



POLICY COUNCIL AGENDA



APRIL 2 2026



5:00 - 6:30 PM

TOPIC	ACTION	PAGE #	PERSON RESPONSIBLE
Call to Order	None	NA	Jenny Reyes
Corrections/Additions to the Agenda	Vote	1	Jenny
Approval of Consent Agenda:			
• Minutes of March meeting		2	
• Financial reports (3 pages)	Vote	5	Jenny
• Director's report		8	
◦ includes personnel information			
• Program Information summary		10	
Training			
• Health, Mental Health & Nutrition Services	NA	NA	Lacy Krebs
Director Update	NA	NA	Lesa Larson
Old Business			
• Enrollment report	NA	NA	Sherri Scott
• ELC training update	NA	NA	Lesa
• PPO07 - Volunteer Requirements	Vote	11	Lesa
New Business			
• 2025-30 five year goals update (year 1)	NA	12	Lesa
• 2026-27 "past parent" discussion	NA	13	Jenny
• 2026-27 community rep discussion	NA	14	Lesa
• New policy - PP021 - Staff Wages & Benefits	Vote	15	Lesa
• New policy - CHS144 - Mental Health Support for Children & Families	Vote	16	Lesa
• Revised policy - PP001 - Staff Health & Wellness	Vote	17	Lesa
Parent/Community Reports		NA	Jenny
Adjournment		NA	Jenny
Next meeting: May 7, 2026			

Heartland Early Education Policy Council Minutes 3.5.2026

VOTING MEMBERS PRESENT:

Udana Arceo, Kelly Mobray, Shelly Peters

NON-VOTING MEMBERS:

Jenny Reyes, Lesa Larson, Linda Lorett, Sherrie Scott, Adriana Aranda, Shanna Rector

GUESTS:

Amanda Preeo, Michell Hellmuth

CALL TO ORDER:

Jenny Reyes called the meeting to order at 5:07 p.m.

CHANGES AND ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA:

There were no changes or additions to the agenda.

APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS:

Kelly Mobray motioned to approve the Consent agenda items as presented. Shelly Peters seconded the motion.

Quorum

At the March 5, 2026, Policy Council meeting, we were unable to take action on three agenda items due to a lack of a quorum.

- Federal Head Start budget approval
- New policy – PP030 – Staff Qualifications & Competency Requirements.
- ER004 – Child recruitment

Our bylaws require five voting members to be present, and we had three. This prompted the director to send items via email on March 6, 2026, with an explanation of the documents. Five votes to approve and zero votes to not approve were received. The motion to approve the items sent via email as presented passed.

Lesla inquired about ideas to interest and retain parents on Policy Council. The following ideas were shared:

- Change the time of the meeting
 - Start the year with more representatives for each program offered
 - Have meetings every other month
 - Have family consultants remind parents of the meeting the morning of the meeting
 - PC informational video should be provided during the first family consultant visit
 - Provide PC information during conferences, preschool jump into Head Start, and enrollment
-

DIRECTOR'S REPORT:

Lesa informed that Heartland Early Education will be participating in Match Madness, which will take place on March 12 at the Salina Field House. Two student volunteers from the marketing department at Kansas Wesleyan University created a video and flyers to post on social media.

OLD BUSINESS:**Enrollment Report**

Sherrie Scott presented January's enrollment report. She stated the Federal Early Head Start program is enrolled at 96%, Kansas Early Head Start Child Care at 100%, Kansas Home Visits at 100%, and Head Start at 100%. Jenny Reyes inquired if the Policy Council videos that were recorded are being shown during the application process. Sherrie replied, "This is done at the first Family Consultants visit." Sherrie also mentioned that 98 new applications for the 2026-2027 school year have been received.

ELC training update

The English Language conversation sessions started on March 2, 2026. The sessions will take place every Monday from 5:00 to 7:00 pm from March 2nd to May 4th, 2026. These sessions are offered to parents who are part of Heartland Early Education.

NEW BUSINESS:**Federal Head Start budget approval**

Linda presented the proposal for the Federal Head Start and Early Head Start Grant Application that serves qualifying low-income families. The budget will allow Heartland Early Education to provide services through center-based programming and home visitation for children ages 0-5 in Saline, Dickinson, and Ellsworth Counties, 230 Head Start, and 91 Early Head Start children. Kelly Mobray made a motion to approve the Federal Head Start and Early Head Start Grant Application as presented. Shelly Peters seconded the motion.

