

SCHOOL BOARD WORKSHOP

GADSDEN COUNTY SCHOOL BOARD
MAX D. WALKER ADMINISTRATION BUILDING
35 MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. BLVD.
QUINCY, FLORIDA

August 12, 2021

3:30 P.M.

The workshop was open to the public and electronically recorded.

The following Board members were present: Mr. Leroy McMillan, Chairman; Mr. Steve Scott; Mrs. Karema D. Dudley; Ms. Cathy S. Johnson; and Mr. Charlie D. Frost. Also present were Mr. Elijah Key, Superintendent and Secretary to the Board; Mrs. Deborah Minnis, Attorney for the Board; and others.

1. Call To Order

The workshop was called to order by the Chairman, Mr. Leroy McMillan, at 3:35 p.m.

2. Opening Prayer

The opening prayer was led by Mr. Elijah Key.

3. Pledge of Allegiance

Recited in unison.

4. Head Start Governance Training

Mr. Key turned the workshop over to Ms. Sone-Serae Batten, Head Start Grantee Specialist. Ms. Batten asked everyone to introduce themselves. Introductions were made by the following participants: Ms. Carol Coffee, Head Start Grantee Specialist, Ms. Leslie McKenney, Head Start Grantee Specialist/POC, Mr. Jason Flowers, Head Start Grantee Specialist, Mr. Leroy McMillan, School Board Chairman, Mr. Steve Scott, School Board Member; Mrs. Karema D. Dudley, School Board Member, Ms. Cathy S. Johnson, School Board Member, Mr. Charlie D. Frost, School Board Member, Mr. Elijah Key, Superintendent, Mrs. Deborah Minnis, School Board Attorney, Dr. Sonya Jackson, Human Resource Director, Mrs. Mary Davis, Administrative Assistant; Ms. Valencia Denson, Head Start PreK Director, Ms. Tamela McGriff, Health Coordinator, Mrs. Dana Street, Family Services Coordinator, Ms. Deondra Watson, HIPPIY Coordinator, Ms. Monique Barnes, Midway Head Start Chairman, Ms. Shannon Brown, Parent Involvement Coordinator, Ms. Twanna Parker Davis, Community Member, Ms. Francheska Daniels, Greensboro Center Chairperson, Ms. Cierra Cato, George W. Munroe Center Chairperson, Ms. Kristiana Morris, Havana Magnet Center Chairperson, Ms. Maricela Martinez, Quincy Area 3's Center Chairperson, Ms. Judith Flores, Community Member, Ms. Latoria Riggins, Community Member, Ms. Britney Tongen, Stewart Street Center Co-Chairperson, Ms. Jasmine Bouie, Quincy Area 3's Center Co-Chairperson, and Ms. Trina Robinson House, Greensboro Center Co-Chairperson.

Ms. Carol Coffee shared a power-point presentation with the Board members outlining an overview of training and technical assistance for the Head Start Program. She stated that the Gadsden County School Board will gain knowledge of the Head Start Program Performance Standards and Head Start Act Regulations related to governance in order to properly implement their roles and responsibilities and properly govern the Head Start Program. She stated that the Grantee Specialist will explore Head Start leadership and governance through the lens of structure, processes and relationships and provide strategies and resources for strengthening leadership and governance capacity. She stated that Head Start is a program focused on helping young children prepare for and be successful in school. She stated that this is done by providing comprehensive services that are responsive to each child and family's ethnic, cultural, and linguistic heritage. She stated that the purpose of the Head Start Program is to promote the school readiness of low-income children by enhancing their cognitive, social, and emotional development. She stated that more children reach kindergarten ready to succeed. She stated that leadership and governance includes exercising fiscal and legal oversight, setting program direction, and creating a balanced representation of voices that ensure stakeholder input, diversity and accountability to the community. She stated that Public Law 110-134 was established December 12, 2007 – Improving Head Start for School Readiness Act. Head Start Program Performance States were effective November 7, 2016. Individual with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), McKinney Vento-Homeless Assistance Act, 45 CFR Part 75 Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost, Principles, and Audit Requirements: December 26, 2014; Other Federal and State Regulations and Statutes; and OHS Program Instructions and Information Memorandum. She stated that the program instructions address a specific requirement that Head Start grantees and delegate agencies must implement in their programs. She stated that Information Memorandums are targeted communication tools the Office of Head Start which provides policy information to Head Start and Early Head Start grantees and delegate agencies. She stated that a system is a group of interacting, interrelated, or interdependent parts that form a complex and unified whole with a specific purpose. She stated that the Head Start Core Values include the following: a) establish a supportive learning environment for children, parents, and staff in which the processes of enhancing awareness, refining skills, and increasing understanding are valued and promoted; b) recognize that members of the Head Start community – children, families, and staff – have roots in many cultures and languages. Head Start families and staff, working together as a team, can effectively promote respectful, sensitive, and proactive approaches to diversity; c) understand the empowerment of families occurs when program governance is a collaborative effort among families, governing bodies, and staff, and when the ideas and opinions of families are heard and respected; d) embrace a comprehensive vision of health for children, families, and staff that ensures basic health needs are met; encourages practices that prevent future illnesses and injuries; and promotes positive, culturally relevant health behaviors that enhance life-long well-being; e) respect the importance of all aspects of an individual's development, including social, emotional, cognitive, and physical growth; f) build a community in which each child and adult is treated as an individual, while at the same time reinforcing a sense of belonging to the group; g) foster a relationship with the larger community so families and staff are respected and served by a network of community agencies that work in partnership with one another; and h) develop a continuum of care, education, and other services that allow stable, uninterrupted support to families and children during and after their Head Start experience. She stated that the management systems wheel includes the Leadership and Governance overarching theme of the management systems. She stated that the management systems wheel is the core ingredient for any successful Head Start Program. She stated that the management systems wheel impacts strategic direction for a five-year project period. She stated that one can have great services and incredible staff, but if the governance is not solid, the program is at risk. She stated that the twelve management systems include: Program, Planning & Service System Design, Fiscal Management, Data & Evaluation, Recordkeeping & Reporting, Technology & Information Systems, Communication, Ongoing Monitoring & Continuous Improvement, Community Assessment & Self-Assessment, Training & Professional Development, Human Resources, Facilities & Learning Environments, and Transportation. She stated that the Head Start Center for Inclusion provides information and develop resources and materials that include web-based learning opportunities and evidence-based instructional strategies. She stated that the goal of the center is to increase the competence, confidence and effectiveness of personnel in Head Start programs to include children with disabilities.

