



**Board of Directors
Meeting Minutes
November 12, 2025
6:00pm-7:30pm**

ROLL CALL

James Kyriaco, Chair called the meeting to order at 6:15pm. A quorum was established.

<u>Members present:</u>	<u>Members not present:</u>	<u>Staff present:</u>	<u>Guests present:</u>
Areli Miguel	Angela Miller-Bevan	Pat Keelean	Rafael Gonzalez(Zoom)
Marina Owen	Jeremy Ball	Grant Carmichael	
Josephine Torres	Roy Lee	Jennifer Macdonald	
Alexander Saunders(Zoom)		Monica Logan	
Hilda Zacarias		Monica Moreno(Zoom)	
Miguel Avila			
James Kyriaco			
Gloria Flores			
Oscar Gutierrez			

1. WELCOME & CALL TO ORDER

James Kyriaco, Chair, called the meeting to order at 6:15 pm

2. PUBLIC COMMENT – Members of the public may speak up to 5 minutes each.

The public comment period is reserved for comments on matters within the subject matter jurisdiction of the Board of Directors. Each person may address the Board for up to three minutes at the discretion of the Chair, for a total public comment period of no more than 15 minutes.

The CommUnify Chair asked if there were any public comments. None

3. CLOSED SESSION:

- a. Personnel Matter: None
- b. Legal Matter: Rafael Gonzalez – Mullen & Henzell LLP

4. APPROVAL OF BOARD MINUTES:

September 3, 2025

Motion to approve Board Minutes.

M/S/A

Alexander Saunders

Gloria Flores

Approved

5. **RECITE COMMUNIFY MISSION STATEMENT/MISSION MOMENT – PAT KEELEAN, CEO:**

We serve Santa Barbara County’s most vulnerable populations through education and coordinated services so they may achieve economic stability, improve overall well-being and thrive.

Mission Moment

Familias Seguras/Secure Families Program



Turning Challenges into Second Chances

- Supported **6 youth** who had been **expelled** and placed at Fitzgerald Court & Community School due to behavioral and attendance issues.
- Provided **comprehensive support** — case management, mentorship, and mental health therapy.
- Students showed **steady progress**: improved attendance, no further disciplinary actions, and stronger engagement.
- **All 6 students** were approved to **return to their home schools** — a chance to **walk the stage, promote, and graduate** alongside their peers.

A true testament to the power of support, resilience, and second chances.

- Pat presented the Familias Seguras program’s successful report on six young men who had experienced challenges at school and received support from Familias Seguras, along with other partner agencies. All six participants completed the program and were successfully reinstated in their schools to continue toward graduation.

6. **CEO REPORT:**

- Government Shutdown: Head Start Impact:
 - Pat informed the board members about the significant impact the government shutdown is having on Head Start, noting that the Head Start office is substantially behind on grant distribution. The agency remains off track and is preparing for a potential funding gap, with final funding decisions not expected until January 2026.
 - Pat also notified the board members that 97 staff members have received a 60-day WARN notice ahead of potential employment termination. In addition, services for 267 children and families may be disrupted due to the possible closure of six Head Start centers and 17 classrooms across the county.

Government Shutdown: Head Start Impact

Day 43 – House Votes Today on Bill to Reopen Government

Shutdown Status

- Government still closed; 150+ grant awards pending.
- OHS backlog expected to delay processing for several months.

Funding Impact

- CommUnify's current Head Start grant ends Dec. 31, 2025.
- New grant approval not expected by Jan. 1, 2026.
- Potential gap in funding for 1-3 months and service continuity.

Government Shutdown: Head Start Impact

Staff Impact

- WARN notices issued to 97 Children's Services staff, effective Jan. 2, 2026.
- Reflects severe uncertainty caused by federal delay.

Community Impact

- Services for 267 children and families could be disrupted, including the closure of 6 Head Start Centers and 17 classrooms across the county.
- Families would lose access to health screenings, developmental supports, parenting education, and nutrition services.
- Staff and parent anxiety levels and community concern are increasing daily.

CommUnify's Plan of Action

Advocacy

Engaging state and congressional representatives to expedite review and approval of Head Start contracts.

Funding Continuity

Requesting authorization to use unspent FY 2024–25 federal funds to maintain operations in January 2026.

Community Partnerships

Working with local philanthropic partners to identify temporary gap funding sources.

Communication

Maintaining open, transparent communication with staff, families, and community partners throughout the process.

