Approved by Policy Council on February 16, 2021

TACOMA PUBLIC SCHOOLS
HEAD START

POLICY COUNCIL

BYLAWS

(Operational Procedures)



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Tacoma Public Schools
HEAD START

POLICY COUNCIL BYLAWS

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Tacoma Public Schools
HEAD START POLICY COUNCIL

BYLAWS

ARTICLE I: NAME OF THE ORGANIZATION & PURPOSE

Section 1: Organization

This organization shall be called the Tacoma Public Schools Head Start Policy Council.

Section 2: Purpose of Policy Council

In accordance with the Head Start Act, every Head Start agency shall have a Policy Council responsible for working cooperatively with program staff to determine the direction of the Head Start program, including program design and operation, and long and short-term planning goals and objectives, taking into account the annual community-wide strategic planning, needs assessment and self-assessment.

ARTICLE II: RESPONSIBILITIES

As our governing body, the Tacoma Public Schools Board of Directors has the legal and fiscal responsibility for the overall administration of the Head Start program. The purpose of the Policy Council is to approve and submit to the governing body decisions about each of the following:

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, prior to submission of applications.
4. Budget planning for program expenditures, including policies for reimbursement and participation in Policy Council activities; review of monthly budget expenditures, including credit card charges.
5. Bylaws for the operation of the Policy Council.
6. Head Start employee personnel policies and decisions regarding the employment of staff, except the following situations, which are grantee decisions by program regulations: hiring and firing of program Director(s); RIF or displacements due to district or program budget shortages; RIF or displacements due to a change in the management staffing structure. Policy Council involvement includes decisions regarding criteria for the employment and dismissal of program staff, as well as standards of conduct for program staff, contractors, and volunteers. Program parents will also participate in employment interviews.
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.
9. Approve the amount and the use of the Parent Activity Funds that are allocated to the Policy Council and each Head Start Parent Center Committee.
10. Individual members of Policy Council will serve as liaisons to the Tacoma School District Board of Directors to communicate Policy Council activities and required functions.

ARTICLE III: MEMBERSHIP

Section 1 - Definition of Members

The Policy Council shall be comprised of two types of members:

1. **Parents of Children Currently Enrolled in the Tacoma Head Start Program**
   These members shall constitute a majority of the members on the Policy Council. Tacoma Head Start defines the parent as the child's mother/stepmother, father/stepfather, or other family member who is a primary caregiver, foster parent, guardian, or the person with whom the child has been placed for purposes of adoption. A parent may only represent the school of his/her enrolled child.

2. **Community Members**
   These are members of the community served by the Head Start Agency, including parents of children who were formerly enrolled in the Tacoma Head Start program, or members of businesses, or public or private community, civic, and professional organizations familiar with resources and services for low-income children and families.

Section 2 - Composition of Members

There will be one parent Representative and one parent Alternate per school site. Policy Council will also have as many as eight (8) community members, consisting of up to five (5) community representatives from the community at large and three (3) past parents.

Section 3 - Selection of Membership

A parent Representative and an Alternate will be elected by parents during the October Parent Center Committee Meeting held at each Head Start site. During the Policy Council Executive Board elections meeting at Madison, if a school's Policy Council Representative is elected as Chair of Policy Council, the Alternate from that classroom will become the Representative at the next month's meeting. A new Policy Council Alternate will be elected at the next Parent Center Committee meeting for that site. As a result, the total size of the Policy Council increases by one.

Community Representatives will complete an application to serve as a Policy Council member. Applications will be reviewed and approved by the Policy Council Executive Board and voted on by the Council as a whole.

Section 4 - Membership Conflict of Interest

1. A conflict of interest occurs when a Policy Council Representative/Alternate acts independently or contrary to the intent of the Policy Council's purpose, policies, plans and actions.
2. No person who is employed by the school district may serve on the Policy Council. This includes, but is not limited to, substitutes, part-time, hourly, and seasonal employees.
3. No person can serve as a member of the Policy Council while any member of his/her immediate family is employed by the Tacoma Public School District Head Start preschool program or in an administrative role with the district.
4. No member shall receive compensation for serving on the Policy Council or for providing services to Tacoma Public Schools.

Once a conflict of interest is identified, the member will be terminated from the Policy Council, unless the conflict of interest is resolved immediately. The termination will be made official by the Executive Board and the Policy Council at the next meeting.