The Board recessed the workshop for a short break at 4:35 p.m.; the workshop reconvened at 4:40 p.m.

Ms. Sone-Serae Batten stated that the Head Start Program Leadership Structure consisted of the following: Governing Body, Policy Council and Management Staff. She stated that upon receiving designation as a Head Start agency, the agency shall establish and maintain a formal structure for program governance, for the oversight of quality services for Head Start children and families and for making decisions related to the program design and implementation. She stated that the structure shall include the following: a) In General – the governing body shall have legal and fiscal responsibility for the Head Start agency; composition – the governing body shall be composed as follows: not less than one member shall have a background and expertise in fiscal management or accounting; not less than one member shall have a background and expertise in early childhood education and development; not less than one member shall be a licensed attorney familiar with issues that come before the governing body; additional members shall reflect the community to be served and include parents of children who are currently, or were formerly, enrolled in Head Start programs; and are selected for their expertise in education, business administration, or community affairs; exceptions shall be made for members of a governing body when those members oversee a public entity and are selected to their positions with the public entity by public election or political appointment; and if a person is not available to serve as a member of the governing body, the governing body shall use a consultant, or another individual with relevant expertise, with the qualifications described in that clause, who shall work directly with the governing body. She stated that when there is a conflict of interest, members of the governing body shall not have a financial conflict of interest with the Head Start agency (including any delegate agency); not receive compensation for serving on the governing body or for providing services to the Head Start agency; not be employed, nor shall members of their immediate family be employed, by the Head Start agency (including any delegate agency); and operate as an entity independent of staff employed by the Head Start agency. She stated that exceptions take place when an individual holds a position as a result of public election or political appointment, and such position carries with it a concurrent appointment to serve as a member of a Head Start agency governing body, and such individual has any conflict of interest, such individual shall not be prohibited from serving on such body and the Head Start agency shall report such conflict to the Secretary and if the position held as a result of public election or political appointment provides compensation, such individual shall not be prohibited from receiving such compensation. She stated that the policy council is responsible for approving and submitting to the governing body decisions about each of the following activities: a) activities to support the active involvement of parents in supporting program operations, including policies to ensure that the Head Start agency is responsive to community and parent needs; b) program recruitment, selection, and enrollment priorities; applications for funding and amendments to application for funding for programs under this subchapter, prior to submission of applications; c) budget planning for program expenditures, including policies for reimbursement and participation in policy council activities; d) bylaws for the operation of the policy council; e) program personnel policies and decisions regarding the employment of program staff, including standards of conduct for program staff, contractors, and volunteers and criteria for the employment and dismissal of program staff; f) developing procedures for how members of the policy council of the Head Start agency shall be elected; and g) recommendations on the selection of delegate agencies and the service areas for such agencies. She stated that each delegate agency shall create a policy committee, which shall be elected and composed of members, consistent with respect to delegate agencies; follow procedures to prohibit conflict of interest, consistent respect to delegate agencies; and be responsible for approval and submission of decisions about activities as they relate to the delegate agency, consistent with respect to delegate agencies. She stated that the secretary shall develop policies, procedures, and guidance for Head Start agencies concerning the resolution of internal disputes, including any impasse in the governance of Head Start programs; and the facilitation of meaningful consultation and collaboration about decisions of the governing body and policy council. She stated that the agency must establish and maintain a formal structure for program governance that includes a governing body; a policy council at the agency level and policy committee at the delegate level, and a parent committee. She stated that the governing bodies have a legal responsibility to administer and oversee the agency's Head Start and Early Head Start Programs. She stated that the policy councils are responsible for the direction of the agency's Head Start and Early Head Start programs. She stated that the governing body may establish an advisory committee as it deems necessary for effective governance and improvement of the program. She stated that if a governing body establishes an advisory committee to oversee key responsibilities related to program governance it must establish structure, communication, and oversight in such a way that the governing body continues to maintain its legal and fiscal