- Pat discussed the agency’s plan of action, including ongoing advocacy efforts. She shared that she will be meeting with a foundation roundtable to explore funding strategies, noting that conversations have been positive but remain cautiously optimistic. She is also actively reaching out to Congressman Carbajal to request assistance in securing a no-cost extension so that funds can be made available in the first quarter of 2026, allowing services to continue without interruption.
- Pat informed the board that a key challenge is that the agency is nearing the end of its five-year contract and approaching the conclusion of its current funding cycle.
- She emphasized that staff will be kept informed, but management cannot make any promises at this time.
 - Josie asked whether the agency has a reserve fund.
 - Pat confirmed that a reserve does exist, and that Grant Carmichael, CFO, will present on it later in the meeting to review potential options.

FY 2026

Proposed Congressional Appropriations

GRANT	CURRENT FUNDING	WHITE HOUSE RECOMMENDATION	HOUSE RECOMMENDATION	SENATE RECOMMENDATION
Community Services Block Grant	\$770 million	\$0	\$775 million + 200% FPL Eligibility	\$770 million + 200% FPL Eligibility
Head Start	\$12.3 billion	\$12.3 billion	\$12.272 billion	Nearly \$12.4 billion
LIHEAP	4.025 billion	\$0	\$4.035 billion	\$4.0445 billion
WAP	\$326 million	SILENT	\$180 million	TBD

- James asked what would happen if the agency waited until January 1st and was not prepared. He emphasized the importance of being ready, doing whatever is necessary, and working with Congressman Carbajal to access funds while being strategic in how those funds are used.
 - Marina asked what the total amount of available funds was.
 - Pat deferred the question to Grant, who will address it during his CFO presentation.
- South Coast Youth Safety Partnership was held on October 9, 2025, with presentation of the PYD – Positive Youth Development Program for the members of the partnership.



Key Updates

- **FUNDING DELAYS:**

- (1) **CA Violence Intervention Program (CalVIP) Continuation Grant Review Delay**

- Familias Seguras Program: Santa Maria and Lompoc Expansion - \$3.99 million

- Santa Maria/Bonita Schools have proposed gap funding for 2-months** to support CommUnify and Fighting Back Santa Maria staff expenses.

- (2) **Brisa Encina Head Start Center (Mission Hills)**

- Release of CDBG Funding Delayed - \$360k

- **2026-27 STRATEGIC PLAN – Board Presentation (January 7)**

- **CHAMPIONS DINNER – Nominee Ballot**

- There is a delay with the CalVIP contract until February 2026. However, the Santa Maria Bonita School District is providing interim funds, and Santa Maria Fighting Back has agreed to fund the program for two months.
- Brisa Encina: CDBG funds totaling \$360k have been delayed. Pat will meet with county staff on Monday morning to discuss the situation.
 - Hilda asked for clarification regarding the land purchase.
 - Pat replied that the funder indicated that DSS wants the agency to take ownership of the land; additional details will be provided at the January 2026 board meeting.
- Aspire Innovators, the consulting firm, has finalized the agency's Strategic Plan and will present it at the January board meeting.

7. **CFO REPORT:**

Grant Carmichael, Chief Financial Officer presented the agencies' financial report



Balance Sheet

Current Month vs Prior Year and Audit (PY)

Balance Sheet

ASSETS

	Current Sep 30, 2025	Prior Month Aug 31, 2025	Prior Year Dec 31, 2024
Assets			
Cash and Cash Equivalents	\$5,227,400	\$2,901,042	\$1,818,462
Grants Receivable	\$2,086,497	\$2,945,787	\$5,400,651
Prepaid Expenses & Other	\$343,500	\$341,036	\$240,854
Investments	\$1,639,081	\$1,617,376	\$1,513,920
Fixed Assets	\$365,232	\$368,429	\$394,203
Total	\$9,661,710	\$8,173,670	\$9,368,091

LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS

	Current Sep 30, 2025	Prior Month Aug 31, 2025	Prior Year Dec 31, 2024
CURRENT LIABILITIES			
Accounts Payable and Accrueds	\$236,592	\$391,226	\$474,527
Accrued Payroll	\$768,542	\$739,244	\$2,370,099
Accrued Vacation	\$914,167	\$894,810	\$847,207
Deferred Revenue	\$6,269,701	\$4,605,927	\$3,707,788
PPP Loan	\$0	\$0	\$97,505
Total Current Liabilities	\$8,189,002	\$6,631,206	\$7,497,126
LONG TERM LIABILITIES			
Long Term Liability Other	\$170,000	\$170,000	\$170,000
Total Net Assets	\$1,302,708	\$1,372,464	\$1,700,965
Total LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS	\$9,661,710	\$8,173,670	\$9,368,091

- Grant shared with the board members that the portfolio and investments total \$1.6 mil as of now.