Self-Assessment update

Sherrie presented the updated self-assessment plan of action for the Early Head Start (EHS) under enrollment plan, the simplification of the enrollment process for families, and the improvement of the coordination of required health services in Salina Public Schools. Refer to page 20 of the agenda for details.

Child Assessment – 2nd Checkpoint

Michelle Hellmuth presented the assessment reports for the Head Start, Early Head Start, SPS Preschool classrooms, and the USD 305 Parents as Teachers program. This assessment is designed to determine if children are improving in their developmental skills. The results show steady progress from the fall to the winter assessment.

Udana inquired if there is a percentage difference between part-day and school-day classroom results. Shanna rector replied that the school-day classrooms show a higher percentage improvement than the part-day classrooms.

New Policy – PP030 – Staff Qualifications & Competency Requirements

Lesa presented the new Staff Qualifications and Competency Requirements Policy. Even though other policies are also being revised, new policies and revisions are presented to the Policy Council only if the policy changes or a new policy is created. Pages 26 to 29 of the agenda explain details about the new policy. Shelly Peters made a motion to approve the Staff Qualifications & Competency Requirements policy as presented. Udana seconded the motion.

Revised Policies:

- ER004

Sherrie presented the Child Recruitment Policy. This policy was revised, and the wording and procedures were updated to make the recruitment process more specific. Udana motioned to approve the Child Recruitment Policy as presented. Shelly seconded the motion.

- PP007

Lesa presented the Volunteer Requirements Policy. This policy was reviewed and updated to ensure health and interaction requirements are met for volunteers in both licensed and non-licensed facilities. Jenny inquired how recent health testing must be to meet the volunteer health requirements. Lesa will follow up and provide information at the next meeting. The policy will be revised again for procedural changes. The policy will be presented for approval at the following meeting.

Parent/Community Reports

Policy Council members are concerned about our community families, the immigration situation, and the recent events happening in the country.

Udana shared that her child is using a communication device and is thriving in the classroom.

Meeting adjourned at 6:04 p.m., motion made by Udana and seconded by Kelly.

USD 305 Heartland Early Education

Board of Education and Policy Council Reports



CACFP MEALS CLAIMED - FEBRUARY 2026

	# of Meals	Breakfast	Lunch	PM snack	Total Meals	Revenue Recv'd
Enterprise		145	147	139	431	1,252.88
Ellsworth		143	153	151	447	1,292.51
Salina Education Center		178	178	171	527	1,526.43
Salina Heartland		2,379	2,558	2,317	7,254	21,318.74
	Total CACFP Meals	2,845	3,036	2,778	8,659	\$ 25,390.56

CREDIT CARD CHARGES - FEBRUARY 2026

	Vendor name	WEX Inc.	Walmart	Dillon's	Gene's IGA	Wests C Mart
	Date Paid	2/13/2026	multiple	2/6/2026	2/28/2026	2/28/2026
Account #	DESCRIPTION					
42275	Parents as Teachers supplies			6.28		
73470	HS classroom supplies - room 103					
73480	playground / outdoor supplies					
73490	Classroom misc. supplies HS					
73500	HS classroom supplies - room 104		50.81			
73530	HS classroom supplies - room 106		18.32			
73540	HS classroom supplies - room 108					
73560	HS classroom supplies - room 110					
73580	HS classroom supplies - room 111					
73585	HS classroom supplies - room 112					
73640	HS classroom supplies - Enterprise					26.16
73660	HS classroom supplies - Ellsworth				11.17	
73680	HS classroom supplies - SA Educ Center		17.13			
73720	EHS classroom supplies - room 904					
73725	EHS classroom supplies - room 906					
73731	EHS classroom supplies - room 810		14.11			
73732	EHS classroom supplies - room 812		15.89			
73780	EHS Home Visit Supplies					
73840	Medical / Dental Supplies		1.42			
73930	diapers / supplies		29.97			
74380	Policy Council Meetings			68.88		
74430	Parent Meetings - Ellsworth					
74440	Parent Meetings - HS					
74470	Parent Meetings - EHS Center Based		56.32			
74480	Parent Meetings - EHS socializations					
74485	Parent Meetings - EHS home based					
74487	DK CO socializations					
74523	Staff Supplies - EHS					
74523	Staff Supplies - HS					
73440	Office Supplies					
74630	Staff Heartwarmers			89.70		
73950	Building Supplies		38.01		24.83	
74490	Father / Mothers Club Meetings		35.91			
74520	Other Activities - Program					
74522	Other Activities - Staff Groups					
74680	vehicle fuel	419.21				
74685	bus fuel (Durham)	456.37				
74720	Training - Staff					
81860	CACFP - non food supplies				10.93	
81880	CACFP - Food Expenses		339.05		533.09	
75752	Preschool Elementary Supplies (KPP)					
		875.58	616.94	164.86	580.02	26.16



