		
Motion to approve the hire request of Evelyn Wilde as an EHS Pond Infant/Toddler Teacher Assistant		
Motion: Karli Leonardi	Seconded: Suzie Yeates	Approved: Yes

8. Vote to approve the August 2026 Lateral Staff Transfer Requests – Steph Wood		
Policy Council was asked if they had any questions about the August 2026 lateral staff transfers whose information was sent out in the Policy Council Packet. No questions were asked.		
Motion to approve the August 2026 Lateral Staff Transfer Requests		
Motion: Karli Leonardi	Seconded: Suzie Yeates	Approved: Yes

9. Vote to approve the Bear River Head Start Job Descriptions – Sarah Thurgood		
Every year we bring the job descriptions to Policy Council for their approval. We try not to make too many changes or get too detailed in the job descriptions. If we get too specific, we lose the flexibility to make adjustments as needed. In all job descriptions there is the line 'other duties as		

assigned' to allow us flexibility. Some job descriptions are very set and do not change such as the Teacher and Teacher Assistant job descriptions. For some positions that are in mid-management, we try to assign staff according to their strengths and abilities. We compile the job descriptions and bring them to Policy Council and ask for your approval so you have the chance to review them and have greater understanding of the program and what our staff do in their specific positions. Policy Council was asked if they had any questions. No questions were asked.

Motion to approve the Bear River Head Start Job Descriptions

Motion: David Lengenfelder

Seconded: Kalista Leishman

Approved: Yes

10. Vote to approve the Bear River Head Start Community Assessment including the Salary Compensation Survey – Sarah Thurgood

Every year we do an update to the Community Assessment. Year one of our grant cycle we complete a full Community Assessment and it includes everything. The rest of the years in our grant cycle, we make updates. We see if there have been any significant changes that we should be aware of to help guide where our services are the most needed and decide where our classrooms should be. It is fluid; the population changes. At one point, we were so close to closing down our Paris, Idaho classroom because we could not find kids up there. Now, six or seven years later, that was the first class filled. We like to try to keep a foot print in all of our service areas so if we ever need to swing back, we have the ability to do so. That is one reason we only have one class in the Tremonton area this year. Things have changed there and we don't have the need for two full classrooms. We for sure do need one and we will always keep one classroom there so that if we need to swing back, we have a building. Policy Council was asked if they had any questions on the Community Assessment. No questions were asked. Salary Compensation Survey information is always reviewed to see if we are competitive in our salaries with our main competition which tends to be the local school districts. Our salaries are roughly \$10,000 lower than Cache and Logan school districts but higher than the school districts in Idaho. We have a unique situation as we have such a broad service area. In the more populated areas school districts do tend to pay their teachers really well. At this point it is what it is unless we get a COLA (Cost of Living Adjustment) but in Idaho we pay more than they would make working for the school districts. Policy Council inquired if we receive any state level funding. We get our CACFP (Child and Adult Care Food Program) funding that reimburses food costs through the state. School District money does not come to us from the states. We get TANF funding in Idaho that comes through the state but is federal in origin. We are not eligible for state funding since we are a federal program.

Motion to approve the Bear River Head Start Community Assessment including the Salary Compensation Survey

Motion: Karli Leonardi

Seconded: David Lengenfelder

Approved: Yes

11. Vote to approve the July 23, 2026 Policy Council Meeting Minutes – David Lengenfelder

Policy Council was asked if they had any questions or concerns in regards to these meeting minutes. No questions were asked or concerns shared regarding the July 23, 2026 Policy Council Meeting Minutes.

Motion to approve the July 23, 2026 Policy Council Meeting Minutes

Motion: Karli Leonardi

Seconded: Kristin Fellows

Approved: Yes

12. Vote to approve the August 6, 2026 Interim Policy Council Meeting Minutes – David Lengenfelder

Policy Council was asked if they had any questions in regards to the meeting minutes for August 6. No questions were asked or changes made to the August 6, 2026 Interim Policy Council Meeting Minutes.

Motion to approve the August 6, 2026 Interim Policy Council Meeting Minutes

Motion: Karli Leonardi

Seconded: David Lengenfelder

Approved: Yes

13. Vote to approve holding Interim Policy Council Meetings prior to the next scheduled Policy Council Meeting, as needed – David Lengenfelder

Policy Council was asked if they had any questions or suggestions with regards to interim Policy Council Meetings. No questions were asked or concerns shared.

Motion to approve holding Interim Policy Council Meetings prior to the next scheduled Policy Council Meeting, as needed

Motion: Karli Leonardi

Seconded: Kristin Fellows

Approved: Yes

14. Budget Committee & Fiscal Reports – Sarah Thurgood

We are about 50% through our budgets for the year. Budget Committee talked a lot about the suggestions from the Trump Administration and the Office of Health and Human Services to modify the Performance Standards and what that would mean regarding funding, etc. Andy has distributed the SEP distribution. That is all that was discussed; the meeting was brief.

