

HEAD START PROGRAM zero-to-five Community Action, Inc. of Central Texas



CONSTITUTION & BY LAWS

PREAMBLE

In order to secure and use all available federal, state and private resources to provide comprehensive services to program families to ensure implementation of Head Start Approach to School Readiness: that children are ready for school, families are ready to support their children's learning, and schools are ready for children.

ARTICLE I NAME

The name of this organization shall be the Head Start Program Policy Council (Policy Council) and it shall be established as outlined in Head Start Program Performance Standards 2016, 45 CFR Chapter XIII, 1301 Program Governance, 1301.3 Policy Council and policy committee.

ARTICLE II PURPOSE

The purpose of Policy Council shall be to implement the Head Start Program Performance Standards and PL 110-134 (Head Start Act). The policy council shall be responsible for guiding the direction of the Head Start program, including program design and operation, long- and short-term planning goals and objectives, and taking into account the annual community wide strategic planning and needs assessment and self-assessment.

ARTICLE III MEMBERS

Section 1: Composition of Council

The membership of the Council shall consist of no less than fifty one percent (51%) parents of children enrolled in the program democratically elected by the parents. The parents shall elect one (1) Parent Member for each center and one (1) Parent Alternate. In the event an elected Parent Member is unable to attend a meeting, the Parent Alternate will attend in the Parent Member's place and have voting power. Both Parent Members and Parent Alternates will receive an invitation to each Policy Council meeting, and the meeting packet prior to the meeting.

Forty-nine percent (49%) of the membership of the Policy Council may be persons from the communities who are interested in the education and development of the children served by the Head Start Program, and who can make some contribution to the program by virtue of their profession or experience (i.e. educational, health, social, religious, legal, business, former parent, etc.).

Conflict of Interest: No Community Action staff (or members of their immediate families) may serve on Policy Council. Immediate family is defined to include: spouse, father, mother, brother, sister, son, daughter and in-laws. Furthermore, members of the same family may not serve on Policy Council during the same year. A relative of a Policy Council

member may serve as an alternate only if the parent committee was not able to recruit a different family. Members of the policy council shall - (i) not have a conflict of interest with the Head Start agency (including any delegate agency); and (ii) not receive compensation for serving on the policy council or for providing services to the Head Start agency.

Confidentiality Agreement: All elected Policy Council Representatives shall sign a confidentiality agreement committing to keeping confidential information private to protect the privacy of the children, families, staff and Policy Council Representatives. Failure to comply with this confidentiality commitment could result in being dismissed from the Policy Council.

Section 2: Election of Members and Alternates

- a. Parent Committee members and alternates shall be elected to Policy Council by the parents of currently enrolled children in each program option (center based, home based, locally designed). There will be one parent member and one parent alternate to represent each center. There will be up to three community representatives and one Honorary Representative.
- b. Community Representatives shall be nominated by the Parent Committee, or a current Policy Council Member, and shall be approved by the Policy Council. A Community Representative must be from the local community; business, public or private community, civic or professional organizations including an active parent member of the Council whose children have left the program and who desires to remain active.
- c. A Community Representative will not have an alternate.
- d. The members shall be elected and installed by the end of October every school year.
- e. All members will be elected by simple majority vote for a term of one year. Elections be held annually, with nominations, elections at the center level and installation of the members at the Policy Council level.
- f. If there is only one nominee for the parent member and/or alternate member, the parent committee for that center must approve the nominee(s) as the representative(s) for that center by a majority vote at a Parent Committee Meeting.

Section 3: Definitions

Parent Member-A voting representative for a center who has a currently enrolled child at that center and is elected or approved by the parent committee to represent that center.

Alternate Member-A non-voting representative for a center who has a currently enrolled child at that center and is elected or approved by the parent committee of that center to stand in for the Parent Member and vote on his/her behalf if the Parent Member is absent.

Community Member-A voting member who was nominated by the Parent Committee or a Policy Council Member and was approved by Policy Council to serve as a representative of the public, professional, and/or business community.

Honorary Member-A former member who has served 5 years on the council and is

approved by the Policy Council to remain on the council in an advisory capacity. An Honorary Member does not have voting authority and does not participate on committees.

Parent Committee- All regularly scheduled parent meetings at the center level are considered to be a Parent Committee Meeting. There must be at least two parents present to achieve quorum.

