



702 3RD AVENUE SOUTH

VIRGINIA, MINNESOTA 55792-2797

ARROWHEAD HEAD START POLICY COUNCIL MINUTES

June 10, 2026

PRESENT:

Alicia Varani	VA Toddler Center/Chairperson
Armony Hutchinson	Eveleth-Gilbert
Brandi Reamer	EHS Hibbing & West Range
Emily Bolin	Proctor
Juhi Perkin	EHS Lake & Hermantown
Karissa Kaiser	East Range & QUAD 1
Patina Eversum	Hermantown
Stacey Roepke	CHIC & Northern Tier
Carla Current	EHS Program Manager
Jerry Crittenden	Community Relations Manager
Kristine Norberg	Health Manager
Nicole Larsen	Family Support Specialist
Gabe Johnson	Head Start Director
Tracy Sandnas	Head Start Finance Supervisor

SITES NOT REPRESENTED OR EXCUSED:

Babbitt-Open
Chisholm-Open
EHS East Range-Quad 1-Excused
Hibbing I-Open
Hibbing II-Excused
Hibbing III-Open
Hibbing IV-Open
PSHB-Absent
Rob Hietala AEOA BOD Rep-Excused
Two Harbors-Absent
Virginia Infant Center-Absent
Virginia I-Open
Virginia II-Absent

The Policy Council meeting was held on June 10, 2026, in the conference room of the Station 44 Building in Eveleth and via Teams.

- I. **CALL TO ORDER:** Alicia Varani, Chairperson, called the Arrowhead Head Start Policy Council Meeting to order at 9:43 a.m. on Wednesday, June 10, 2026.

- II. **ROLL CALL:** Roll call was taken showing 7 members present. A quorum was established.
- III. **CORRECTION/APPROVAL OF April 8, 2026, POLICY COUNCIL MINUTES:** **Stacey Roepke moved to accept April 8, 2026, minutes, supported by Armony Hutchinson. Motion carried unanimously.**
- IV. **CORRECTIONS/ADDITIONS TO AGENDA:** None.
- V. **CORRESPONDENCE:** None.
- VI. **REPORTS:**

A. DIRECTOR'S REPORT: Gabe Johnson reported on the federal side.

The Head Start Performance Standards are going through federal review. Programs have not seen a draft of the new standards yet. One revision around wage and benefits standards has been opened for public comment. The revisions would fully rescind sections of the Head Start Performance Standards related to staff wages and benefits that were added in 2024. More changes are expected.

The transportation Waiver has been approved by the Office of Head Start for the year 2026-2027.

Construction is ongoing at the Infant and Toddler Center. The walls and floors have been completed.

On the state side, Minnesota Head Start Association (MHSA) members volunteered and assisted with organizing National Head Start Association Conference in Minneapolis. Our Head Start had 11 staff and one Policy Council parent attend the conference. **Stacey Roepke moved to accept the Director's Report, supported by Armony Hutchinson. Motion carried unanimously.**

B. FINANCIAL REPORT:

Tracy Sandnas presented the financial statements.

FY 2025 MN HEAD START GRANT: This grant for \$702,898.00 for the period from July 1, 2025, through June 30, 2026. The Current Period Actual Expenditures are \$144,162.22; the YTD Actual Expenditures are \$693,157.80. The balance is \$9,740.20.

FY 2025 FEDERAL HEAD START GRANT: This grant for \$2,544,527.00 for the period from April 1, 2025, through March 31, 2026. This grant was closed out after all expenditures for the year.

FY 2025 FEDERAL EARLY HEAD START GRANT: This grant for \$1,821,881.00 for the period from April 1, 2025, through March 31, 2026. This grant was closed out after all expenditures for the year.

FY 2026 FEDERAL HEAD START GRANT: This grant for \$2,462,968.00 for the period from April 1, 2026, through March 31, 2027. The Current Period Actual Expenditures are \$593,847.82; the YTD Actual Expenditures are \$593,847.82 YTD encumbrances were 35,376.98. A balance of 1,833,743.20 remains.

FY 2026 FEDERAL EARLY HEAD START GRANT: This grant for \$1,930,823.00 for the period from April 1, 2026, through March 31, 2027. The Current Period Actual Expenditures are \$368,865.25; the YTD Actual Expenditures are \$368,865.25; YTD encumbrances were 1,316.94. The balance of \$1,560,640.81 remains.

The March & April credit card report was presented. **Armony Hutchinson moved to accept the Financial Reports, supported by Stacey Roepke. Motion carried unanimously.**

- C. **COMMUNITY RELATIONS REPORT:** Jerry Crittenden reported that we were full for our last month of classes. Jerry shared the recruitment report. A discussion was held. The Policy Council approved the sites for the next school year. It will remain the same. **Stacey Roepke moved to approve the sites for next school year, supported by Armony Hutchinson. Stacey Roepke moved to accept the Community Relations Report, supported by Armony Hutchinson. Motion carried unanimously.**

- D. **AEOA BOARD MEETING REPORT APRIL 15, 2026:** Carla Current reported on Early Head Start at the board meeting. She shared the roles of the EHS Home Base Educators and an update of the new Infant and Toddler Center. **Stacey Roepke moved to approve the AEOA Board Meeting Report, supported by Armony Hutchinson. Motion carried unanimously.**

OLD BUSINESS:

- A. **FAMILY OUTCOMES REPORT:** Carla Current reported that there was growth in all areas. Rhyming is the lowest score.
- B. **SPA ALTERNATE:** Gabe reported that this position is still open if anyone on the Policy Council is interested.
- C. **PARENT FAMILY COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT:** NA

VIII. NEW BUSINESS

A. **NEW HIRES:**

New Staff	First	Second	Motion Passed
Hibbing 4 Teacher	Stacey Roepke	Armony Hutchinson	Approved

- B. **POLICIES AND PROCEDURES:** None.
- C. **VIRGINIA INFANT AND TODDLER UPDATES:** Gabe received an email on the construction completion timeline, and it is now estimated that it will be completed by the end of June. Gabe shared a video on the completed construction so far.
- D. **NATIONAL HEAD START ASSOCIATION CONFERENCE:** Gabe shared that the conference was an eye-opening experience. He attended a mock training that demonstrated real-life challenges families may face, including situations with financial and social impacts. Nicole Larsen shared that she learned more about the role of fathers and ways to better include fathers in their child's Head Start experience.
- E. **POLICY COUNCIL MEETING SCHEDULE (NEXT MTG August 12, 2026, at Station 44).** Policy Council members picked back to school as the theme for the meeting.

- IX. **PARENT & COMMUNITY REPRESENTATIVE REPORTS:** Stacey Roepke shared the library has a summer reading program and they are awarding prizes. A Discussion was held on putting a Head Start Community Clean Up event together. Ideas will go out in a parent chat and with the EHS Home Visitors.
- X. **MISCELLANEOUS DISCUSSION:** Splash pads are now open in Hibbing and Chisholm. The annual AEOA Block Party will be held on 7/23/26 from 4:00-7:00 at the main AEOA agency in the parking lot. A suggestion was made to get some shade tents this year at the Block Party.

- XI. **ADJOURNMENT: Armony Hutchinson moved to adjourn the meeting, supported by Stacey Roepke. Motion carried unanimously.** The meeting was adjourned at 11:31 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Tracy Sandnas, Finance Supervisor

Gabe Johnson, Director Arrowhead Head Start