responsibility for the Head Start agency; and notify the responsible HHS official of its intent to establish such an advisory committee. She stated that the agency must establish a parent committee comprised exclusively of parents of currently enrolled children as early in the program year as possible. She stated that the parent committee must be established at the center level for center based programs and at the local program level for other program options. She stated that strong leadership and governance are critical to providing quality services in Head Start and Early Head Start programs. She stated that Head Start leaders must ensure the Governing Body/Tribal Council and Policy Council each has a membership that complies with Sec. 642(c)(1)(B) of the Head Start Act. She stated that the Governing Body/Tribal Council and Policy Council members are required to obtain ongoing training and technical assistance (T/TA) so they can fully understand and fulfill their roles and responsibilities. She stated that Head Start leaders must also have processes in place to provide timely information to the Policy Council and governing body or Tribal Council. She stated that Head Start Grantees who build strong leadership and governance systems and work to establish positive relationships among the three governing entities are better equipped to deliver high-quality Head Start services to children and families. She stated that strong leadership and governance foster an environment that supports innovation and continuous program improvement. She stated that the governing body key functions include adhering to bylaws; establishing major policies; measuring its performance; recruiting diverse and qualified members; and participating in orientation for all new members and ongoing training. She stated that Head Start programs are only as good as their people. She stated that the agency should ensure that staff members and volunteers have the credentials and competencies needed to provide quality Head Start services. She stated that the governing body should always learn ways to safeguard program staff's health, wellness, and engagement, and to emphasize training and professional development. She stated that the governing body should have a range of instructional resources, including federal and regional training, technical assistance (TTA) staff, and online materials. She stated that the governing body shall be responsible for other activities including approving personnel policies and procedures, policies and procedures regarding the hiring, evaluation, compensation, and termination of the Executive Director, Head Start Director, Director of Human Resources, Chief Fiscal Officer, and other person in an equivalent position with the agency. She stated that the fiscal management ensures accountability for federal assets, compliance with regulations, and includes internal controls. She stated that appropriate reporting systems must be in place and program leadership work in partnership to develop and execute a budget that reflects and supports program goals and priorities. She stated that the fiscal checklist helps directors, managers, and Policy Council members identify and comply with Head Start fiscal policies and regulations. She stated that the fiscal checklist form helps to identify the person(s) responsible for specific tasks; whether a required policy exists; and if so, the most recent date it was approved. She stated that the fiscal checklist also provides a way to list actions required to better address each responsibility.

Mr. Key left the workshop at 5:25 p.m. to attend a prior scheduled meeting.

Ms. Sone-Serae Batten stated that the Policy Council duties and responsibilities include the approval and submission to the governing body the approval of activities for parent involvement/engagement; program recruitment, selection, and enrollment priorities; funding applications/amendments; budget planning; Policy/Council bylaws; Head Start Program personnel policies and decisions; Policy Council election procedures; and recommendations on delegates/service areas. She stated that the Policy Council and Policy Committee terms include a member will serve one year; if a member intends to serve for another year he/she must stand for election; the policy council policy committee at the delegate level must include in its bylaws how many one-year terms; not to exceed five terms a person may serve; and a program seat a successor policy council; policy committee at the delegate level, before an existing policy council or policy committee at the delegate level may be dissolved. She stated that a program must enable low-income members to participate fully in their policy council or policy committee responsibilities by providing, if necessary, reimbursements for reasonable expenses incurred by the low-income members. She stated that the parent committee responsibilities are to advise staff in developing and implementing local program policies, activities, and services to ensure they meet the needs of the children and parents; have a process for communication with the policy council and policy committee; and within the guidelines established by the governing body, policy council, policy committee, participate in the recruitment and screening of Early Head Start and Head Start employees. She stated that the purpose of the Head Start Bylaws shall be to implement the Head Start Program