Heartland Early Education Financial Summary

for Fiscal Year 7/01/25 to 6/30/26

as of February 28, 2026



Categories	Budget	Jul	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	Total	Balance	% Spent
Fund 61 - Federal Head Start / Early Head Start																
1. Personnel	4,720,408	262,395	308,461	405,890	435,060	445,259	386,944	423,515	413,458					3,080,983.05	(1,639,424.95)	65.27%
2. Fringe Benefits	932,320	48,715	55,402	80,611	83,838	84,916	80,995	82,569	82,120					599,166.61	(333,153.39)	64.27%
4. Contractual	92,518	2,698	5,645	2,305	20,908	3,419	19,723	3,616	10,050					68,363.76	(24,154.24)	73.89%
6. Supplies	178,800	7,700	10,848	5,505	11,359	6,847	4,860	5,508	6,670					59,295.69	(119,504.31)	33.16%
7. Other Child Services	29,145	476	282	565	1,069	856	1,004	329	947					5,527.31	(23,617.69)	18.96%
8. Other Parent Services	23,510	375	265	1,640	1,487	1,724	1,406	646	939					8,481.71	(15,028.29)	36.08%
9. Other/Occupancy	217,960	7,257	27,285	17,150	7,284	12,379	14,007	14,030	10,568					109,961.07	(107,998.93)	50.45%
10. Training	76,921	915	5,847	4,016	8,767	5,330	5,189	6,191	7,332					43,586.98	(33,334.02)	56.66%
11. Equipment > \$5000														-	-	
Total Federal Grant	6,271,582	330,531	414,034	517,681	569,773	560,730	514,127	536,404	532,084	-	-	-	-	3,975,366.18	(2,296,215.82)	63.39%
	Budget	Received													Variance	
Additional Revenues/Reimbursements	230,000	15,515	13,150	15,843	15,409	15,232	17,974	15,390	16,103					124,616.07	(105,383.93)	54.18%
Fund 59 - Kansas Early Head Start Child Care																
1. Personnel	761,352	58,698	68,533	59,658	58,684	63,047	56,264	67,719	62,093					494,695.83	(266,656.17)	64.98%
DCF Child Care Revenues	(244,800)	(22,554)	(21,097)	(21,106)	(22,633)	(27,524)	(29,647)	(24,068)	(22,657)					(191,285.54)	53,514.46	78.14%
2. Fringe Benefits	153,448	11,483	12,940	11,888	11,424	12,121	11,539	12,770	12,277					96,442.43	(57,005.57)	62.85%
5. Child Care Supplies	9,000	316	597	507	658	713	575	527	500					4,392.71	(4,607.29)	48.81%
9. Other /Occupancy	18,000	1,734	2,046	1,811	1,615	2,165	1,564	1,414	1,919					14,266.27	(3,733.73)	79.26%
Total Kansas Grant HCCP	697,000	49,677	63,018	52,759	49,747	50,521	40,295	58,363	54,132	-	-	-	-	418,511.70	(278,488.30)	60.04%
Fund 59 - Kansas Early Head Start Home Visitation																
1. Personnel	169,769	14,335	13,879	12,900	14,372	13,957	12,575	15,419	13,628					111,063.62	(58,705.38)	65.42%
2. Fringe Benefits	27,691	2,535	2,395	2,341	2,526	2,425	2,308	2,652	2,419					19,601.63	(8,089.37)	70.79%
9. Other / Occupancy	2,540	540	211	174	140	137	132	185	134					1,652.35	(887.65)	65.05%
Total Kansas Grant HV	200,000	17,410	16,485	15,415	17,038	16,519	15,014	18,255	16,181	-	-	-	-	132,317.60	(67,682.40)	66.16%
Other Early Childhood Grants																
Fund 28 - Parents as Teachers	149,084	10,966	14,293	11,363	14,376	12,020	12,286	12,847	14,354					102,504.48	(46,579.52)	68.76%
Fund 11 - State Pre-K	308,200	1,307	30,605	30,555	30,585	30,599	30,474	30,619	30,417					215,159.53	(93,040.47)	69.81%
Fund 70 - KS Preschool Pilot (KPP)	189,800	5,519	7,707	21,054	18,435	1,561	13,700	12,398	21,062					101,436.30	(88,363.70)	53.44%
Fund 58 - Non Federal Funds	14,098	-	1,018	-	1,494	377	-	510	149					3,548.17	(10,549.91)	25.47%
Fund 60 - Summer Food Program	2,500	1,872	81	-	-	-	-	-	-					1,952.97	(547.03)	78.12%
Fund 69 - Child Food Program (CACFP)	255,000	4,781	26,619	27,223	28,012	22,987	18,270	26,820	22,839					177,550.81	(77,449.19)	69.63%
Total Other Grants	918,682	24,445	80,322	90,195	92,902	67,544	74,730	83,193	88,820	-	-	-	-	602,152.26	(316,529.82)	65.5%
															-	∞
TOTAL ALL GRANTS																
	8,087,264	422,062	573,860	676,051	729,461	695,314	644,167	696,215	691,218	-	-	-	-	5,128,348	(2,958,916)	63.41%
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VISA Credit Card Statement

