

By-Laws
For
U.C.H.R.A.
Van Buren County Head Start
Policy Council

I. Name of organization: The name of this organization shall be Van Buren County Head Start Policy Council.

II. Purpose: The purpose shall be to implement appendix A of the performance standards, Head Start Policy Manual, to include serving as a link between public and private organization's, the grantee, the community served and the parents of children enrolled in the planning and coordination of the Head Start program.

III. Function: The function of this Policy Council in accordance with regulations, must work with key management staff and governing body to develop, review and approve or disapprove the following:

A.

1. All funding applications and amendments of funding applications for Head Start prior to submission to H.H.S.
2. Procedures for governing the governing body and policy council to implement shared decision-making.
3. Procedures for program planning.
4. Programs: philosophy and Long and Short Range Goals.
5. Composition of Policy Council and procedures for choosing members.
6. Criteria for recruitment, selection, and enrollment.
7. The annual self assessment of grantee in carrying out the programmatic and fiscal intent of its grant application.
8. The annual independent audit that must be conducted
9. Program personnel policies and changes to these policies.
10. Approve or disapprove recommendations for the hire or termination of program director.
11. Approve or disapprove the recommendation to termination of any person who works directly with the Head Start Program.

B. In addition, the policy council must perform these functions directly:

1. Serve as a link to parent committee, governing body of grantee, public and private organizations and community served.
2. Assist parent committees in communicating with parents enrolled to ensure they understand their rights, responsibilities and opportunities.
3. Assist parent committee in planning program activities for parents with assistance of staff ensuring funds are used properly.
4. Assist in recruiting volunteer services from parents, residents and organizations within the community, to meet identified needs.
5. Establish and maintain methods for hearing and resolving community complaints.

IV. Membership

- A. The policy council shall be made up of 51% of parents of enrolled children.
- B. Membership shall consist of parent members and community representatives. There shall be no less than 8 members and no more than 10, and should decide upon at the beginning of each school year by parent committee.
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 - a. Membership means individuals have been elected and seated.
 - b. Members of parent committee shall elect parents.
 - c. Parent committee must elect alternatives. Alternate may attend all meetings but may not vote, except in the absence of member.

- d. Parent members of policy council must approve all community representatives before they can be seated.
 - e. Chairperson of policy council must be a council member.
3. Policy council member shall serve a term of 1 year. Any portion of a year will be considered as 1 year. No member shall serve on the policy council for more than 3 years. Each term of office shall begin in August and at the end of August of the following year.
 4. Confidentiality must be maintained in all matters addressed before the policy council. Failure to do so shall result in termination after review of said offense by the policy council.
 5. Each member of the policy council shall have 1 vote. If a regular policy member is not present, an alternative can be called upon to vote.
 6. Membership on the policy council can be terminated by a majority vote at the next meeting if, he/she has been regularly absent from 2 prior consecutive meetings without having submitted a legitimate excuse to the policy council chairperson.
 7. A member shall give the written resignation.
 8. When a vacancy of a parent member occurs an alternate will become a member. A new parent alternate must be elected within 30 days, if a vacancy occurs within community representative, policy council must approve any replacement.
 9. Head Start staff members and their immediate families cannot serve as policy council members. A member of an immediate family is defined as a mother, father, husband, wife, daughter, son, brother, sister, mother-in-law, father-in-law, brother-in-law and sister-in-law.
 10. More than one member of a family cannot serve on the policy council during a member term.
 11. Travel reimbursement in accordance with the grantee's policies will be provided for policy council members whose family income falls below the poverty line. Any person meeting these criteria may request travel reimbursement.

V.

- A. The policy council shall elect a chairperson, vice chairperson, secretary/treasurer and other officers as deemed necessary. Officers shall be elected at the first meeting for each subsequent year. All returning officers shall hold a two (2) year position unless they do not sufficiently fulfill the obligations of the office.
- B. Each officer shall be elected by majority vote once the full policy council has been seated and shall serve for a term of 1 year.
- C. Any officer, who fails to perform their duties, can be removed by majority vote of council members. Notice to said officer or member must be given 4 weeks prior to vote. Notice must state specific reasons for removal. All members of the policy council shall abide by Head Start confidentiality standards. Failure to do so will result in the immediate removal of the council member.
- D. Duties of the chairperson shall include: presiding at all meetings, possessing an understanding of by-laws, refraining from entering into debate of questions before assembly, extending courtesy to the discussion of motions, and calling the meeting to order and formal close. The chairperson shall note whether a quorum is present and declare same, assure an agenda for each regular meeting is mailed out to members, call special meetings and assure notices are sent out, appoint chairpersons to all committees, explain or request explanation of each motion before it is voted upon and may vote only to break tie.
- E. Vice-Chairperson shall preside in the absence of chairperson. The vice-chairperson shall assume office of chairperson in the event of resignation, termination or death of chairperson, until a permanent chairperson is elected.
- F. Duties of the secretary/treasurer shall include recording of the minutes of every meeting, maintaining a copy of by-laws, Amendment A, list of members, a list of unfinished business, and a copy of each agenda/minutes. A copy of the minutes and any material to be considered shall be given to all members. The secretary/treasurer shall make regular reports to council of all expenditures relating to the administration of the parent activity funds.

VI

- A. The council shall appoint committees as are necessary to the proper conduct of Head Start business to include, but not limited to: Executive Committee, Personnel & Community Complaint Committee and Budget & Proposal Committee. Each committee shall consist of members of policy council and any other interested program parents. The chairperson of each committee shall

be a policy council member. Reports will be submitted to the full policy council by each committee and listed on the agenda.

- B. The Executive Committee shall be composed of the policy council officers. The committee shall formulate activities of the council and shall have power to conduct business between regular meetings of the council.
- C. The Personnel and Community Complaints Committee shall hear complaints from community and parents who have followed complaint procedures at the center level. This committee will refer legitimate complaints to the Director. The Director should take steps to resolve the complaint and advise council of the outcome in a timely manner. This committee shall also assist the Head Start Director in filling staff vacancies and in determining criteria for the selection of new staff members.
- D. The Budget & Proposal Committee will approve any fund raising activities by the parent committee and expenditures of all said parent activity funds.
- E. Special committees may be appointed by the chairperson or selected by the policy council as the need arises.

VII.

- A. Regular meetings of the policy council shall be held monthly dates, times and sites, decided upon by the policy council.
- B. Written notice shall be mailed prior to each regular meeting. A copy of the agenda and other relevant reports & materials, shall be enclosed.
- C. Notices of special meetings shall be mailed or called to each member 48 hours prior to date of meeting, with an explanation of said meeting.
- D. Fifty-one percent (51%) of the voting members of the policy council must be present to institute a quorum for regular or special meetings to discuss business.

VIII.

- A. Sending a copy of the proposal amendment to each policy council member at least one week before a regular meeting. The council may debate an amendment before adoption. Amendments must be approved by majority vote and meet regulations in performance standards.

VIII.

- A. Policy Council members possess the ability to nominate an advisor, a previous member of the council that can no longer serve on the board, to advise all members on issues presented to the board but will have no voting rights.

Authorized Representative, UCHRA
Van Buren County Head Start

Date

Chairperson, Policy Council

Date