

**Minutes**  
**Douglas-Cherokee Head Start/Early Head Start**  
**Policy Council**  
**February 6, 2025**

Members Present

Casey Brown	Krista Warner
Scharanda Brock	Melissa Logan
Sheri Arden	Jessica Burnett
Tamra Williamson	Cheyenne Wright
Patrick Tackett	Sierra Finley
Tina Patterson	Emily Galban
Danielle Smikle	Jaimaine McNamara
Carla Testerman	Jamie Jackson

Members Not Present

Stacey Inman	Molly Scaff
Misti Eubanks	Kelly Ritenour
Jessica Walker	

Employees Present

Kristie Woolard	Arlene Radcliff
Curt Amos	Billie Epps
Shannon Smith	Aranda Pruitt
Melody Cantrell	Ginny Ritchea
Lindsey Arnold	Amber Brobeck
Brittany Turner	Emily Kelley

Guests Present

Tonya Purkey  
Rene Tabor  
Haley Moore  
Megan Barnard

Douglas-Cherokee Head Start/Early Head Start held a Policy Council Meeting on February 6, 2025, at Shoney's, located at 120 Sharon Dr. Dandridge, TN 37725.

Kristie Woolard, Parent Involvement Manager, called the meeting to order at 10:03 AM and announced that we had a quorum. Kristie asked for volunteers to lead the Policy Council meeting in absence of the chair and vice chairperson. Sheri Arden, Community Representative from Blount County volunteered. Kristie asked for approval to appoint Sheri Arden to lead the Policy Council meeting. Casey Brown, Blount County, made the motion for approval and Scharanda Brock, Blount County, seconded the motion. The motion carried.

Emily Kelley, Assistant Director, provided the Literacy Reading with the book, *The Big Umbrella* by Amy June Bates.

Tonya Purkey, DCEA Education Center Director, presented the DCEA Program Spotlight. She shared information about the free after school program. For more information call 423-318-6932.

Kristie announced that Misti Eubanks and Sierra Finley from Grainger County and Emily Galban from Hamblen County are all new members of the Policy Council Committee. Sheri asked for approval of the new members. Scharanda Brock, Blount County, made the motion for approval and Casey Brown, Blount County, seconded the motion. The motion carried.

Sheri asked for the approval of the January 9, 2024, Policy Council meeting minutes. The minutes are available to all Policy Council members on the website. Casey Brown, Blount County, made the motion for approval and Krista Warner, Sevier County, seconded the motion. The motion carried.

Casey Brown, Secretary, announced that the Personnel Committee met, ratified, and approved all hiring decisions. Sheri asked for a second. Jamie Jackson, Cocke County, seconded the motion. The motion carried.

Krista Warner, Treasurer, announced that the Finance Committee met and approved all budget and finance reports. Sheri asked for a second. Patrick Tackett, Hamblen County, seconded the motion. The motion carried.

Melissa Logan, Tennessee Department of Health Social Counselor II, presented the Community Spotlight. Melissa presented valuable information about the CHANT program and other services. For more information email Melissa at [Melissa.Logan@tn.gov](mailto:Melissa.Logan@tn.gov).

Jennifer Coopman, ERSEA Manager, spoke about the Recruitment Workshop for 2025-2026 program year and the Selection Criteria previously presented to the Policy Council members and made available on the website. Sheri asked for approval of the Selection Criteria. Scharanda Brock, Blount County, made the motion for approval and Krista Warner, Sevier County, seconded the motion. The motion carried.

Arlene Radcliff, Education Manager, explained how the Coaching and Professional Development and CLASS (Classroom Assessment Scoring System) is completed in the program.

- Coaching is an Office of Head Start requirement.
- Currently we have one Mentor Coach.
- Coaching is presented to staff in person and virtually.
- We contracted with UT for CLASS observations this year.

Curt Amos, Program Director, presented the Director's Report.

- The report was uploaded to the website.
- The Self-Assessment is currently being completed with the help of parent and community representative volunteers.
- We completed the Laura J. Kress Angel Tree grant by spending all the funds.

- The two Underwood classrooms merged into one classroom. The children who were displaced were offered spots at other centers.
- The presidential executive order to pause federal grant money was not going to affect the Head Start program.
- The Change of Scope is being completed and there are no changes to the current plans.
- Our attendance is down. We must be at 85% to meet the federal regulations and the monthly report showed us at 76.6% for the month of January.

Sheri asked for approval of the Director’s Report and action items. Cheyenne Wright, Union County, made the motion for approval and Jamie Jackson, Cocke County, seconded the motion. The motion carried.

The Management Team presented the Grant Preparation topics.

- Early Childhood Development and TSG Outcomes Update -Amber Brobeck
- Health/Mental Health/Disabilities- Lindsey Arnold, Billie Epps
- Family/Community Partnerships/ERSEA- Brittany Turner, Jennifer Coopman, Kristie Woolard
- Fiscal/HR/Facilities- Melody Cantrell, Ginny Ritchea, Shannon Smith
- Program Planning/T&TA/Monitoring- Aranda Pruitt, Emily Kelley, Curt Amos

Kristie presented the MVP awards for the classrooms with the most volunteer hours for December.