2/15/2026

ACCOUNT	DESCRIPTION	AMOUNT	CARD HOLDERS	AMOUNT
42520	Parents as Teachers			
73440	Office Supplies			
73460	Classroom Supplies - room 101 Madison			
73465	Classroom Supplies - room 102 Gina			
73470	Classroom Supplies - room 103 Nicole			
73500	Classroom Supplies - room 104 Kate		Hellmuth, Michelle	
73530	Classroom Supplies - room 106 Heidi		Holecek, Cindy	
73540	Classroom Supplies - room 108 Tonya			
73560	Classroom Supplies- room 110 Casi		Larson, Lesa	
73580	Classroom Supplies - room 111 Jackie		Lorett, Linda	1,096.66
73640	Classroom Supplies - Enterprise		Wagoner, Megan	
73700	Misc. Expense			
73720	Classroom Supplies- Room 904 Marqesa		Enterprise (LeAnn F)	
73780	HV Supplies & Curriculum			
73790	Literacy Supplies - Classroom	218.40		
73840	Medical/Dental Supplies		Salina #1	698.22
73950	Building Supplies		Salina #2	1,464.40
74380	Policy Council Meetings	348.25	Salina #3	1,050.00
74400	Volunteer Appreciation			
74424	Parent Meetings - Enterprise			
74440	Parent Meeting - Saline County	37.22	Reward Credit	
74480	Socializations			
74485	Parent Meetings - EHS HB			
74487	Parent Meetings - EHS HB DK CO			
74490	Fatherhood/Motherhood Support Group	214.78		
74520	Other Activities	61.98		
74523	Other Activities - Michelle EHS	18.00		
74524	Other Activities - Michelle HS	17.99		
74620	Advertising - Human Resources			
74630	Staff Heartwarmers Program			
74640	Human Resources - Testing Fees	196.00		
74660	Membership Dues			
74700	Training - Leadership			
74710	Training - Mid Manager			
74720	Training - Staff			
74740	Training - Conscious Discipline			
74820	Training - Health / Mental Health			
74880	Training - Staff Development			
74890	Training / CDA Fees	1,575.00		
75798	Training - Staff Development KPP	525.00		
45700	Salina Education Foundation Grant	1,096.66		
	TOTAL	4,309.28	9 Visa Cards	4,309.28

Heartland Early Education >>> Director's Report

Lesla Larson
March 2026

**1) Enrollment ending 1.31.2026**

Early Head Start: 82/91
 Head Start: 226/230
 KEHS-Home Visitation: 20/20
 KEHS-Child Care Partners: 23/24

2) Attendance Rates ending 1.31.2026

EHS Home-Based: 95%
 EHS Center-Based: 84%
 Head Start: 91%
 KEHS-Home Visitation: 95%
 KEHS-Child Care Partners: 87%

3) Snacks and meals served (December)