Section 3: Term of Membership

- a. Each Member shall serve a single term of one year, from October to October of the following year. In October the new council is seated and the past members are released.
- b. Membership to the Policy Council is limited to five one year terms. On completion of five one year terms of service, a member may become an Honorary Member and serve in an advisory capacity. Honorary Members may not vote or hold office. Honorary Members shall be nominated by the Center Parent Committee, a current Policy Council member, or the Head Start administrative staff and shall be approved by the Policy Council.
- c. If an Alternate attends meeting(s) but does not vote in that year, then that year does not count in the five year term limit. If an Alternate attends meetings all year and votes at 6 meetings, then the year counts in the five one year terms.
- d. In the event of a disability or resignation of a member, the center parent committee shall elect a representative for the remainder of the term.

Section 4: Voting Rights

- a. Each Member of the Policy Council shall have one vote. The Chairperson abstains from voting except in the event of a tie.
- b. Alternates, who are attending a meeting to represent absent members, also have voting rights.
- c. If both the Parent Member and the Alternate Member representing a particular center are absent, they may **vote by proxy** by communicating their desire to do so in writing at least one day prior to the scheduled meeting to the ChairPerson. The written communication should identify which council member they are naming as a proxy and what agenda items they are allowing them to vote on in their place. **A proxy vote counts towards quorum.**
- d. Only Parent Council Members shall vote on issues concerning Community Representatives.
- e. Votes may be taken orally, by a show of hands, by written ballot, or by an electronic poll at the discretion of the ChairPerson.
- f. The member serving on both the Policy Council and the Board of Directors has full

voting rights in both governing bodies.

Section 5: Termination of Membership

- a. Membership in the Council shall cease after three unexcused absences from regularly scheduled meetings. At two absences a reminder letter is sent to a member informing that at three unexcused absences the membership will be terminated.
- b. After the third unexcused absence, membership will be terminated by notification from Policy Council, stating the above reason and signed by the Policy Council Chairperson.
- c. Excused absences shall be reported by the Council Member by contacting an Alternate to attend in their place, center staff, or the Head Start Program Office prior to the meeting and giving a reason for the absence.

Removal of the Membership

A member may be removed from the Policy Council in the middle of the term, if the Center Parent Committee, which the member represents, has presented a petition signed by two thirds of the parents of the children enrolled, and after the Policy Council agrees on the removal by majority vote.

Section 6: Resignation

A Member may resign from the Policy Council by notifying the Chairperson of the Council in writing.

Section 7: Transfer of Membership

Membership may be transferred from the Parent Member to the Alternate Member with the approval of the Policy Council.

ARTICLE IV OFFICERS

Section 1: Officers

The Officers of the Policy Council shall be a Chairperson, Vice Chairperson, a Translator, Community Action Inc. (CAI) Board of Director Representative and the Secretary. Other offices may be created as needed. Full membership is given on the Policy Council and on the Community Action Board of Directors for the CAI Board of Directors Representative.

Section 2: Election and Term of Office

Officers shall be elected by simple majority vote for a term of one year. Officers may be reelected for succeeding terms. Elections shall be annually, with nominations, elections and installation of Officers in November.

Section 3: Removal of Officers

Policy Council Officers may be removed from office by two thirds majority vote of the Policy Council membership.

Section 4: Vacancy

In the event of the disability or resignation of the Chairperson, the Vice Chairperson shall succeed to that office for the unexpired portion of the term. If any other office becomes

vacant, a new officer shall be elected for the remainder of the term from Policy Council Members.

Section 5: Duties of Chairperson

The Chairperson shall preside at all Policy Council meetings. He/She shall appoint all committees and may serve as an ex officio member of these committees. The Chairperson in cooperation with the Head Start Program Director shall draft the proposed agenda for each meeting. He/She shall sign all Policy Council approved documents.

Section 6: Duties of Vice Chairperson

The Vice Chairperson shall preside at all meetings upon the unavailability of the chairperson and then shall have the same power of the Chairperson. The Vice Chairperson is acting as ERSEA Committee Chair, and works in collaboration with ERSEA Coordinator to ensure program compliance with ERSEA regulations.