- Blount           Maryville 4
- Cocke           Parrottsville
- Grainger       Bean Station
- Hamblen       Learning Center 2/Early Head Start 1
- Jefferson       Cherokee
- Monroe         Mount Vernon 1/ Madisonville
- Sevier          Oak Cluster
- Union          Maynardville

Sheri asked for approval to adjourn the meeting. Krista Warner, Sevier County, made the motion for approval and Cheyenne Wright, Union County, seconded the motion. The motion carried. The meeting adjourned at 12:35 PM.

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Casey Brown, Secretary

## **2025-2026 T/TA Plan Report**

We will continue with six of our previous training goals, combining two goals that were overlapping. We added one new goal giving us seven training goals for the 2025-2026 T/TA Plan that are listed below.

### **Part 1 – Identified Goals**

*To help teaching staff develop new skills and improve existing practices that will result in positive, significant and sustained outcomes for children and promote career development for staff:*

*To help teaching staff to effectively accomplish program goals that facilitates the children's growth, development and school readiness within the five developmental domains of the Head Start Early Learning Outcomes Framework and the Tennessee Early Learning Standards:*

*To help teaching staff improve existing practices that will promote accurate administration of the developmental assessment and screenings to effectively plan classroom and home activities using Developmentally Appropriate Practice, Creative Curriculum and Partners for Healthy Babies:*

*To help staff increase their knowledge and understanding of the Parent, Family & Community Engagement Framework to enhance engagement practices & support professional development:*

*To identify children with chronic absences and provide support to increase child's attendance:*

*To equip staff with trauma informed behavior prevention and behavior management techniques and to enhance staff's abilities to effectively deal with behavior concerns of high-risk children (NAS, foster, high ACEs, etc.):*

*To increase staff awareness & knowledge to meet the required In-kind match as the program works toward the new HSPPS.*

**Part 2 – Head Start Training** – Adjusted timelines and budget updates where

**Part 3 – State Training** – needed.

## **2024-2025 Self-Assessment/Program Improvement Plan Report**

Our Self-Assessment is complete with a few concerns that have been addressed, but with no major issues found. There were several nice comments about our staff and facilities. Attached is the results from the questionnaire with the concerns and response. We had 6 Board Members, 6 Community Representatives, 37 parents/family members– 6 who are on Policy Council, volunteered their time to evaluate our program. Thank you to everyone who was able to participate in the self-assessment process. You did an awesome job!

## 2024-2025 Self-Assessment Compliance Report

### **BLOUNT COUNTY**

#### Maryville 2

Concern: Nutrition – Why is so much food thrown away and also why is children that is late, why are they not offered some food?

Response: Food Thrown away: We follow recipes with the appropriate serving sizes according to CACFP guidelines. We want to be sure all children are able to have seconds if they want, so this can sometimes lead to food waste. Any uneaten food must be thrown out due to food safety regulations. Offering Food: It is our policy that all children are offered food regardless of when they arrive. I have spoken to the classroom and reminded them of this policy – Lindsey Arnold, Health/Nutrition Manager

### **COCKE COUNTY**

#### Parrottsville

Concern: Concern for their stove as it isn't working correctly. Stove eyes aren't maintaining the (cannot make out 2 words here) heat that it's put on & the oven isn't heating properly.

Response: No work order has been sent in, but Kevin checked the stove & oven while he was at the center for another reason (center was closed for weather at the time). He said all eyes came on and were working properly. The oven heated up in a reasonable time. He checked the temperature with his heat gun and it was consistent with the stove temperature setting.

### **GRAINGER COUNTY**

#### Rutledge

Request for more outside play items – Request forwarded to the Facilities/Maintenance Manager and Education Manager

### **HAMBLEN COUNTY**

No out of compliance concerns

### **JEFFERSON COUNTY**

No out of compliance concerns

### **MONROE**

No out of compliance concerns

### **SEVIER COUNTY**

No out of compliance concerns

### **UNION COUNTY**

#### Corryton

Request for more outside play items – Request forwarded to the Facilities/Maintenance Manager and Education Manager

#### Cross Creek

Request for more outside play items – Request forwarded to the Facilities/Maintenance Manager and Education Manager

#### Maynardville

Concern: Parking lot needs gravel or paving

Response: Parking lot resurfacing is on the list when budget allows. – Shannon Smith, Facilities/Maintenance Manager

**Douglas-Cherokee Economic Authority, Inc.**  
**Head Start/Early Head Start**  
**Program Goals Grant Cycle 2025-2030**