2026 AGENCY BUDGET ANALYSIS

(In \$,000s)	2026			2025			Variance		
	Revenue	Expense	Net	Revenue	Expense	Net	Revenue	Expense	Net
Childrens Services	\$21,218	\$21,118	100	\$20,745	\$20,645	100	\$473	\$473	-
Community Services	\$2,462	\$2,616	(154)	\$2,723	\$2,902	(179)	-\$261	-\$286	25
Family Youth Services	\$2,049	\$2,139	(90)	\$2,502	\$2,659	(157)	-\$453	-\$520	67
Behavioral Health	\$1,030	\$1,042	(12)	\$1,318	\$1,300	18	-\$288	-\$258	(30)
Admin	\$1,233	\$1,077	156	\$1,155	\$937	218	\$78	\$140	(62)
Totals	\$27,992	\$27,992	-	\$28,443	\$28,443	-	-\$451	-\$451	-

- Hilda asked about the agency's total net assets and emphasized the need to be realistic, suggesting consideration of a scenario where the agency might have insufficient or no funds at all.
- Josie asked that the agency prioritize the children.
 - Pat responded that the main concern is spending funds and depleting the reserves, leaving nothing in reserve.
- Marina asked how many days of funding were available.

- Grant replied that there are fewer than 22 days in the current budget.
- Hilda inquired about the possibility of reduced Head Start operations.
 - Grant stated that the agency has not reached that point yet.
- Marina asked about the Head Start program and, organizationally, what a transition scenario before closure would look like.
 - Grant noted that losing the workforce would be a significant loss to the agency.
 - He emphasized that funding would be needed quickly and that any investment strategy must be executed rapidly.
 - Pat shared that she will be hosting a foundation roundtable before Thanksgiving, and if an award is granted, it would be available by December.
- James stated that the agency is working quickly to find alternatives and avoid returning to the line of credit. He also mentioned that the City of Goleta has approximately \$150K in childcare funding.
 - Pat added that the City of Buellton has reached out, and there are additional loan opportunities being explored.

Contingency Plan Proposal

CommUnify 90-Day Childrens Services Contingency Plan Proposal

Days 1-60	Days 60-90
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create an operating and financial plan to continue operations as far into Q1 2026 as possible Continue to fund and support existing staffing levels Shift to higher levels for state funding wherever feasible Credit line support as needed Execute strategies to secure long-term alternative funding from non-federal sources 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Suspend classroom operations Support temporary movement of families to other programs or alternatives Continue to pay and retain teaching and support staff to furthest extent possible Execute strategies to secure long-term alternative funding from non-federal sources

Note: Total 2026 federal Head Start funding at risk of reduction or elimination: \$13.7M. We have submitted our 5-year grant funding application to begin operations in January, but have yet to get confirmation of approval from OHS. There is significant concern in the short term that the current government shutdown could delay our receipt of notice of award beyond the necessary January 1st start date, or of reimbursement of expenses effective as of that date. Long-term concerns exist about future federal funding levels for Head Start, as well as LIHEAP, CSBG, and weatherization due to cuts.

- Grant’s proposal focuses on retaining staff and families while engaging with the Santa Barbara Foundation to maintain the program as a whole. If assistance is received, there is hope to reimburse the funds once January funding is secured. Priority is being given to maintaining staff.

- Grant also discussed opening lines of credit with other banks to establish additional bridge funding.
 - Hilda asked if other agency programs might need support.
 - Grant responded that there are long-term concerns regarding the LIHEAP, CSBG, and Weatherization programs.
 - Marina asked about the agency’s cash-on-hand and the target goal.
 - Grant stated that the current metric is 22 days, whereas 60 days is normal in Accounts Receivable for good liquidity and longer-term self-funding during a crisis. He emphasized that the Contingency Plan should be the first priority.
 - Hilda shared her own experience with historical funding reductions and the psychological impact on staff, urging the agency to support its employees.
 - Marina informed Pat and Grant that her company, CenCal Health, has a Child & Family Wellness program with up to \$250K available for children’s health initiatives and encouraged the agency to apply.

