

**Wright County Community Action, Inc.  
Head Start Policy Council Meeting Minutes  
January 20, 2026**

**Members Present:**

Meghan Polzin, Annandale Representative, Secretary  
Nicole Cantin, Buffalo 1 Representative  
Emily Lommen, Delano Representative  
JorDyn Bresinger, EHS Representative  
Gena LaPlante, Howard Lake Representative, MHSA Rep  
Samantha Peters, Montrose Representative, Vice Chairperson  
Evette Holler, Otsego Representative  
Marina Eggink, Community Representative  
Nicole Schmitz, Community Representative

**Members Absent:**

Lindsey Gibbons, EHS Representative  
Maria Mendoza, Monti 206 Representative  
Alexis Carrillo-Sigle, Monti 207/208 Representative  
Reanna Sigle, Monti 209/210 Representative  
Jennifer Greenhagen, WCCA Board Member (non-voting)

**Staff Present:**

Dara Smida, Head Start/Early Head Start Director

**I. Determine Quorum/Call to Order/Introductions**

The January 20, 2026, Policy Council meeting was called to order at 6:04PM by JorDyn Driver. A quorum was present, members introduced themselves, and the meeting began.

**II. Consideration/Approval of January 20, 2026 Agenda**

Policy Council members reviewed the agenda as presented.

*Motion by Evette Holler second by Gena LaPlante, to approve the January 20, 2026 agenda. Motion carried.*

**III. Consideration/Approval of the December 16, 2025 Policy Council Minutes**

Policy Council members reviewed the December 16, 2025 Policy Council minutes as e-mailed.

*Motion by Nicole Schmitz, second by Marina Eggink, to approve the December 16, 2025 Policy Council meeting minutes as e-mailed. Motion carried.*

**IV. Consideration/Approval of the November 2025 Financial Reports**

Staff and Policy Council members reviewed and discussed the November 2025 Financial Reports, including expenditures, credit card statements, and in-kind summary.

*Motion by Meghan Polzin, second by Marina Eggink, to approve the November 2025 financial reports. Motion carried.*

**V. Unfinished Business**

None

**VI. New Business**

**a. Hiring & Termination Memo**

The Head Start Director presented a hiring and termination memo detailing staff hired or terminated since the last meeting.

*Motion by Gena LaPlante, second by Evette Holler, to approve the Hiring & Termination Memo as*

*presented. Motion carried.*

**b. 2025 Program Information Report**

The Head Start Director shared the 2025 Program Information Report (PIR).

**c. 2025 Community Needs Assessment Executive Summary**

The Head Start Director shared an executive summary of the 2025 community needs assessment. The CNA is required for Head Start every five years, and for Community Action programs every three years.

**VII. WCCA Board Report**

Jen Greenhagen was not at the Policy Council meeting. Dara Smida only attended part of the Board meeting. Per the Board meeting minutes, one Board member resigned. WCCA is seeking a new member to serve on the Board as a representative of the low-income community. Head Start presented the 2025 Program Information Report. Policy Council members asked if the Board discussed an agency response if ICE comes into the office. Dara will follow up with the Executive Director.

**VIII. Reports from Community Representatives, MHSA Representative, and Parents**

- This is Nicole's last meeting. She took another job and will no longer working at Milestones.
- Marina said she is working on safety plans with families and connecting them with resources.
- Gena is stepping down as the MNHSA representative. Samantha Peters will take over as the rep.
- Evette shared that they had a great turnout at a recent family engagement session in Otsego. They had a cooking class with adults and children. Families who attended received a bag of groceries and some recipes.
- A parent inquired about the Good Neighbor funds that were available for community members to apply for. Decisions have been made and recipients should start to hear this week.

**IX. Program Director's Report**

**a. Updates from the Director**

- WCCA has maintained full enrollment since January 2025. We received a letter from the Office of Head Start that we completed our full enrolment process.
- We have one staff vacancy for a part-time center aide in Howard Lake. We are also looking for substitute teachers, assistant teachers and center aides.
- Head Start received a grant from a private foundation. Parents offered some ideas of how to use the funds.
- We had licensing visits recently at Buffalo, Howard Lake and Otsego. There were no violations.

**b. Program Activity Report for December 2025.**

The Head Start Director shared the program activity report for December 2025. This report includes information on enrollment, attendance and meal counts.

**X. Schedule Next Meeting and Adjourn**

**a. The next Policy Council meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, February 16, 2026 at 6:00PM in-person and via Zoom.**

**b. The January 20, 2026 Policy Council meeting adjourned at 7:03PM.**

*Motion by Gena LaPlante, second by Evette Holler, to adjourn the January 20, 2026 Policy Council meeting. Motion carried.*

**Respectfully Submitted by:** Dara Smida, Head Start Director