

**Worcester Child Development – Head Start Program  
Worcester Public Schools  
770 Main Street  
Worcester, MA 01610**

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**Policy Council/Board Meeting  
Mill Swan School  
Wednesday November 29, 2017  
5:30 p.m.**

**Meeting called to order by Chairperson Chantel Bethea at 5:35 p.m.**

**Roll Call/Sign In:**

1. Chantel Bethea – Community Rep.
2. Jennifer Shehata – Mill Swan B
3. Nicole MacRae – Mill Swan A
4. Kim Davenport – Edward Street Child Services
5. Linda Jackson – Family Engagement/Transportation Specialist
6. Kwame Appiah – WIC
7. Sharon Quiles – Greendale
8. Emily Coolick – MSA
9. Karen Waters – Assistant Director
10. Laurie Kuczka - Director
11. Youssef Bourogaa – Greendale
12. Mandy Sosvielle – Greendale
13. Redi Lico – Mill Swan A
14. Wendy Connor – YWCA
15. Enlantina Zguro – WSU Student
16. Lisa Sciannameo – WSU Student
17. Tiana Ansley – Mill Swan A
18. Reneet Reyes- Jimenez – Greendale
19. Faith Tendo – Friend of Head Start
20. Vince Asbridge – Mill Swan B
21. John Monfredo – WPS Committee

Regrets: Doreen Samuels

**Secretary's Report:**

Chairperson, Chantel Bethea asked if all members of the Policy Council had received their minutes from the last Policy Council meeting held on October 25, 2017. Chantel asked if there were any changes, additions, or deletions. There was one change to Karen Waters' last name to add the /s/ that was omitted in the minutes. Chantel asked for a motion to accept the minutes as read with the change. Jen Shehata made a motion, it was seconded by Nicole MacRae. All in favor.

**Treasurer's Report:**

Co-Chair Jen Shehata read the Treasurer's Report for October to the full Council. Chantel Bethea asked if there were any questions, comments or concerns. There was none. Chantel asked for a motion to accept the Treasurer's Reports as read. A motion was made by Jen Shehata and seconded by Nicole MacRae. All in favor.

### **Old Business:**

- **Enrollment/ Recruitment update – Karen Waters-** Karen went over the enrollment reports. She reported that Greendale and Millbury St. are now full. Mill Swan B has 21 opening and Mill Swan A has 3 openings. Karen stated that they are still working on customizing the enrollment report with the Child Plus software system. Karen talked about the Eligibility, Recruitment, Selection, Enrollment, Attendance (ERSEA) Advisory Committee meeting and felt the committee had some great ideas. Karen thanked John Monfredo for his connection and help. Emily Coolick noted that she had received two phone calls through the Connect Ed. System about taking application for this school year. Laurie said there is one more scheduled to go out. John Monfredo asked about Main South Community Center. Karen said she has been in contact with them. Wendy Connor asked if the busses were full. Karen answered that the busses are not full yet. Emily asked if part day could have a bus. Karen stated that transportation is offered to part day, but that the program cannot offer full day placements transportation at this time due to busing contracts, and contract schedules.
- **Monthly Menu/USDA Report – Karen Waters -** Karen reviewed the December menu and the total reimbursement collected by the City of Worcester for children’s meals for the month of October (breakfast, lunch, including afternoon snacks) was \$52,737.75.

Chairperson Chantel Bethea asked for a motion to accept all old business. Motion was made by Kim Davenport; seconded by Nicole MacRae. All in favor.