School	Breakfast	Lunch	PM Snack	Total	Revenue Received
Enterprise	156	158	154	468	1,352.79
Ellsworth	148	161	160	469	1,355.39
Salina Education Center	146	145	146	437	1,254.35
Salina Heartland (0-5)	2,159	2,302	2,081	6,542	19,224.51
Total CACFP Meals	2,609	2,766	2,541	7,916	23,187.04

4) New Hires

Name	Position	Effective
Abrams, Amanda	Intake/Data Entry Specialist	3/23/2026

Transfers

Name	Former Position	New Position	Effective
Dolezal, Angela	EECES	EECES/CDA	3/1/2026
Lamer, Stephen	EECES	EECES/CDA	3/1/2026
Bagley, Sandra	EECES	EECES/CDA	3/1/2026
Dominguez-Herrera, Francisca	EECES	EECES/CDA	3/1/2026
Contreras, Susana	Kitchen Assistant	EECES	3/1/2026

Separation of Employment

Name	Position	Effective
Martinez, Marina	Intake/Data Entry Specialist	2/25/2026

- 5) The Head Start federal grant guidelines have changed for the 2026–2027 program year. In previous years, continuation applications required a comprehensive written narrative and submission of multiple supporting documents. We are currently completing Year One of our five-year project period. For the remaining four years, we will follow the updated continuation guidelines. Under the new requirements, only the budget and cost allocation documents must be submitted. All other required components such as the five-year goals, annual report, and self-assessment must still be completed and maintained on file but do not need to be submitted unless requested.

- 6) Over the past several months, our Policy Council has been intentionally exploring ways to strengthen parent engagement. During those discussions, one of our bilingual fathers, who serves as a parent representative, shared feedback from families interested in opportunities to practice conversational language skills and build confidence in their second language. I am pleased to share that Heartland is partnering with the Salina Adult Education Center to respond to this interest. Miranda Marshall, an instructor with the center, will facilitate an eight-week course that supports parents in developing conversational skills while also reinforcing *Conscious Discipline* strategies their children are learning at Heartland. To help ensure access and participation, childcare and a light meal will be provided. I will share updates as the course progresses, but we are excited about this meaningful opportunity to support both family engagement and student success. Flyer is included.

Program Information Summary

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APRIL 2026

ENROLLMENT

- Working on information flyer/packet to be shared with area churches
- New Intake/Data Entry staff started 3/23/2026
- Participating in Preschool Information and Eligibility Events at each Elementary school on 3/26.
- Recruitment meeting scheduled with SRHC for 3/25/26.

FAMILY SERVICES

- Parent Committee Meetings for Ellsworth and Enterprise are set for Tuesday, March 25th.
- Early Head Start Home Based Parent Committee meeting was held March 10th. Families attending were able to have a family picture taken by a local photographer and enjoyed dinner and discussion on several topics.
- Big Truck Night is Tuesday, April 28th

HUMAN RESOURCES

- Open Positions:
 - Family Consultant for EHS Center-Based
 - Preschool Teacher
- If interested, complete an application at www.305heartland.com/careers
- Participated in the Career Fair and Mock Interviews at Salina Tech on 2/26.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

- Second Bus Evacuation practice was completed Wednesday, March 25th.

HEARTLAND EARLY EDUCATION
700 JUPITER AVENUE, SALINA KS 67401

MISSION STATEMENT:

Inspire and empower children and families through quality education

HEALTH AND NUTRITION

- HSAC on 4.15.26
- Health Services staff will attend KHSA Networking sessions at WCC on 4.16.26
- Developing a collaboration with CKCIE Audiologist for hearing screens for SPS preschool Head Start students
- Second KU student nurse here for Population Health experience (March 23-April 15th)
- SFHC staff completed oral health screenings and fluoride varnishes on students whose families had provided prior authorization on Thursday, March 5th.

EDUCATION

- Heartland will participate in celebrating the Week of the Young Child with area early childhood organizations/PIECE during the week of April 13-17th. We will provide face painting at the Family Friday event on April 17th.
- Our annual art walk will be held in our sites from April 20-May 1. Student and staff artwork will be on display for all to enjoy!
- End of year activities in preschool classrooms focus on transitions for kindergarten-bound students. Practice using lunch trays, working independently, recalling memories, and saying goodbye are some of the activities provided to help prepare students for upcoming changes.
- As we prepare for the school year end, Early Head Start staff are preparing for a summer of activities for our littlest learners! Wet Wednesdays are always a fun day when the students get to enjoy splashing and cooling off with outdoor water play.
- Kindergarten Field Trips for our students transitioning to a SPS Elementary Building for Kindergarten this fall will begin March 30th.

