



NMCAA Policy Council Meeting Minutes

Thursday February 8, 2024

10a.m.-12p.m.

Present: Alyssa Witowski, Amber Babcock, Blair Cole, Erica Gaylord, Kathleen Byers, Malanie Chaney, Shanda Lee, Shyanne Chriscoe, Thaina Carpenter

Absent: Amity Forsgren, Ashlee Parsell, Brandi Bouthwell, Brittany Gottschall, Chelsea Johnson, Estee Colen, Crystal Abranski, Danielle Amman, Density Kasben, Eryn Krajewski, Grace Ogden, Jasmin Niersel, Kattie Mirritt, Linnae Delahanty, Lisa Sargent, Rebecka Kinwabikise, Taylor Robinson, Tiffany Evans, Victoria Braden

Official Call to Order- Blair Cole, Policy Council Chair

- Roll call
- Approval to use roll call as attendance (quorum not established)
 - Melanie Chaney
 - 2nd- Kat Byers
- Review of agenda
- Approval of minutes from last meeting
 - Kat Byers
 - 2nd- Melanie Chaney

Agency Connection- Kerry Baughman, NMCAA Executive Director

- Brittney G is the tech guru for our upcoming event
 - Super Saturday 2/10/24 Event at the Tech Center in Traverse City-
- Welcome and Congratulations to HS Parents, Blair Cole and Melanie who are now on the PC Board!
- Child Lead Screening requirement- raising awareness about how important this is for our children's health and collecting more resources and materials to share with the community. Our HS families are the perfect parent group to connect with other families in the communities.
 - Kat Byers and Blair agreed to participate in this outreach!

Grounding Activity- Family Engagement Specialists

- Kim M- Circle of Security for our children was discussed last month. How we need to be the secure base for our children. So we must have our own protective factors to comfort ourselves, in order to be that for our children.
 - Protective factors are conditions that people possess or have access to that ground them. Community support, strong and healthy family and friends support, and our capacity within ourselves (sense of hope, humor etc).
 - Asked the group what protective factors we have personally.
 - Humor to make light of rough situations. Music redirects our minds to something happier and calm us. Doing my best to say Yes(with boundaries) instead of No when my children need something small, even if I'm overwhelmed-given them maybe an opportunity to regulate themselves (like maybe they need to scream to regulate) stressful for me but it has been helping them calm down faster. When your partner is upset and unable to show patience- going to your support person or partner to handle a situation that you know you're unable to handle calmly. Recognizing when you need to step back.

NMCAA VITA Free Tax Program- Brittney Grzesiak

- NMCAA does completely free taxes (Federal and State) for anyone in the community, NMCAA staff and HS/EHS families (anyone).
- Powerpoint presentation- VITA-Volunteer Income tax Assistance is a national program through the IRS for people making under \$75,000/yr, seniors, persons with disabilities, english as second language, veterans and students.
- NMCAA has been doing this for 20 years. But it's nationwide.
- Tax preparers are certified every year and work between 10-40 hrs/week.
- They work to file for the most refund possible for clients.
- We have a goal to complete 5,100 tax returns this year for free! In TC, Petoskey, Benzie, Charlevoix and Kalkaska. TC office is open year round to help with Taxes.
- You can drop off your documents, do an in person appointment or complete everything online.
 - myfreetaxes.com self file.- Similar to using TurboTax
 - getyourrefund.org/nmcaa document upload-NEW
- Credits we check on- HOMestead Property Tax Credit for renters or homeowners and Home Heating Credit. American Opportunity Credit for adult students. Lifetime Learning Credit for adult students taking courses to acquire or improve job skills.
- We can also help with IRS notices
- 231-947-3780 ext 3 to contact Brittney or visit main NMCAA website.

Book Share (Timmy Doesn't Tie His Shoes)- Kat Byers and Melanie Chaney, State Delegates

- Found this book on Tiktok and we loved it. It has to do with neurodivergent and is super relatable. Helps parents with neurodivergent children.
 - The book explains how some children can struggle with a simple task because all the steps it takes to complete that simple task can seem daunting. Ex- putting on your shoes- need to find socks, put on socks, then find shoes and put in shoes and maybe even deal with sensory issues with those socks and shoes and how to make those items comfortable on your feet. So parents can help their child by going through those steps slowly and not fighting the process. Parents change the way they handle the task to prevent fighting. Giving your child the tools they need to be independent.