### **New Business:**

- **Policy Council/Board By-Laws, Revised – Laurie Kuczka –** Laurie was seeking approval to some changes made to the By-Laws. Laurie read through the old By-Laws and the suggested changes the program was seeking approval for individually. (See attached document) Kim made a suggestion on page 5, Article V, number 1, to omit the word /or/ in the second sentence. Kim made a suggestion on page 9, last bullet to change the wording to /one/ member shall be determined. Chairperson Chantel Bethea asked for a motion to approve the By-Laws with changes. Motion was made by Kim Davenport; seconded by John Monfredo.
- **Programmatic Concerns – Laurie Kuczka –** Laurie let policy council know that on November 8, 2017 the program had an incident were a child was left on the bus. She explained that, the child was not met at the stop by the parent and when they returned to the center with the child, the monitors did not take the child off the bus. When they realized this, they contacted the bus driver and the bus returned to the center with the child. The child was never alone at any time, the driver was on the bus. Disciplinary action was taken and the two bus monitors who were involved in this incident were suspended for 3 day with no pay, with Policy Council/Personnel Committee Approval. Laurie explained that due to the severity of the situation, the program had to contact the Regional Office in Boston and also had to file with DCF on the program. Laurie explained that she was still waiting to hear from DCF on a decision of support was going to be found. She stated that once she learns she will be contacting the Regional Office and information will be share with the policy Council. It was reported that a detailed report of the incident will be sent from the Regional Office to the Office of Head Start in Washington to be placed through a risk report. Laurie said she was hoping to hear back from DCF by Friday December 1, 2017. Laurie explained that based on her conversation

with the Boston Regional Office, one of three things can happen. First being deemed a *Concern*; this would mean the Regional Office will provide ongoing monitoring to ensure we are a quality program. Second would be a considered a *Finding*; where a corrective action plan would need to be created that outlines possible changes to programmatic process and possible policies. The plan could also include re-trainings and additional trainings for staff. This action plan would need to be completed within 120 days. Laurie stated that by holding meetings and reviewing policies and procedures to include a cross reference of forms, that the program has begun work on creating an action plan. Laurie stated that they have put many things in place since the incident. The third is a *Finding of Deficiency*, where the program would have to put in place the actions from above and have to compete for grant funding. Laurie stated, that was all the information she had at this time and would share any new information once received. Vincent Asbridge asked, "How this happened?" Laurie explained that when a child is not picked up at the child's bus stop by the parent or an authorized pick up person, the child stays on the bus, in their assigned seat until the bus finishes the route. The bus then returns to the school to drop off the bus monitors and any children who were not picked up. On this day, when the bus arrived back at the center, the bus monitors did not take the child off the bus when they disembarked the bus. When questioned how they could have forgotten he was there, the two bus monitors said that they did not see the child as they checked the bus and the bus driver confirmed that the child was sitting in such a way, asleep, that she did not initially notice him when she was directed to re-check the bus and return to the school with the child. The bus driver reported that the child was asleep when she found him, and when he woke up he did not appear scared. Laurie also shared the Jackie Hastings the Center Coordinator spoke with the family right away about the incident. Kim Davenport said she remembered talking about the bus policy and remembers discussion each action. Laurie explained how monitors are required to walk to the back of the bus at the end of each run to check each seat, ring the buzzer at the back of the bus and again check each seat as they walk back toward the front of the bus. The bus driver also has their own policy on checking the bus. Sharon Quiles explained how the buzzer system works and if the driver exits the bus without hitting the buzzer the alarm will go off. Jen Shehata asked if there were cameras on the bus. Laurie explained that there are cameras on all buses but the cameras on the bus were not working on that day. Sharon, who explained that she works for Durham Transportation Service, said that Durham noticed that if items are placed behind the driver's seat, it will jam the camera and it will not work. Linda Jackson shared that she has been in contact with Durham and John Hennessey, the WPS Transportation Manager, about how to rectify the cameras not working. Reneet Reyes- Jimenez asked if we can make changes to the bus monitor policy. Laurie explained that we have and that it is policy that the child stays in their seat and that the bus monitor is supposed to always sit behind the last child. Karen explained that for safety reasons, the program always keep the child in the assigned seat so they are able to be identified. Faith Tendo asked, "Who calls the parent if the child is not picked up at their bus stop? Laurie said this was the centers job to contact the family. Faith asked, "What happened to the monitors?" Laurie said they had been suspended for three days without pay, per approval of the Policy Council Personnel Committee, and that per program policies, that is the most severe consequence outside of termination. She went on to explain that, they are now suspended but receiving pay until the result of the DCF finding are final and that the decision of DCF will determine if the 2 bus monitors will be terminated. Karen stated that the monitors are asked to call the center while in route if there is a child that is not met at a bus stop so that the center can start the process of reaching the parent. Karen went on to explain that parents are informed that if they are not at the bus