Heartland Early Education	
Policy Number: PP007	Title: Volunteer Requirements
Performance Standard: Sec. 1302.94	Effective Date: 8/23/07
	Policy Council Approval: 8/23/07
	Procedure Revised: 5/15/13, ~~R.~~ 11/7/2022, 3/19/26
	Reviewed:

POLICY:

~~Regular volunteers are required to provide results from a skin test for tuberculosis to ensure they do not pose a significant risk to the health or safety of others in the program.~~

Volunteers must be screened for appropriate communicable diseases in accordance with State, Tribal or local laws.

Children will never be left alone with volunteers.

~~Volunteers are never counted in the staff/child ratio.~~

PROCEDURES:

1. At a minimum, volunteers will be screened for appropriate communicable diseases, via the TB Risk Assessment screener.
2. Volunteers for Licensed Child Care sites, will follow the Kansas Department of Health and Environment (KDHE), Kansas Laws and Regulations for Licensing Preschools and Child Care Centers. As of August 2024, volunteers must successfully complete the following:
 - KDHE Health Status Form
 - Negative TB Skin Test/X-ray
 - Background check via CLARIS
3. Volunteer records are reviewed yearly and updated as required by KDHE.
- ~~1. Heartland follows the State of Kansas Licensing requirements, as they are more stringent than HSPPS and USD 305.~~
4. Clarification of a volunteer ~~(provided by LeighAnn Montoy, Childcare Licensing Coordinator, 10.18.2017)~~
 - Volunteer = The parent/person is present to help the teacher with an activity or to help other students.
 - NOT a volunteer = The parent is present to interact only with their child and for the benefit of the parent/child relationship.
- ~~5. Prior to volunteering, volunteers are required to provide results from a TB Skin Test (less than 6 months old).~~
- ~~6. Volunteers will complete the Non-Employee Required Paperwork packet, which include a TB skin test requirement and a background check.~~
5. Volunteers are never counted in the staff/child ratio.

Heartland Early Education — Five-Year Goals

Year One Update (2025–2026)

Goal 1: Attract and cultivate staff who inspire and empower children and families

Objective A: Successfully recruit qualified staff

- Redesigned orientation into a two-part model combining training and guided classroom observation.
- Piloted ESL TA Academy (Spring 2025); five participants, two hires.
- Partnered with district to launch a CDA high school career pathway (approved by BOE); rollout planned for 2026–27.

Objective B: Build systems to effectively train staff

- Implemented Conscious Discipline training across all staff; new staff training scheduled for Spring 2026.
- Provided financial wellness training (“The Beans”) with ongoing evaluation.
- Education supervisors trained in Practice-Based Coaching; staff needs assessments guide annual training.
- Developing supervisor training resources (HR/PM) and ongoing professional etiquette focus at staff meetings.

Objective C: Create a secondary level of support for mid-managers and leadership

- Began succession planning for key roles; expanding in Year Two.
 - Hosted administrative workshops (COMET initiative; upcoming teamwork training).
 - Focused on staff wellness, including financial and occupational wellness supports.
-

Goal 2: Strengthen relationships through intentional communication

Objective A: Build communication practices and strategies to enhance overall program engagement

Specifically for Head Start programming in the elementary schools:

- Developed transition plans and shared calendars for Head Start services in elementary schools.
- Established PLCs and held leadership coordination meetings.
- Ongoing work to simplify enrollment processes.
- Coordinated health screenings and transportation communication with district partners.

Objective B: Foster a culture of transparent and respectful communication (with Durham)

- Shared updates on Head Start Performance Standards and revised policies.
 - Simplified application materials with QR codes for accessibility.
 - Provided regular director video updates and increased staff engagement opportunities.
-

Goal 3: Responsive to the needs of children, families, staff and community

Objective A: Align services with identified needs

- Trained staff on tiered supports, referral processes, and updated procedures.
- Adjusted social-emotional curriculum to allow flexible pacing based on classroom needs.
- Conducted classroom observations to ensure implementation of key practices.
- Reinforced Active Supervision practices and safety procedures across all classrooms.