8. CONSENT AGENDA:

All matters listed hereunder constitute a consent agenda and will be acted upon by a single roll call vote of the Board. Matters listed on the agenda will be read only on the request of a member of the Board or the Public, in which event the matter shall be removed from the consent agenda and considered as a separate item.

8a. Approval of Minutes:

- 8a – 1 Executive Committee Minutes: 10/1/25, 2025
- 8a – 2 Finance Committee Minutes: October 3, 2025
- 8a – 3 Finance Committee Minutes: October 31, 2025
- 8a – 4 Planning Committee Minutes: October 3, 2025
- 8a – 5 Ambassador/Head Starters Committee: September 15, 2025
- 8a – 6 Ambassador/Head Starters Committee: October 20, 2025

8b. Approval of Grants \$10,000 and Under/Renewal Contracts, MOUs, Resolutions, etc.:

8b – 1 Approve a **Change of Scope** for the 2025–2026 school year, reducing Head Start enrollment by 78 slots.

8b – 2 Adopt resolution to certify approval to enter into a transaction with the **California Department of Social Services (CDSS)** for the purpose of providing **childcare and development services** and to authorize the designated representatives to sign contract documents for **Fiscal Year 2026–2027**.

9-C Approval of and authorization to submit a grant application to the **Santa Barbara Foundation's Childcare Grant** program in the amount of \$15,000 to support CommUnify's Head Start program.

M/S/A Josephine Torres Gloria Flores Approved

9-D Approval of and authorization to submit a grant application to the **Mark and Dorothy Smith Foundation** for \$20,000 in support of the Seniors Safe at Home program.

M/S/A Josephine Torres Gloria Flores Approved

9-E Approval of and authorization to submit a grant application to the **Lompoc Community Development Block Grant (Public Service)** program in the amount of \$15,000 in support of the rent and utility assistance.

M/S/A James Kyriaco Miguel Avila Approved

9-F Approval of and authorization to submit a grant application to the **Santa Maria Community Development Block Grant (Public Service) program** in the amount of \$15,000 in support of the rent and utility assistance.

M/S/A Areli Miguel Marina Owen Approved

Abstained Gloria Flores

9-G Approval of and authorization to submit a grant application to the **Santa Barbara City Community Development Block Grant (Public Service) program** in the amount of \$40,000 in support of the 2-1-1 Helpline over the next two years.

M/S/A Areli Miguel Hilda Zacarias Approved

9-H Staff Approval of **Sandra Llamas**, FY 2026 Policy Council Chair, to serve as a **voting member of the CommUnify Board of Directors**, in accordance with Head Start governance requirements.

M/S/A Areli Miguel Josephine Torres Approved

10. 2026 BOARD OFFICER NOMINATIONS:

Board Chair

The board members nominated: James Kyriaco

Vice Chair

The board members nominated: Gloria Flores

Secretary/Treasurer

The board members nominated: Jeremy Ball

11. PRESENTATIONS/TRAININGS:

11a. CommUnify Budget Presentation (FY 2026), Grant Carmichael, CFO



PROGRAMS SNAPSHOT

(In \$1,000s)			
Childrens Services	Revenue	Expense	Net
Head Start / Blended	\$16,507	\$16,407	100
Early Head Start	4,711	4,711	-
Childrens Services Total	\$21,218	\$21,118	100

(In \$1,000s)			
Community Services	Revenue	Expense	Net
LIHEAP Wx	\$580	\$660	(80)
ECIP	986	990	(4)
AAA Home	22	24	(2)
PLHA (County of SB)	100	102	(2)
Senior Safe @ Home	40	43	(3)
2-1-1 Program	255	296	(41)
Assurance 16	90	103	(13)
DOE BIL	189	196	(7)
Cal-AIM	200	202	(2)
Community Services Total	\$2,462	\$2,616	(154)

(In \$1,000s)			
Family Youth Services	Revenue	Expense	Net
Worforce Development	\$449	\$449	-
AFLP	239	247	(8)
South Coast Task Force	160	149	11
SECURE	1,151	1,151	-
Cencal/Other	50	143	(93)
Family Youth Services Total	\$2,049	\$2,139	(90)

(In \$1,000s)			
Behavioral Health	Revenue	Expense	Net
Family Wellness	\$911	\$923	(12)
HCAI	119	119	-
Behavioral Health Total	\$1,030	\$1,042	(12)

(In \$1,000s)			
Agency Support	Revenue	Expense	Net
Agency Fund/CSBG	\$533	\$437	96
Development	700	640	60
Agency Support Total	\$1,233	\$1,077	156

Grand Total	\$27,992	\$27,992	-
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- Hilda noted that the negative numbers highlight that community services are currently operating “underwater.”
 - Grant responded that the positive numbers on the administration side are largely due to fundraising efforts by the development department.
 - Pat shared that she and Grant have met and are working on a new reporting format and updated goals. They are developing new strategies for donor cultivation, including increased involvement in the advocacy committee. She noted a \$154K gap resulting from indirect rate increases.