Section 7: Duties of Secretary

The Secretary shall assist administrative staff to maintain a current roll of the members with full name, mailing address, email address, business and home address and phone numbers. He/She shall assist administrative staff to record the minutes of the Policy Council meetings and maintain a permanent file at the Head Start office. The Secretary shall make electronic copies available to the members and alternates before every meeting. Should anyone require a hard copy, they may request one at least 3 days in advance of the scheduled meeting from administrative staff at the Head Start Office.

Section 8: Duties of the Translator

The Translator shall assist non English speaking parents to prepare for and participate in the Policy Council meetings. The Translator will contact all Spanish dominant parents prior to the Policy Council meetings to review the agenda and packet. The translator will maintain a log of any hours spent outside of the regularly scheduled meeting supporting non-English speaking parents towards In Kind hours. This log shall be submitted to administrative staff at the end of the term in October. During meetings, the Interpreter will translate information, comments and questions.

Section 9: Duties of Community Action Inc (CAI) Board of Director Representative

The Policy Council will elect an Officer to serve as a full member on the Community Action Board of Directors. The Officer will attend the Board of Directors meeting, serves on the Head Start Committee, and represents the Head Start Policy Council. The Representative will report information to and from both governing bodies.

ARTICLE V: MEETINGS

Section 1:

The annual Policy Council member recognition shall be held in October. This is an opportunity for the past members to be celebrated for their service and to pass on any words of advice to the incoming members.

Section 2: Regular Meetings

The Policy Council shall have regularly scheduled meetings monthly at a designated time via Zoom or at a designated place and time to be established by Policy Council as needed. Parents will be provided with technology support as needed to facilitate attendance and participation. Established dates and times are indicated on the Head Start Calendar.

Section 3: Special Meetings

The Chairperson may call a special meeting if circumstances demand a vote of the members before the regularly scheduled meeting. **All members must be notified of all meetings.**

Section 4: Notice of Meetings

Members will be sent an electronic notification and the meeting Agenda at least seventy two hours (72) prior the meeting. The Agenda will be posted on the CAI website at least seventy two hours prior to the meeting. Written notices may be prepared and emailed from the Head Start Office on instruction from the Chairperson. Should a member require a hard copy, they must request one at least 3 days in advance of the meeting from the administrative assistant at the Head Start office.

Section 5: Quorum

- a. A quorum for conducting business at a Policy Council meeting shall consist of fifty-one percent (51%) of the membership. The quorum refers to the number present, not to the number voting, therefore the Chairperson is counted in the quorum.
- b. Should a vote before a certain deadline be needed at the regularly scheduled meeting and a quorum of the membership is not present, the chairperson may choose to either call a special meeting, or move to an executive committee session if the Executive committee has a quorum, or mail/obtain written ballot to the absent members to obtain a quorum. The ballot must clearly explain the issue(s)/item(s) the members are voting on. A majority vote is needed for approval of the issue/item.

Section 6: Conduct of Meeting

The guide for conduct of any meeting shall be Robert's Rules of Order, Revised. All members will be provided with a summary of Robert's Rules of Order along with a copy of the By Laws at the beginning of their term of membership.

ARTICLE VI: THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEES

Section 1: The Executive Committee

- a. The Executive Committee shall consist of the Chairperson, Vice Chairperson, Secretary, the Translator and CAI Board of Directors Representative.
- b. The Executive Committee shall recommend courses of action to the Policy Council and may act on pressing issues when a quorum of the membership is not present. Such action shall be ratified by the membership at the following meeting.

ARTICLE VII: COMMITTEES

Section 1: Appointment of Committee Members

- a. Each Committee shall consist of at least **three** Policy Council Representatives.
- b. The Chairperson is responsible for making committee assignments.

- c. The membership to the committees shall be open for all Council Members, with the exception of the Executive Committee (The Executive Committee is composed of 5 Officers). The Chairperson may participate in all committee meetings.
- d. Each Committee will select a Chairperson.
- e. Alternates may serve as committee members.
- f. The quorum of every committee will be the majority of all the members of the committee. Two of the three members will represent a quorum.
- g. Committees are responsible for discussing items pertaining to their designated topic and propose ideas and/or solutions to the Policy Council for approval.
- h. Each member of any committee must be notified electronically of the time, date, and location of such a meeting at least seventy two hours (72) hours before the committee shall meet. The requirement for notice may be waived, however, upon written agreement of all members of the committee which is meeting.