Heartland Early Education Policy Council membership

Past Parents

Criteria:

- Parent or guardian whose child has or will be transitioning from Heartland to another school

Responsibilities:

- Serve as a Community Representative on Policy Council
- Mentor/leader for new PC parents
- Provide continuity and stability
- Eligible to be elected for Chair, Vice-chair, Secretary

Elected yearly.

Not to exceed five years.

**Heartland Early Education
Potential Additional Policy Council
Community Representatives for 2026-2027**

DICKINSON COUNTY			
Name	Position	Address	Phone/Email
John Hultgren	Dickinson County Health Department	1001 N Brady St. Abilene, KS 67410	785-263-4780 jhultgren@dkcoks.org
Laurie Rutherford	Enterprise Elementary Principal		785-342-9754

ELLSWORTH COUNTY			
Name	Position	Address	Phone/Email
Brenda Buehler	Retired RN	1603 Aylward Ave. Ellsworth, KS 67439	785-472-4488

SALINE COUNTY			
Name	Position	Address	Phone/Email
Dr. Jessica Cairo	SRHC Nurse Practitioner	2265 S. 9 th St. Salina, KS 67401	785-827-6453
Karen Couch	Director of Salina Emergency Food Bank	PO Box 1482 Salina, KS 67401	kcouch@salinafood.org 827-7111
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Policy Council Approved:

Heartland Early Education	
Policy Number: PP021	Title: Staff Wages and Benefits
Performance Standard: 1302.90(e) and (f)	Effective Date: 3/19/2026
	Policy Council Approval: 4/2/2026
	Revised:
	Reviewed:

POLICY:

Heartland provides wages and comprehensive benefits to attract, retain, and support highly qualified staff that are equitable, transparent, and sufficient to promote the well-being and high-quality services for children and families.

PROCEDURES:

1. Wages

- a. Heartland Early Education follows the same salary schedules determined by Salina Public Schools. The salary schedules:
 - i. Reflect salaries or wages for all other staff in the program; promotes salaries that are comparable to similar services in relevant industries in their geographic area; and considers, at a minimum, responsibilities, qualifications, experience relevant to the position, and schedule or hours worked.
 - ii. Are reviewed annually by Salina Public Schools Board of Education, and at a minimum Heartland Leadership will review once every 5 years to assess whether it continues to meet the expectations described in 1302.90(e)(1)(i).
 - iii. Are not in excess of level II of the Executive Schedule, as required in 42 U.S.C 9848 (b)(1).
- b. The salary schedules match those of the Salina Public Schools elementary schools.
- c. The salary schedules provide all staff with a wage or salary that is generally sufficient to cover basic needs such as food, housing, utilities, medical costs, transportation, and taxes, or would be sufficient if the worker's hourly rate were paid according to a full-time, full-year schedule.
- d. The salary schedules are the same for all ages served.

2. Staff Benefits

- a. Each full-time staff member, defined as those working 30 or more hours per week, will be offered the following benefits through Salina Public Schools:
 - i. High-quality affordable health care coverage.
 - ii. Paid Leave based on the number of hours and days worked per year.
 - iii. Access to short-term, free and low-cost behavioral health services via the Employee Assistance Program or directly paid by Heartland.
- b. Each part-time staff member, defined as those working less than 30 hours per week, will be offered the following benefits through Salina Public Schools:
 - i. Paid leave based on the number of hours and days worked per year.
 - ii. Access to short-term, free and low-cost behavioral health services via the Employee Assistance Program or directly paid by Heartland.

Heartland Early Education

Policy Number: CHS144	Title: Mental Health Support for Children and Families
Performance Standard: 1302.45 (a)(b)	Effective Date: 3.19.26
	Policy Council Approval:
	Revised:
	Reviewed:

POLICY:

Heartland Early Education will support a program-wide culture that promotes mental health, social and emotional well-being, and overall health and safety with a multidisciplinary approach. Heartland Early Education will ensure that mental health consultants provide consultation services that build the capacity of adults in the infant's or young child's life to strengthen and support the mental health and social-emotional development of young children.

