

Kids Central Incorporated Policy Council Meeting March 9, 2011

The Policy Council of Kids Central Incorporated met on March 9, 2011 at the Kids Central Administration office. Dee Strouth, Chairperson, called the meeting to order at 11:00 a.m.

Present: Deanna Dingus, Mike Standifur, Liz Merritt, Christina Edwards, Melinda Huffman, April Harvey, Tishia Adams, Patricia Neece, Melissa Turner, Sue Coleman, Charlotte Owens, Melissa Baker, Jennifer Perrigan, Tabitha Harvey, Dellia King, Dee Strouth, and Thomas Williams

Staff present: Darrell Edwards, Kim Austin, Lisa Barton, Lindsey Sturgill, and Sandra Harvey

AGENDA

The agenda for today's meeting was presented for approval. **April Harvey made a motion to approve the agenda for today's meeting. Melinda Huffman seconded the motion. Motion carried.**

MINUTES

The minutes of the previous meeting (February 9, 2011) were presented. Christina Edwards asked that the minutes be amended to show her present for February's meeting. **Mike Standifur made a motion to approve the minutes of the previous meeting with the amendment showing Christina Edwards present during February's meeting. Liz Merritt seconded the motion. Motion carried.**

DIRECTORS REPORT

Darrell Edwards informed the Policy Council that the House of Representatives has proposed cutting the budget for Head Start by 22%. The Senate is voting on this issue today. Our hopes are that the Senate will not pass this budget cut, and if they do, we hope they will lower the amount. Kids Central is a single-purpose agency, meaning the only funds we have come from the federal government. People need to contact their Congressman and Senators to let them know what serious effects this will have on the services provided to children in the Head Start programs.

The ARRA funds given last year will end September 30, 2011. This money will not be refunded. We have already planned our budget based on the fact that we will not receive this money so it will not have a major impact on Kids Central. However, for some programs that used the funds thinking they would continue this year, it will have a huge impact.

We now have a Director's Report on our website. The Director's Report is updated weekly. Darrell discusses the status of our agency, news updates from different departments, changes in the agency, and updates on events.

Last night we had our first ever family picture night. More information about this event will be given by Lindsey Sturgill during her report.

Mike Standifur asked about family involvement in public schools as opposed to Kids Central family involvement. Darrell stated that family involvement is an issue in all programs. We are doing better in family involvement than most programs. Our Policy Council is strong.

The Virginia Head Start Conference will be held in Abingdon this year. Kids Central will be co-hosts of the conference. Some of our staff will give presentations. The Policy Council is welcome to attend. Anyone interested should register with Darrell as soon as possible.

STAFF REPORTS

- **Finance:** Lisa gave everyone a copy of the financial statements for February. As of the end of February, we are approximately 75% through our fiscal year. She reports that as of the end of February, we have spent 60% of our Head Start and 65% of our Early Head Start funds, and 50% of our ARRA funds. This is basically where we should be this time of year in our budget.

We don't know what gas prices are going to do in the future. We do not pay taxes on our gas purchases, so that does cut the amount by 60-70 cents less than pump prices. Last year, we changed our phone service which gave us a savings of \$14,000 per year.

- **Education/Enrollment:** Kim Austin reports that our attendance for February was 75%. We are fully enrolled. Our number of Head Start children will drop from 360 to 320 due to converting Head Start slots to Early Head Start. All Teachers need to start talking with the parents to let them know that enrollment for next year will be based on eligible children first, then over income. It may be possible by the computer system we use for accepting children, that an over income child in the program now, may not be able to get into the program next year. We are only allowed 32 children who are above income eligible guidelines. Of these 32, the children with disabilities with an IEP are given priority.

If accepted, parents will receive a letter stating their child has been accepted for the 2011 – 2012 program. Parents must confirm that they accept their slot in the program. If the child has not been confirmed, they are put at the bottom of the list and face a chance of not getting into the program.

We hope to have acceptance letters sent to all parents by June 15th.

Kim recently attended a School Readiness Conference. She reports that we need to develop a set of school readiness goals and will develop a committee. Policy Council members are welcome to be on this committee. Kim also would like to send surveys to people in the area asking if they would like to be on the committee.

- **Transportation:** Darrell reported that there are no changes in our transportation department.
- **Nutrition:** Mary Collins was not able to attend today's meeting to give a report.
- **Family Involvement:** Lindsey Sturgill reported that Family Days are going great. She said everyone is having lots of fun. Family portrait nights began last night at Esserville, and will be held in Big Stone Gap on March 18th and in Clintwood on March 29th. Turnout at last night's event was great. The children have been making fish tanks and celebrating spring this month during family days.

FINANCE REPORT FOR POLICY COUNCIL

Deanna Dingus did not have a report to give to the Policy Council today.

OLD BUSINESS

There was not any old business to address at today's meeting.

NEW BUSINESS

There was not any new business to address at today's meeting.

COMMENTS

Dee Strouth explained to the Policy Council that attendance is very important. If you are not able to attend a meeting, it only takes a phone call to let someone know so you will be excused. Three consecutive meetings without being excused will eliminate you from the Policy Council. The centers need representatives that will attend meetings and report back to the center. Lindsey Sturgill said she will talk with the parents during family days and stress the importance of the Policy Council and its representatives.

NEXT MEETING

The next Policy Council meeting will be April 13, 2011 at 11:00 a.m. at the Kids Central Administration Office.

The next Executive meeting will be held on March 29, 2011 at 10:00 a.m. at the Kids Central Administration Office.

With no further business or discussion, Dee Strouth adjourned the meeting at 11:45 a.m.

Sue Coleman, Secretary

Sandra Harvey, Recording Secretary