

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 of the Policy Council shall be for the direction of the Head Start Program.

III. Function: The function of this Policy Council Shall approve and submit to the governing body decisions about:

1. Activities to support the active involvement of parents in supporting program operations, including policies to ensure that the Head start is responsive to community and parent needs
2. Program recruitment, selection and enrollment priorities
3. Applications for funding and amendments to applications for funding prior to submission
4. Budget planning for program expenditures including policies for reimbursement and participation in policy council activities
5. Program personnel policies and decisions regarding the employment of program staff, including standards of conduct for program staff, contractors, and volunteers and criteria for the employment and dismissal of program staff.
6. Developing procedure for how members of the policy council will be elected
7. Recommendations on the selection of delegate agencies and the service area when applicable.
8. The Policy Council must use ongoing monitoring results, data on school readiness goals to promote school preparedness of children through school entry, including activities to encourage families and caregivers to engage in highly interactive, developmentally and age appropriate activities to improve children's early social, emotional, and cognitive development and foster parental and family involvement in the early education of young children. They shall support professional development, recruitment and retention initiatives for early childhood educators. Enhance existing early childhood education and development and services including quality improvement activities and carry out activities consistent with the State's plan.

IV. Membership

- A. The policy council shall be made up of a majority of parents of enrolled children (No less than 51%).
- B. Membership shall consist of parent members and community representatives. There shall be no less than 7 members and no more than 10, and should be decided upon at the beginning of each school year by the parent committee.
 1. Membership means individuals have been elected and seated.
 2. Membership shall consist of parent members and community representatives. There shall be no less than 7 members and no more than 10, and should be decided upon at the beginning of each school year by the parent committee.
 - a. Members of the parent committee shall elect parents.
 - b. Parent members of the policy council must approve all community representatives before they can be seated.
 - c. Chairperson of the policy council must be a council member.
 3. Policy council members 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 5 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.
 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 3 prior consecutive meetings without having submitted a legitimate excuse to the policy council chairperson.
 7. A member shall give the written resignation.
 8. Head Start staff members and their immediate families cannot serve as policy council members. A member of the 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.
 9. More than one member of a family cannot serve on the policy council during a member term.
 10. No member shall be employed or receive compensation for service.
 11. Program must enable low-income members to participate fully in the policy council by providing, if necessary, reimbursements for reasonable expenses incurred.

V. Elected Officers

- A. The policy council shall elect a chairperson & vice chairperson. Officers shall be elected at the first meeting for each subsequent year.
- 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 a 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 ties.
- E. The Vice-Chairperson shall preside in the absence of the chairperson. The vice-chairperson shall assume the office of chairperson in the event of resignation, termination or death of chairperson, until a permanent chairperson is elected.

VI. Committees

- 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 (Head Start Staff's immediate family members will not be eligible for hire), Community/Complaint Committee and Budget & Proposal Committee. Each committee shall consist of members of the policy council. 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 the 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 work with the Head Start Director on budget proposals for submission to the Office of Head Start
- E. Special committees may be appointed by the chairperson or selected by the policy council as the need arises.

VII. Meeting

- 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 the 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.
- E. Electronic voting is permitted under these Bylaws. Such calls of vote are to be reserved for issues of importance. This may arise, for example, in the event a quorum is not present at a formal meeting, or in the event that Policy Council action is considered desirable at a time between regularly scheduled meetings.

VIII. Amendments

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

VIII. Advisory Member

- 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