Section 5 - Terms of Membership

A term of membership shall be one year, beginning in November, through the following November when the new Policy Council is elected. The past year's Executive Board chairs the November Policy Council meeting until the election of new officers is complete. No person in a voting capacity (including Community Representatives) may serve on Policy Council for more than five (5) one-year terms, with a maximum of 2 years as a past parent.

Section 6 - Attendance

Parent and community members shall be responsible for attending all regular and special Head Start Policy Council meetings. Parent Alternates are requested to attend every Policy Council meeting so they can stay current with Policy Council business. In the event the parent Representative is absent, the Alternate will then have the necessary information to vote responsibly.

All members and alternates are responsible for notifying the Head Start office no later than one half day before the meeting in the event of their absence. The parent Representative is also responsible for notifying their parent Alternate in a timely manner if he/she is unable to attend the Policy Council meeting. If no notification is made to the Head Start office, the absence will be counted as unexcused.

Section 7 - Termination of Membership

After two consecutive absences, the member or alternate will receive an inquiry from the Policy Council Executive Board regarding his/her desire to remain on the Policy Council. If a response is received, the Policy Council Executive Board will determine continued membership on a case-by-case basis. If no response is received or there is an additional absence after the letter, a simple majority vote of those present will terminate the membership.

Membership may also be terminated for a breach of confidentiality (see Section 11), for repeated violations of the group agreements regarding conduct at meetings, or for non-performance of duties. In these cases, program administrators will attempt to resolve the issues with the member. If there is no change, the member may be removed by a vote of the Policy Council.

Section 8 - Resignations and Vacancies

Members who are unable to fulfill their responsibilities are requested to notify the Head Start Office and the Policy Council of their resignation. In the event a parent Representative resigns, the parent Alternate may choose to take the position as the Representative and a new Alternate will be elected. If the parent Alternate declines, a new election will be held at the Parent Center Committee. Vacancies in Community Members will be filled by the next available applicant, using the same process used to elect those members.

Section 9 - Voting Rights

Each school site is entitled to one vote on each decision that requires a vote of the Policy Council. Generally, that vote will be cast by the Representative, but may also be made by the Alternate in the absence of the Representative. In addition, each community member shall be entitled to one (1) vote on each decision. The Chair is not entitled to a vote, except during elections or to break a tie.

Absentee voting by proxy or otherwise is not permitted, except as provided for in Article III, Section 10 and Article V, Section 5.

Section 10 - Quorum

A quorum shall consist of at least fifty one percent (51%) of the total number of Policy Council members present at the meeting. This includes members who are attending the meeting virtually when that option is offered. If there is no quorum, information may be shared, but no official action may be taken until a quorum exists or until the next regular meeting. In the case where there is a time deadline for official action, however, a preliminary vote will be taken at the meeting, to be supplemented by email or phone vote of absent members.

Section 11 - Confidentiality

The Tacoma Head Start Policy Council is an official group of the Tacoma Public Schools. Actions taken by members representing the Policy Council are an extension of the school district, and those actions must be taken in accordance with Policy Council By-laws, school district policies, and Head Start regulations. At times, the Policy Council will go into "Closed Session" to make a confidential decision. During this time, any non-voting attendees, with the exception of the PC Chair will be excused. Any discussion and/or decisions made in closed session must be kept confidential. If a member is found responsible for a breach of confidentiality, appropriate actions, which may include removal from Policy Council, will be taken by the Program Administrators. Any breach of confidentiality with legal or fiscal ramifications will be referred to the Superintendent or his/her designee.

ARTICLE IV: POLICY COUNCIL EXECUTIVE BOARD

Section 1 - Members

There shall be up to six members of the Executive Board, including but not limited to Chairperson, Vice Chair, Member-at-Large, and the Washington State Association Representative. There will be the option of adding two additional officer, Secretary and Treasurer. Policy Council members have the option of which, if any, additional officers are needed at the beginning of the current school year or anytime deemed necessary during the school year.

Section 2 - Executive Board Member Responsibilities: The Executive Board is responsible for bringing decisions forward to the Policy Council. In addition, the Executive Board also makes up the Operations Committee. This committee meets as needed to:

- Review and provide input to program planning, proposed budgets, and revisions for all grants to ensure they meet program priorities and goals.
- Review and provide input to program planning and related policies and service plans.
- Oversee the fundraising activities, including:
    - Determine appropriate fund-raising activities and bring proposals to PC for approval.
    - Coordinate and participate in activities.
    - Review and make recommendations to update policies and procedures for access, use and amount of funds.