15. Program Performance & Director's Reports – Sarah Thurgood

Regarding the Program Performance Report, extended day Preschool Head Start services have been going for almost a month and part day Preschool Head Start services have not started yet. We will start sending out these reports again when we have more data after all of the classes have been in session for a bit longer. This will give us a better representation of where we're at. There are a lot of potential things going. Sarah heard from Anne, our Regional Office Specialist. Everyone is waiting to see if the potential changes to the Performance Standards will go through and if we'll just stick with the Head Start Act. When John F. Kennedy was president, he started the process of sending Head Start through for Congressional approval. When Kennedy died, Lyndon Johnson picked up the finishing charge and Head Start itself is passed by Congress. Head Start, as a program, is entwined in the roots of our government. It was guided by the Head Start Act and over the years as they've had different people in the Office of Head Start and different ideas of how the program should be run, the Performance Standards came to be. We have a lot of Performance Standards that cover everything. The proposal is to remove what other agencies or programs, etc. in communities, governments, state systems are already doing. The theory is that if someone else is already doing it, Head Start doesn't need to as well because of the redundancy. Head Start would be encouraged to utilize those who are already providing the services in businesses, entities, and agencies and refer children and parents to them for their expertise. Nothing is settled yet. It is still in the waiting period to see how this will roll out. Sarah has been with the program for a long time. She built the Early Head Start program. We didn't have an Early Head Start program years ago and she was hired to bring that about. We had no kids, no staff, no building. She has learned a lot through the years from building a program from scratch and things change, politics change. They swing back and forth and whoever is in charge of the funding decides what needs to be done with the program. We work with the changes they make and then when someone else comes along, they will make other changes and we just work with it. If programs have that flexibility and ability to be resilient they will be okay. That is how a program can be successful; we just adjust as needed. We are moving forward as usual and this will most likely not have an effect on the services for this year because we have already started. If there are changes they want us to make that won't affect the services to the children and families, we'll just see how that goes. Policy Council asked if we

have any representatives that can advocate for Head Start to the federal government for more funding. Yes, our Senators and Congressman do so and Head Start also has a very powerful presence in Washington D.C. who are lobbying with the Senators, Congressmen, etc. Policy Council shared information about the Five Calls app and website. You can type in your zip code and it will bring up the five people in your government who you contact to advocate for Head Start or other causes. You can find the Head Start information or page in the app and then it brings up the two representatives in your state, and then federal, government that you can reach out to. It's a nice, easy way to advocate without being overwhelmed. This is a really good suggestion. Thank you for this information.

16. Board Report – Suzie Yeates

Board did not meet in July; there is nothing to report right now. Suzie shared that Sarah is correct about federal and government programs. What has been shared is true. You always have to be ready, flexible and resilient. Suzie has had experience with this as well.

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

Policy Council was asked if they had any questions, comments or concerns to discuss. No questions were asked or comments and concerns shared.

18. Community Report – Policy Council Representatives

Policy Council was asked if anyone had anything to report in regards to their local community. No community events were shared.

19. Parent Committee Meeting Report – Policy Council Representatives

Policy Council was asked if anyone had anything to share about Parent Committee Meetings. Nothing was shared.

20. Calendar Review – Terrah Smith

- Tuesday, September 1: Last day of classes for EHS
- Wednesday, September 2-Friday, September 4: No classes for EHS
- Monday, September 7: Labor Day; All Staff Off
- Tuesday, September 8: First day of EHS Classes/Services
- Tuesday, September 8: PHS Part Day Open House
- Wednesday, September 9: First day of class for PHS Part Day
- Wednesday, September 16: EHS 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, September 17: EHS Socializations for Homebased families: Soda Springs area from 10am-12pm at the Soda Springs Library; Malad area from 1:30-3:30pm at the Malad PHS Center
- Friday, September 18: PHS Part Day Screening Day
- Tuesday, September 22: Budget Committee Meeting at 10am (Policy Council Treasurer attends)
- Wednesday, September 23: EHS 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, September 24: EHS Socializations for Homebased families: Soda Springs area from 10am-12pm at the Soda Springs Library; Malad area from 1:30-3:30pm at the Malad PHS Center
- Thursday, September 24: Policy Council Meeting at 8:30pm

-Tuesday, September 29: Board Meeting at 5pm (Policy Council Chair attends) -Thursday, October 1-Friday, October 2: Fall Break for the Preston area
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21. Thank the 2025-2026 Policy Council Members for their Service to Bear River Head Start – Terrah Smith

This is the last meeting for this Policy Council as it is currently seated unless there is the need to hold an interim meeting between now and the next scheduled meeting in September. If we need to hold an interim meeting between now and then, Terrah will reach out to the current Policy Council Members to do so. The new Policy Council Members will be elected by the time of the September Policy Council Meeting and will attend that meeting as their first meeting for the new Policy Council year. As the current Policy Council Chair, we would like David to attend the September meeting to conduct as a way to help train the new Policy Council. The new Policy Council Chair and Vice Chair will be elected at that meeting. Thank you so much for all you have done this year on Policy Council and supporting Bear River Head Start with your kids and in the program. You have all been amazing and we really appreciate all of the help you have given this year! Sarah has loved working with this Policy Council! You guys are so awesome! Sarah is always so impressed. David has been running the meetings so well and the other members have been participating and attending the meetings. We know this takes so much of your time. Thank you so much!
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22. Vote to adjourn the August 20, 2026 Policy Council Meeting – David Lengenfelder
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With no other business to conduct, the August 20, 2026 Policy Council Meeting was adjourned at 9:18pm.
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Motion to adjourn the August 20, 2026 Policy Council Meeting

Motion: Kalista Leishman	Seconded: Karli Leonardi	Approved: Yes
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