Application and Eligibility Training- Alicia Temple, ERSEA and Health Manager

- Purpose and Definition- HS performance standards on how to collect and complete accurate info, privacy, falsifying information actions, training management staff and annually training thereafter.
 - EHS Home based- expectant families to age 3. EHS center based-infant and toddler classrooms. EHS childcare partners- ages 3-4 up to 10 hrs/day. HS- ages 3-4 up to 7 hrs/day. GSRP- ages 4 before Dec 1st.
- Eligibility Criteria- Pregnant women and children 0-5. Income at or below 100% of the Fed. Poverty line. Homelessness, foster/kinship care or receiving cash assistance programs.
- Discussed Income Guidelines
- Discussed Priority Criteria
- Treating families with Dignity and Respect- follow our cornerstones of culture during the eligibility interview. Nurturing, Mindful, Compassionate, Accountable and Appreciative.
- Disciplinary action for falsifying documentation from staff or applicant- can lead to criminal charges and or terminate enrollment.

- HS last year we took 936 applications and this year we took 956 applications within 10 counties.
 - last year we served 501 students and this year we served 588.
- EHS last year we took 566 and this year we took 568. We served 277 last year and served 329 this year.
- Be sure to join and like the NMCAA FB page and Instagram- When you see a recruitment post be sure to like and share it so that the word gets out there!
- No changes this year to criteria

Program Information Summary- Mini Management

- Shannon Phelps- Shared financial information through December and waiting for January to see where we landed. The grant for fiscal year 2023 is expected to be fully expended. Final closeout is in March 2024.
- January 2024 inkind numbers are up from January 2023.
- We not under the full enrollment initiative at this time! We are really close to 97%. We expect to hit it this month!
- Opening Discovery Center EHS at the end of this month and hopefully opening Blair HS back up soon. Working on hiring teachers.
- OHS update- changes to close out process with grants but doesn't affect families enrolled in the programs. More information can be found by searching: Federal Reporting of Standard Forms 425 and 428: ACF-PI-OHS-24-01

MHSA Assembly Update- Blair Cole, Chair; Kat Byers, State Delegate; Melanie Chaney, State Delegate

- Office of Head Start Director, Khari Garvin, talked about “HS 2.0”- looking into creativity to solve some of the same problems we’ve been having and doing things differently than we have in years past to try to resolve those issues. We want to really try to represent all areas of MI.
- Katie Vaughn- “I need your differences and you need mine”- How can we bring who we are into the programs we work in. Discussed 4 of the 7 categories described. And where we fall on those scales can change over time too. Could be beneficial to do with teaching teams.
 - When you listen genuinely to people, they can hear the truth in themselves, often for the first time.
 - Empathy is only effective when combined with active listening. Avoiding Empathy Blockers.
- Staff workshops- Katie Vaughn- protecting your time and energy, creating systems that work for you. Everyone is different.
- Parent Workshop- Vivian Washington- starting school and what did children need to start school (going into kindergarten)- Things like- you child knowing their full name, and will be working on social emotional skills, working in groups, working alone, approaches to learning, language and learning, literacy.
- Parent Workshop-Advocating for our Children- and opportunity to speak with policy makers.
 - And Thinkmichiganbabies- they are going to DC to represent families with babies (a protest)

Personnel

- Approval- Kat Byers
- 2nd- Melanie Chaney

Adjourn

- Kat Byers
- 2nd- Melanie Chaney

Meeting Objectives

1. Better understanding of NMCAA and Head Start locally and nationally
2. Connection to NMCAA agency programs
3. Learn about application and eligibility processes

Next Meeting April 11, 2024

***NMCAA Vision** NMCAA leads in strengthening our communities by empowering people to overcome barriers, build connections and improve their quality of life*

Chair – Blair Cole; Vice Chair – Rebecka Kenwabikise; Secretary – Tiffani Evans; Treasurer – Open; Parliamentarian- Open; State Delegates – Kat Byers, Melanie Chaney; Alternates- Rebecka Kenwabikise, Open