Finance and Planning Committee

The Finance and Planning Committee shall review Head Start Program Grant Applications, expenditure reports and major programmatic changes.

By Laws Committee

The committee shall review the By Laws as needed and shall propose recommended amendments to the Policy Council.

The Personnel Committee (comprised of members from each community: Lockhart, Luling, Kyle, San Marcos)

The Personnel Committee shall work with management staff to participate on interview committees to hire all center based staff. The Human Resources Director shall provide training for all members of the Personnel Committee and obtain their signature on a Confidentiality Agreement. While parent input is invaluable to the hiring process, the final decision of which candidate will be brought forth for Policy Council approval will be made by the Head Start Program Director. All members of the Personnel Committee will be sent an invitation to scheduled interviews and may participate on the interview committees on a rotating basis. Only one parent member may participate per scheduled interview. The Personnel Committee Chairperson will determine which parent will participate on the scheduled interviews. If no members of the Personnel Committee are available, the interview will proceed as scheduled.

The ERSEA Committee

The ERSEA Committee shall participate in the Annual Community Assessment, establish the eligibility criteria, participate in revisions of the eligibility application and work closely with ERSEA Coordinator.

The Translator Committee

The Translator Committee will ensure that all Spanish dominant parents have written and

oral communication in their native language. This committee will elect a chair who shall be the member of the Executive Committee.

ARTICLE VIII RESPONSIBILITIES

The Policy Council shall approve and submit to the Board of Directors decisions about each of the following activities:

- (i) 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.
- (ii) Program recruitment, selection, and enrollment priorities.
- (iii) Applications for Head Start funding and amendments to applications for Head Start funding prior to submission of applications described in this clause.
- (iv) Budget planning for program expenditures, including policies for reimbursement and participation in policy council activities.
- (v) By-laws for the operation of the policy council.
- (vi) Policy Council must establish written procedures for resolving internal disputes, including impasse procedures, between Board of Directors and Policy Council
- (vii) Program personnel policies and decisions regarding the employment of program staff, consistent with paragraph (1) (E) (IV) (IX), including standards of conduct for program staff, contractors, and volunteers and criteria for the employment and dismissal of program staff.
- (viii) Developing procedures for how members of the Policy Council of the Head Start Program will be elected.

The Policy Council will perform the following functions directly:

- A. Have the opportunity to initiate suggestions and ideas for program improvements and to receive a report on action taken by the administering agency with regard to its recommendations.
- B. Have the opportunity to help plan, coordinate and organize agency wide activities for parents with the assistance of staff.
- C. Assist in communicating with parents and encouraging their participation in the Program.
- D. Aid in recruiting volunteer services from parents, community residents and community organizations, and assist in the mobilization of community resources to meet identified needs.

- E. Serve as a link to the parents of the program, The Agency Governing Board of Directors, public and private organizations, and the communities they reside in.

Human Resource Responsibilities

Interviewing - The Personnel Committee members shall, with training from the Human Resource Director, be invited to participate on interview committees along with management staff. Should a member not be available, the interview will proceed as scheduled.

Hiring - During Policy Council meetings, Policy Council members will approve or disapprove decisions to hire any person who works primarily for the Early/Head Start Program.

Termination –During Policy Council meetings, Policy Council members will approve or disapprove recommendations to terminate any person who works primarily for the Early/Head Start Program.

ARTICLE IX -AMENDMENTS

The By Laws listed above may be amended at any regular or special meeting by two-thirds (2/3) vote of the quorum present. (Provided the proposed amendment has been reviewed by the By Laws Committee and a written account of such change is in the hands of all Policy Council Members before such hearing).

Revised and approved By Laws dated September 8, 2007

Revised and approved PC- By Laws dated May 16, 2009

Revised and approved PC By Laws dated October 13, 2012.

Revised and approved PC By Laws dated December 13, 2014

Revised and approved PC By Laws dated September 17, 2016

Revised and approved by PC By Laws dated November 12, 2016

Revised and approved by PC By Laws dated February 18, 2021

Policy Council meeting February 18, 2021

3/1/2021

Head Start Program Policy Council Chairperson, Mr. Joshua Romero/Date