The Chairperson shall:

1. Preside over all Policy Council and Executive Board meetings, call meetings to order, determine a quorum and adjourn each meeting.
2. Sign all requests for grants after Policy Council approval.
3. Sign any correspondence or other documents as requested by the Program Administrators and with authorization by the membership.
4. Work with the staff and the Executive Board to prepare the Policy Council agenda.
5. Has priority to attend Washington State Head Start/ECEAP Regional meetings in a voting capacity as Tacoma Head Start Current Parent Representative.
6. Call special Policy Council and Executive Board meetings as deemed necessary by the Program Administrators.
7. Present a Policy Council report to the School Board quarterly. Develop the contents of the report, including important PC actions and activities, with the Executive Committee as determined by Executive Board.

The Vice Chair shall:

1. Perform all duties of the Chairperson in his/her absence.
2. Ensure that regular communication takes place with the Chair in the case of the Chair's absence.
3. Serve as Chair to one sub-committee.
4. Perform any other duties assigned by the Chairperson.

The Secretary shall:

1. Take minutes at all meetings of the Policy Council and Executive Board meetings when the Head Start program secretary is unable to attend the meeting.
2. Take roll call at Policy Council meetings.
3. Write correspondence as requested by the Chairperson.

The Treasurer shall:

1. Serve as Chairperson to the Budget subcommittee.
2. Review budget reports with the Head Start Budget Technician and report the amount of all monies pertaining to all parent activities at each regular meeting.
3. Present each site's Parent Activity Fund Budgets for approval before funds are expended from those budgets.

The Member-at-Large shall:

1. Assume the roles of all other Policy Council Executive Board members excluding the position of Policy Council Chair unless the Vice Chair is absent, or office vacated. In the event that a recently elected MAL has not yet attended two Executive Board meetings, the Secretary, Treasurer, or WSA Rep. have the first option to assume the position of Vice Chair.
2. Assist the Representatives in understanding their responsibilities.
3. Monitor the adherence to the Policy Council Bylaws.

The Washington State Association of Head Start/ECEAP Representative shall:

1. Serve as Chair to the Family/Literacy/Legislative Advocacy sub-committee.
2. Serve as the Policy Council Representative to the Washington State Association of Head Start and ECEAP.
3. Has priority to attend all State and Regional meetings.
4. Serve as coordinator of Legislative action and information for Policy Council and Center Committees.

Section 3 - Policy Council Executive Board Elections

Qualifications

All members of the Policy Council are eligible to run for an Executive Board position, provided that two members from the same immediate household do not serve on the Executive Board at the same time.

Composition

1. Alternates may be elected to the Policy Council Executive Board, as long as they meet attendance requirements in Article III, Section 6.
2. A representative and an alternate from the same site may not serve on the Executive Board at the same time.
3. Of the six (6) Executive Board Officers, at least three (3) of the officers must be current parents. One (1) member may be a Community Member as long as they are a past parent.

Nominations

1. Nominations may be requested from the floor, and members may also nominate themselves.
2. The Chairperson will state the name of the representative(s) nominated for the office.
3. Nominations for that specific office will close.
4. Each candidate will deliver a short speech advocating his/her candidacy for office.

Ballots

1. Paper ballots will be given to all voting members of the Policy Council.
2. Ballots will be collected and counted by one (1) non-voting Policy Council member and one (1) staff member.

3. Executive Board members will be elected by majority vote.
4. The Chairperson will receive the results of the ballot vote and announce the newly elected Executive Board members.

Section 4 - Term of Membership-Executive Board

1. Executive Board members shall be elected for a (1) year term by a majority vote in November and shall take office at the close of the meeting.
2. The officers of the past year may serve as advisors to the new officers for a period of thirty calendar (30) days.

Section 5 - Vacancies and Resignations-Executive Board

The Vice-Chairperson shall fill a vacancy in the office of Chairperson, and a new Vice Chair will be elected at the next Policy Council meeting. A vacancy in any other office shall be filled at the next regular meeting by a simple majority vote of those present. If any member of the Executive Board is no longer able to serve on the Policy Council Executive Board, he/she should give verbal or written notice to the chairperson or the Director.