Program Goals: Year 1	Measurable Objectives	Data Tools and Methods used to Track Progress	Progress/Outcomes	Challenges
<p><b>Goal 1:</b> DCEA will utilize funds allocated to effectively operate the program and meet new HSPPS by looking at each component area to determine what changes or improvements are needed to operate efficiently.</p>	<p>A. Work toward pay parity as required by the HSPPS</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Change of Scope submission</li> <li>• Pay Scale</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Closing 6 classrooms in 25-26</li> <li>• Reducing staff</li> <li>• Reducing number of children served</li> <li>• Reducing costs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No additional funding</li> <li>• Negative impacts on staff</li> <li>• Negative impacts of families</li> </ul>
	<p>B. Support classrooms to meet the required In-Kind amount</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Monitoring In-Kind Pro reports</li> <li>• Training for staff</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More In-Kind hours from classrooms</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Closing classrooms have caused loss of In-Kind hours and donated space</li> </ul>
	<p>C. Begin restructuring the program as necessary to be in compliance with HSPPS and meet budgeting constraints</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Change of Scope submission</li> <li>• Budget report</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Closing classrooms</li> <li>• Cutting positions</li> <li>• Prioritize displace staff</li> <li>• Conversion of Ray's Preschool to infant room</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No additional funding from OHS</li> <li>• Staff morale decreased</li> <li>• Negative impact on families and communities</li> </ul>
	<p>D. Identify children with chronic absences and provide support to increase child's attendance</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Child Plus reports</li> <li>• Family advocate and teacher provided information</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase the percentage of attendance to meet or exceed the HSPPS guidelines</li> <li>• Provide support to families to help them become school ready</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Illness/sickness</li> <li>• Appointments</li> <li>• Local school closures while we are open</li> <li>• Individual family obstacles</li> </ul>

**Douglas-Cherokee Economic Authority, Inc.**  
**Head Start/Early Head Start**  
**Program Goals Grant Cycle 2025-2030**

<p><b>Goal 2:</b> DCEA will prioritize the mental well-being of staff and children by cultivating a program-wide culture of wellness that empowers staff as professionals and supports staff to efficiently accomplish their job responsibilities in a high-quality manner.</p>	<p>A. Develop plans for allocation of staff wellness funds and ideas to involve staff in wellness activities each program year</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wellness funds budget report</li> <li>• HS/EHS program calendar</li> <li>• Wellness surveys</li> <li>• Wellness Team meetings</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• TBD</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ability to locate non-federal funding that can be allocated to wellness</li> <li>• Too many federal wellness funds spending restrictions</li> </ul>
	<p>B. Prioritize supporting staff in classrooms where children with severe behaviors are present</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mental Health Consultant schedule</li> <li>• Tracking Behavior Incident Reports</li> <li>• PBSA monthly calendars</li> <li>• Training to help support staff</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Begin plans to reduce case load of PBSAs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• PBSA have increased case load because of increase in number of children with needs</li> <li>• Only have one Mental Health Consultant</li> <li>• Finding time for training</li> <li>• Negative impact on staff mental wellbeing</li> </ul>
<p><b>School Readiness Goals</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Children will display an increasing ability to self-regulate behaviors and emotions.</li> <li>• Children will develop positive relationships with adults and other children.</li> <li>• Children will develop the ability to express, recognize, and manage emotions.</li> <li>• Children will develop receptive and expressive language skills.</li> </ul>				

**Douglas-Cherokee Head Start  
Policy Council Officers and Committee Members  
2024-2025**

**Policy Council Officers**

Chairperson: Jessica Walker

Vice Chair: Molly Scaff

Secretary: Casey Brown

Treasurer: Krista Warner

**Personnel Committee**

Blount County	Casey Brown
Cocke County	Jamie Jackson
Grainger County	Misti Eubanks
Hamblen County (FDY)	Emily Galban
Jefferson County	Jaimaine McNamara
Monroe County	Molly Scaff
Sevier County	Danielle Smikle
Union County	Cheyenne Wright

**Finance Committee**

Blount County	Scharanda Brock
Cocke County	<b>Misty Busler</b>
Hamblen County	Patrick Tackett
Hamblen County	Jessica Walker
Sevier County	Krista Warner



# Douglas-Cherokee Head Start/Early Head Start

## Policy Council Members

2024-2025

*Pending approval 3/20/25*

### **Blount County**

Casey Brown – Personnel  
Scharanda Brock – Finance  
Sheri Arden – Community Rep (5)

### **Cocke County**

Jamie Jackson – Personnel  
Misty Busler – Finance  
Tamra Williamson – Community Rep (2)

### **Grainger County**

Misti Eubanks – Personnel  
Sierra Finley – Community Rep

### **Hamblen County**

Emily Galban (FDY) – Personnel  
Patrick Tackett - Finance  
Jessica Walker – Finance  
Carla Testerman – Community Rep (2)

### **Jefferson County**

Jaimaine McNamara – Personnel  
Tina Patterson – Community Rep (2)

### **Monroe County**

Molly Scaff – Personnel  
Jessica Burnett – Community Rep (2)

### **Sevier County**

Danielle Smikle – Personnel  
Krista Warner – Finance  
Kelly Ritenour – Community Rep

### **Union County**

Cheyenne Wright – Personnel  
Melissa Logan – Community Rep