11b. Head Start/Early Head Start Update, Jennifer Macdonald, Children’s Services Director

What we Know now:



We are fully funded until December 31, 2025



The Federal Shut Down has impacted Head Start in being able to review, approve, and provide funding for 2026



The absence of that funding will directly affect our program.

What we are working on:

- Blending additional classrooms with state preschool funding, alternative payment plan options, and blending sites with CCTR. It is in process but not approved yet.
- Working with local, state, and federal representatives and partners to support funding Head Start.
- Working with our generous philanthropy in supporting Children's services if there is a lapse in funding.

- Jennifer presented the Head Start update to the board. She stated that the program is exploring blending all programs and is working with the Santa Barbara County Office of Education and the Santa Maria School District as a contingency plan, potentially using them as subcontractors to meet temporary needs.
- Jennifer is awaiting a response from the Head Start National Association analyst; she has not heard back since last Friday. Priority is being given to full-day centers. She will return to the board for approval but will wait for California state waivers before proceeding.
- Grant is currently working on the contract.
 - James asked whether there is any possibility of keeping Jardin de Sueños open.
 - Jennifer stated that it must close at the end of December 2025 with no exceptions.
 - Jennifer noted that the Home-Based program will also have to close, resulting in forty families losing services. Additionally, part-day centers in North County, Mid-County, New Cuyama, and Guadalupe will be affected.

In the Absence of Federal Funds on January 2, 2025

- 97 Staff Lay Offs: all positions including teachers, enrollment, health, family service specialists, cooks, and managers.
- **Temporary Loss in Services to:**
 - 191 3–5-year-olds Center Based
 - 40 Home Base-Pregnant Women, Infants, and Toddlers
 - 36 Infants and Toddlers
 - 12 Preschool Classroom Closures (2 of these Classrooms are Inclusion Classrooms)
 - 5 Infant and Toddler Classroom Closures
 - 6 centers will temporarily close entirely

Children’s Services Funding and Guiding Regulations

- **Children’s Services is guided by the Head Start Performance Standards (Federal Funding), Title 5 (State Funding), and Title 22 (Community Care and Licensing).**
- Children’s services uses the Head Start Performance Standards, Title 5, and Title 22 to design our programs policies and procedures implementing the highest standards of quality from each. All policies reflect high quality early care and education and parent training and education. Utilizing research based curriculum.
- The code of Federal regulations- [45 CFR PART 1304](#) — contains the program performance standards for the operation of Head Start programs by grantee and delegate agencies.
- The program performance standards are the mandatory regulations that grantees and delegate agencies must implement in order to operate a Early Head Start and/or Head Start program.

- Hilda asked when families and staff will be informed about the changes.
 - Jennifer informed the board that she has already presented updates to Head Start families—approximately 200 families—and has been keeping them informed about the situation.
 - Marina asked how the board could assist.
 - Pat responded that the agency needs support in meeting with Congressman Carbajal and Senator Monique Limon to advocate for Head Start funding.
 - Hilda inquired whether foundation partners will be reimbursed.

- Pat replied that if the agency receives approval for the Head Start grant, the partners will be refunded. She added that any necessary loan would ideally be zero-percent interest or structured as a forgivable grant.

Take Action

- [Advocate for Head Start](#)
- <https://nhsa.org/our-work/get-involved/>

12. **INFORMATIONAL ITEMS: UPCOMING MEETINGS/EVENTS:**

- a. Finance Committee Meeting: November 21st @ 12 – 1:00pm
- b. Executive Committee Meeting: December 3rd @ 12 – 1:00pm
- c. Board Holiday Party: Wednesday, December 10th @ 6 – 8:00pm, Location: Trattoria Grappolo, Location: 3687 Sagunto Street, Santa Ynez. **(CANCELED-Board recommended be canceled due to Head Start Funding crisis)**

13. **Adjourn:**

- a. Board meeting adjourned at 8:22 pm