stop at drop off, the child will be brought back to the school the child attends. Linda stated she feels we have one of the tightest bus monitor trainings a program can have. Linda stated that we are lucky to have two monitors on each bus when most programs only have one. Karen stated that both monitors took blame and didn't give any excuses. Laurie stated that Linda will be riding the buses to monitor actions and pulling tapes to ensure policies are being followed. Kwame Appiah suggested checking the video every week to make sure the cameras are in working order. Linda stated that she informed John Hennessey right away about the incident and the camera issue. Linda also stated that in this situation, we would not have been able to see the child in the camera due to the seats being higher than the child is tall, but we would be able to see the bus monitors actions and if they did in fact check the bus. When Laurie discussed a possible plan to change up bus monitors on buses so staff did not fall into complacency of task. Wendy Connor suggested not doing so because bus monitors get to know children and families and they become familiar with them, so changing bus monitors could have different negative effects. Laurie stated that one of the things that will be put in place is a flag system. Laurie explained that in the event a child is not picked up, a bright flag will be put up on the bus to remind the monitors that there is a child on the bus that is returning to school. Emily Coolick asked if this is going to be up to a monitor to place it up. Laurie said yes, it will be another reminder that a child is coming back to the center. Emily stated, "I think a neon flag is great." Youssef Bourogaa stated that when you don't sign on the clipboard isn't that a flag. Yes, Laurie went on to explain that a child is not let out of the restraints until the pickup person's id has been checked and they initial along with the bus monitor. In addition, when the monitor gets back to the center, the paperwork will be cross referenced with a new checklist that has been put in place so that we know all the children are released in the afternoon. Kim asked if the checklist is new daily. Laurie explained that both forms discussed are weekly forms initialed daily. Kim asked if there is a spot for parents to sign. Laurie said they sign the list that is taken on the bus for each ride. Parents sign and it is highlighted for them. Sharon suggested moving a child who has not been picked up forward. She stated that on her bus the children in the second seat get off at the second stop. Karen stated that it is the policy that we let off children from the back to the front. Karen said Linda will look into this. Karen explained that each child is in restraints and went over the safety concerns of not being able to identify the child if they are not in their correct seat and that the child would also have to be moved several times due to the bus being unloaded from back to front. Vincent also said it might make the child feel ashamed. Emily stated maybe we need to change some of the policies. Linda said the bus monitors should be in front and in back of the last child. Laurie cautioned that we don't add too much to make the task of the bus monitors too overwhelming. Mandy Sosvielle stated that we need to remember that when you are a car behind the bus it can also be frustrating to wait. Chantel stated she would take two more comments. Emily asked if they have to be in restraints. Laurie said yes, this is a mandate. Tiana Ansley said she has been on the bus and she sees how they do the process and it is hard to release all the children when the bus can get noisy. As a parent she sees how much the bus monitors do.

- **Changes to Bus Monitor Policy & Procedure – Karen Waters** – Changes were discussed and went over during the Programmatic Concerns. Please see agenda item above.
- **Election of Community Representatives – Karen Waters** – All Policy Council members were given bios of the community representatives for the 2017-2018 Policy

Council board. Karen read over each of the bios and asked if anyone had any questions. Chantel Bethea bio will be added for December.

