



**Early Childhood Family Services Advisory Council Minutes  
February 18, 2025**

**Minutes**

**Members present:** Laura Bjork, Manuel Diaz, Lenica Diaz, **Jamie Duffey**, **Melissa Dunlay**, Meredith Eilertson Azeem, Jessica Glenn, Jorge González Castro, Sasha Hiatt-Blenkush, Dave Kerber, Adrienne Rysavy, and Ruku Viswanathan

**Guest:** Abby Bross

**ISD 196 Staff present:** Zachary Gonsioroski

**Call to Order**

Chairperson Melissa Dunlay called the meeting to order at 6:20 p.m. Introductions were made.

**Approval of January 21, 2025 minutes**

Chairperson called for motion to approve the minutes from the January 21, 2025 meeting and full council approved.

**ECFS Program Overview – Zachary Gonsioroski**

**Early Childhood Education (ECFE)**

- Spring registration is open.

**Connections Preschool**

- Preschool applications are currently being accepted.
- New 4-year-old classes will be added at Redpine, Rosemount Elementary and Emerald Trail Elementary.
- Applications received by March 9, 2025 will have priority processing. Those families will be notified via email no later than March 31, 2025 whether their child has been placed in a preschool classroom OR if they have been placed on a waiting list
- Marketing efforts include staff newsletter, District 196 newsletter, and elementary newsletters.
- Teachers and Teaching Assistants are being hired for the new classes.

**Liaison Updates**

**ECFS Foundation Meeting (Wednesday, February 5, 2025).**

- Updates shared: \$28,000.00 in the bank account; \$1,500.00 left over to be dispersed for grants this year. Zachary will announce another round of grant applications in March.

## **District 196 Legislative Advisory Council (Wednesday, February 5, 2025) – Sabrina and Dave**

- Updates shared: The Superintendent provided an update from the Senate Education Finance Committee. Concerns were raised about the potential increase in leave from 12 weeks to 20 weeks and the loss of federal funding, which could cause deficits. There is also concern about the loss of funding for private schools using public equipment.

### **Committee Updates**

#### **Fundraising**

- **Restaurant Fundraisers**
  - Panera: \$715 in sales, with \$214 raised for the Foundation.
  - Upcoming: Punch Pizza on March 5, 2025, from 11:30 AM – 8:00 PM.
  - The committee is exploring non-restaurant options for future fundraising.
- **Winter Family Fun Event – February 22, 2025 from 9:30 - 11:30 a.m.**
  - Planning underway:
    - Adding Thank You notes and pictures to snack room
    - Donation letter & appreciation letter saved in the file
    - Pick up time for silent auction items
      - 9-11
      - 5-7
    - Volunteers
      - 16 high school volunteers signed up; 9 have confirmed
      - 6 Staff volunteers confirmed
    - Set-up & Clean-up
      - 4:30 pm Friday, February 21st
      - 9:00 am Saturday
      - Directly after event until finished

#### **Hospitality**

- **Parent-Teacher Conference Meal - Wednesday, February 5, 2025.**
  - Received thank you from staff. Feedback for next year is to have set-up tie at 2:00 p.m.
- **Teacher Appreciation Week (May 5-9, 2025)**
  - Distribution to sites is being planned.
  - Food/Gift ideas are under consideration.

#### **Education and Planning**

- The next meeting will be Thursday, March 13, 2025.

#### **Outdoor Spaces**

- No updates

#### **Family School Book Drive**

- No updates

**Upcoming Events**

Tuesday, March 4, 2025	Superintendent Parent Leader Meeting – Meredith (a.m.) & Laura (p.m.)	Zoom	Group 1: 9:30 – 10:30 a.m. Group 2: 5:00 – 6:00 p.m.
Tuesday, March 11, 2025	Community Education Advisory Council – Melissa	Zoom	6:00-7:30 p.m.
Wednesday, April 2, 2025	196 Legislative Advisory Council	District Office	6:00-7:30 p.m.

**Other Business**

**New Advisory Council Member** –Melissa Dunlay asked the council to vote; the vote amongst the council was unanimously “In Favor.” Abby Bross was appointed as a new ECFS Advisory Council member starting in February 2025.

**Adjournment**

There being no further business J Jorge González Castro made a motion to adjourn, Dave Kerber seconded and full council approved. The meeting adjourned at 7:48 p.m.

**Future Meeting Dates**

3rd Tuesday, every month - March 18, 2025, April 15, 2025, and May 20, 2025

Respectfully submitted, Dacia Liszka