

Van Buren County Head Start

What is Policy Council and Parent Committee



Parent Committee

A program must establish a parent committee comprised exclusively of parents of currently enrolled children as early in the program year as possible. A program must ensure that parents of currently enrolled children understand the process for elections to the policy council or policy committee and other leadership opportunities.

Within the parent committee structure, a program may determine the best methods to engage families using strategies that are most effective in their community, as long as the program ensures the parent committee carries out the following minimum responsibilities:

1. Advise staff in developing and implementing local program policies, activities, and services to ensure they meet the needs of children and families;
2. Have a process for communication with the policy council and policy committee; and
3. Within the guidelines established by the governing body, policy council or policy committee, participate in the recruitment and screening of Early Head Start and Head Start employees.

Policy Council

Each agency must establish and maintain a policy council responsible for the direction of the Head Start program at the agency level, and a policy committee at the delegate level. If an agency delegate's operational responsibility for the entire Head Start or Early Head Start program to one delegate agency, the policy council and policy committee may be the same body.

The policy council shall approve and submit to the governing body decisions about each of the following activities:

1. 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.
2. Program recruitment, selection, and enrollment priorities.
3. Applications for funding and amendments to applications for funding for programs under this subchapter, prior to submission of applications described in this clause.
4. Budget planning for program expenditures, including policies for reimbursement and participation in policy council activities.
5. Bylaws for the operation of the policy council.
6. 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.
7. Developing procedures for how members of the policy council of the Head Start agency will be elected.
8. Recommendations on the selection of delegate agencies and the service areas for such agencies.