Chairperson Chantel Bethea asked for a motion to approve all new community representatives. Motion was made by Nicole MacRae; seconded by Vince Asbridge. All in favor

- **Elections – Laurie Kuczka** – Laurie was informed by Linda Jackson that some of the new policy council members were not able to attend the training, but would still like to be a member of the 2017- 2018 Policy Council. Laurie was seeking approval to table the elections until the December meeting so that the new members can be trained. Kim asked when the next meeting will take place. Laurie said December 20, 2017. Laurie reminded policy council that in the event of a snow storm, and there is no school, there is no policy council meeting.

Chairperson Chantel Bethea asked for a motion to table the elections until the December meeting. Motion was made by Kim Davenport; seconded by Jen Shehata. All in favor

Chairperson Chantel Bethea asked for a motion to approve all new business. Motion was made by Nicole MacRae; seconded by Vince Asbridge. All in favor

**Other: Sharing and Announcements:**

- Kwame Appiah asked that we remind any Head Start families that are receiving WIC that there is the WIC office housed at Mill Swan A Head Start. He asked that everyone spread the word. WIC uses the Head Start office as a model for other offices. Kwame also reminded everyone that anyone who is pregnant does not need a Dr.s note right away to receive WIC benefits. Also if anyone is from the Virgin Islands and Puerto Rico they don't need all the documentation right away. Kwame encourages anyone to call and complain if there is no answer at the WIC office.
- Emily Coolick wanted to follow up with the health and safety checklist. Emily explained that this was a checklist classrooms uses if they needed something fixed in their classroom. Emily stated she asked if policy council members could have access to these reports because she felt somethings were not being taken care of. Emily stated she was told she would receive a report but want the original checklist. Mandy Sosvielle asked if this was concerns of a building. Laurie explained that each week the classroom does the checklist and these checklists are given to Center Coordinators so that the right person is assigned to the job. Laurie explained that they are willing to put each centers in a binder and in the buildings so anyone can review them. Laurie stated that each checklist is a center based issue and if it is happening at the center it needs to be handled at the center level. Laurie stated that when she receives the information she sends in a work order with the WPS Schooldude system. She then receives an email back on who will be working on the discussed work. There was a discussion about a roof leak that has now been fixed. Laurie stated that she will pull administration, center coordinators, and teachers to go over the checklist and the chain of command to be sure there are checks and balances in the system. Emily suggested maybe writing more grants to get more funding. Chantel stated that now Policy Council knows about the issues and the administration is now accountable to bring it back to us.

Chantel Bethea asked for a motion to approve all other business. A motion was made by Nicole MacRae and seconded by Jen Shehata. All in favor.

**Personnel Report:**

Karen Waters read the Personnel Report to the Policy Council/Board.

- Recommended for Permanency  
Mikayla Bourgault
- Resignation effective December 8, 2017  
Tiffani Grudoff – Classroom Aide  
Kelly Kozlowski – Teacher

Chantel Bethea asked for a motion to approve the personnel report as read. A motion was made by John Monfredo and seconded by Kwame Appiah. All in favor.

**Financial Report:**

Director, Laurie Kuczka read the Financial Report to all members. Karen explained that when the program sends in the grant application, a narrative along with the budget is also sent. Laurie asked if there were any questions, comments or concerns. There were none.

The Chairperson asked for a motion to accept the Financial Report as read. Motion was made by Kim Davenport. Seconded by Jen Shehata. All in favor.

**Meeting Adjourned:** The Chairperson asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Motion made by Jen Shehata. Seconded by Kim Davenport. All in favor. Meeting adjourned at 7:35pm.

**The next Policy Council/Board meeting will be held  
on  
Wednesday, December 20, 2017  
at  
Mill Swan School  
337 Mill St.  
5:00p.m.**

**If transportation is needed, please call  
Beverly Brown at (508) 799-3254 or Linda Jackson at (508) 799-3252**