Performance Standards 1304.50 (Program Governance), for which the Head Start Policy Council is created. She stated that the Policy Council must perform the following functions directly: a) serve as a link to the Parent Committee, the Board of Directors, public and private organizations, and the communities they serve. Provide information, initiate suggestions and reports to and from these group; b) assist Parent Committees in communication with parents enrolled in all program options to ensure that they understand their rights and responsibilities and the opportunities available in Head Start, and to encourage their participation in the program; c.) assist Parent Committees in planning, coordinating, and organizing program activities for parents with the assistance of staff, and ensure that funds set aside from program budgets are used to support parent activities (Parent Activity Funds); d) assist in recruiting volunteer services from parents, community residents, and community organizations, and assist in the mobilization of community resources to meet identified needs. Assume responsibility for recruiting volunteer students from local universities; e) establish and maintain procedures for working with the Board of Directors to resolve community complaints about the program.

Mrs. Dudley left the workshop at 5:35 p.m. to attend a prior scheduled meeting.

Ms. Sone-Serae Batten stated that all staff and volunteers are required at time of hire or placement to understand and abide by the codes of conduct as set forth in the Federal Performance Standards 45 CFR 1304.52 (h) (1-3) and Head Start Program Office: She stated that thoughtful planning is the key to successful programming and to be the achievement of desired outcomes. She stated that the Head Start Program Planning Cycle outlines how the required Head Start management systems are interrelated parts of a predictable planning process. She stated that through this process, programs develop goals, objectives, and expected outcomes. She stated that they monitor and evaluate progress toward their program goals, which include school readiness goals. She stated that references to long-term goals are inclusive of all program goals. She stated that programs also ensure compliance with the Head Start Program Performance Standards (HSPPS). She stated that the Program Planning Cycle depicts an ongoing sequence of planning, implementation, and evaluation. She stated that it promotes continuous quality improvement and allows programs to work toward the achievement of positive outcomes for children and families. She stated that many of the steps happen repeatedly throughout the cycle, and the cycle itself is repeated throughout the five-year project period. She stated that the annual program calendar is used to identify required planning activities and foster meaningful collaboration with program and fiscal leaders. She stated that excellence in early childhood education (ECE) programs is built on a workforce that promotes continuous program improvement. She stated that professional development is a cornerstone of this process. She stated that it includes gaining new knowledge, skills, and abilities, along with experience and competencies that relate to one's profession, job responsibilities, or work environment. She stated that early childhood education (ECE) programs and staff must address three areas: Professional Development Systems; Foundation for Staff Development; and Individual Career Development. She stated that resources are organized within these areas to promote easy access to the information you need.

Ms. Leslie McKenney stated that Head Start Grantees who build strong leadership and governance systems and work to establish positive relationships among the three governing entities are better equipped to deliver high-quality Head Start services to children and families. She stated that strong leadership and governance foster an environment that supports innovation and continuous program improvement. She stated that it is very important to use data and evaluation to make informed and inclusive decisions for the Head Start Program. She stated that while the Head Start Program is an inclusive process, the ultimate responsibility lies with the governing body.

Mr. Jason Flowers shared with the Board information on related Early Childhood Learning and Knowledge Center (ECLKC) Resources, and a brief overview of the training. He thanked the Board for the opportunity to provide the Head Start Governance Training.

Ms. Carol Coffee stated that she will provide the Board with a written overview of the training and technical assistance. She thanked everyone for their participation and commitment to the Head Start Program.

During the Head Start Governance Training Board members and the Superintendent asked questions, shared their concerns and made comments. They thanked the Head Start Training & Technical Assistance Team for providing very informative information regarding the Head Start Program.

5. Educational Items by the Superintendent

None.

6. School Board Requests and Concerns

Mr. McMillan stated that Tropical Storm Fred was approaching Gadsden County and surrounding areas. He asked everyone to keep an eye on the storm and to be safe.

Mr. Scott stated that the portables have arrived at West Gadsden Middle School for Gadsden Elementary Magnet students.

Mr. McMillan stated that he attended insurance open enrollment at several schools. He stated that employees are concern about affordable cost for health insurance coverage. He stated that he will speak with Mr. Key regarding health insurance cost.

In response to Mr. Frost's concern regarding the lawn maintenance at the schools, Mr. McMillan stated that he will inform Mr. Hunter of the concerns with the lawn maintenance upkeep at the schools.

7. The workshop adjourned at 6:25 p.m.