PROCEDURES:

Heartland Early Education Classrooms

Heartland Early Education Mental Health staff:

- Provides support for adult mental health and well-being (i.e., consultation, MH referrals to community providers, classroom team processing and support sessions)
- Coordinates support for positive learning environments for all children, teacher practices and strategies for children with social, emotional and behavioral or mental health needs (i.e., mental health staffing, consultation, classroom team processing and support sessions, Nurturing Pathways groups)
- Provide in-house mental health consultation and assess approaches annually to ensure program needs are met (i.e., Consult Days, Safety Plan Team, SITs, mental health staffing, classroom team processing and support sessions, regularly scheduled MH team meetings,)
- Mental health consultation services are available at least monthly (mental health staffing)
- Ensures all children receive adequate screens and appropriate follow-up including sharing referral information with families for potential social-emotional, behavioral and mental health concerns (0-5 Referral process, ASQ-SE2)
- Facilitates multidisciplinary coordination and collaboration between mental health and other relevant program services including education, disability, family engagement and health services (mental health staffing-SPED, Education, Family Consultants, nurse, nutrition)
- Provides consultation to promote a program-wide culture of mental health, prevent mental health challenges from developing and identify/support children with mental health and social-emotional concerns (mental health staffing, RMT, consultation, training)
- Provides consultation to child and family service staff to implement strategies that build nurturing and responsive relationships and create positive learning environments and promotes mental health and social-emotional development of all children (mental health staffing, Consult Day, SIT, classroom staff processing and support sessions, joint home visit)
- Provides consultation with staff who have contact with children to understand and appropriately respond to prevalent mental health concerns and how exposure to trauma and substance use can influence risks (mental health staffing, classroom staff processing/support sessions, training, mental health observations)

SPS Classrooms

Staff from the elementary school provides support and strategies within their building.

Heartland Early Education

Policy Number: PP001	Title: Staff Health and Wellness
Performance Standard: 1302.93	Effective Date: 11/5/15
	Policy Council Approval: 11/5/15
	Revised: 9/15/17; 2/17/26
	Reviewed:

POLICY: Each staff member will have an initial health examination and a periodic re-examination as recommended by their health care provider, that include a skin test for tuberculosis to ensure they do not pose a significant risk to the health or safety of others in the program.

Mental health and wellness information will be available to staff regarding health issues that may affect their job performance. Regularly scheduled opportunities to learn about mental health, wellness, and health education will be provided.

Each staff member will receive regular breaks of adequate length and frequency based on hours worked to include, time for meal breaks as appropriate.

Heartland will cultivate a program-wide culture of wellness that empowers staff as professionals and supports staff to effectively accomplish their job responsibilities in the high-quality manner.

PROCEDURES:

- ~~1. Prior to employment all employees are required to provide documentation of an initial health examination and results from a TB Skin Test (less than 6 months old).~~
- ~~2. Mental health and wellness information will be provided in ways such as in the staff handbook, through events and activities sponsored by Heartwarmers and other committees etc.~~

Recognizing the physical, emotional, and mental health of our staff directly impacts the quality of services provided to children and families, we strive to prioritize wellness through:

1. Health Requirements prior to employment
 - a. Each staff member will have an initial health examination and a periodic re-examination as recommended by their health care provider.
 - b. Salina Public Schools and Child Care Licensing Regulations require each staff member to have a negative tuberculosis test/x-ray.
2. Access to wellness resources
 - a. Staff are informed of available wellness supports, including Employee Assistance Programs (EAP), mental health services and community wellness initiatives.
 - b. Heartland provides up to six counseling sessions at no cost to the staff person.
3. Adequate breaks
 - a. Staff receive regular, uninterrupted breaks in alignment with labor regulations and program schedules.
 - b. Supervisors are responsible for ensuring coverage that allows for breaks without compromising child supervision or classroom ratios.
4. Wellness culture that values self-care and mutual support.
 - a. Heartland will promote a positive workplace culture by encouraging open communication, recognition, and mutual respect.
 - b. Wellness activities (e.g., wellness challenges, staff appreciation efforts) will be offered to reinforce self-care and team connection.
 - c. Staff are encouraged to model healthy behavior for children and families.

5. Support for job performance
 - a. Supervisors will engage in reflective supervision or regular check-ins with staff to identify any challenges affecting performance and connect staff to appropriate supports.
 - b. When personal health or wellness affects job responsibilities, the program will offer reasonable accommodations or support referrals, when possible.
6. Other supports offered:
 - a. Emergency Fund Request
 - b. Staff Pantry
 - c. Caring Closet
7. Ongoing review and feedback
 - a. The leadership team will periodically assess the effectiveness of wellness initiatives and gather staff input to ensure continuous improvement.