Section 6 - Removal of Executive Board Member

1. Removal of an Executive Board member may occur when there has been a conflict of interest, breach of confidentiality, non-performance of duties, repeated violations of the group agreements regarding conduct at meetings, and/or excessive absences without a valid reason.
2. At a regular Policy Council Executive Board meeting, a motion to remove must be made. The Executive Board member must respond.
3. Any response will be reviewed by the remaining members of Executive Board prior to the following meeting, with either a recommendation to remove or leave the member of Executive Board.
4. If the recommendation is to remove, at the next regular Policy Council meeting a simple majority vote is required to remove the Executive Board member.

Section 7 - Attendance

The Policy Council Executive Board is responsible for following all the previously described attendance procedures for all regular and special Policy Council and Executive Board meetings.

Section 8 - Voting at Executive Board

Each member of the Executive Board, with the exception of the Chair, shall have one (1) vote on each decision that requires a vote of the Executive Board. In the event of a tie, the Chair shall cast the deciding vote. A quorum of the Executive Board shall consist of a simple majority.

ARTICLE V: PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Section 1: Goals

The goal of professional development opportunities for Policy Council Representatives is to strengthen the knowledge and skills necessary to carry out their responsibilities as Policy Council Representatives.

1. Training on Performance Standards and Program Policies will be made available to all members throughout the year.
2. Training for Executive Board members specific to duties of their position will be provided ongoing throughout their term.
3. Additionally, training on leadership skills will be provided throughout the year to all Policy Council Representatives.

Section 2: Conferences

A. Head Start will support travel and childcare expenses of the Executive Board members to attend meetings, trainings, conferences, etc. The PC Chairperson is given the first opportunity to attend and represent Policy Council. If the Chairperson is unable to attend, the opportunity will be offered to Executive Board members in this order:

    1. Vice Chair
    2. Secretary/Treasurer
    3. Member at Large
    4. WSA Representative

B. Executive Board members are responsible to attend all workshops and conference sessions which are included in the paid registration and agenda of the conference, as well as:

- Conduct themselves in a professional manner
- Share what they have learned with the entire Policy Council either in verbal or written form.

ARTICLE VI: MEETINGS OF THE POLICY COUNCIL & EXECUTIVE BOARD

Section 1 - Regular meetings

1. All meetings are open (public) sessions, unless stated closed. Guests may not actively participate in the meeting unless they are reporting on a specific item on the agenda.
2. Regular meetings may be held monthly, November through November. The PC Executive Board, upon recommendation by the Director(s), will determine the need for a July meeting.
3. Policy Council members agree to follow their group agreements in all interactions.

Section 2 - Place of Meetings

Place of meetings shall be determined not less than one (1) week in advance unless it is a special or an emergency meeting.

Section 3 - Time of Meetings

The meeting time shall be determined by the membership of the Policy Council in coordination with the Program Administrators.

Section 4 - Notice of Meetings

1. A schedule of meetings for the year will be determined no later than September.
2. Written notices and meeting information shall be presented before each regular meeting.
3. Policy Council members may establish a “Phone Tree” for telephone reminders. Phone calls will be the responsibility of the current Policy Council Vice Chairperson.
4. The school district’s phone notification system may also be used to inform members.
5. Meetings will be cancelled if Head Start classes were cancelled that day due to weather or driving conditions.

Section 5 - Special and Emergency Meetings

The Chair, Executive Board or Program Administrators shall be empowered to call special or emergency meetings or reschedule meetings when necessary. These meetings must be coordinated with and attended by the Program Administrators.

In case of special and/or emergency meetings, due to time constraints, the Chair, Executive Board and Program Administration may elicit a phone or online conference among members and obtain the necessary approval/disapproval vote of special and/or emergency action items.

Section 6 - Parliamentary Authority

Meetings shall be conducted using the newly revised Robert's Rules of Order as a guide.

ARTICLE VII: COMMITTEES OF THE POLICY COUNCIL

The Policy Council will have committees that work in partnership with the Head Start staff to plan, review, coordinate and make recommendations. These committees will include Operations, Family Advocacy, Health Services Advisory, and School Readiness and will be overseen by the Policy Council Executive Board.

Section 1 - Committees

1. Any member of the Policy Council or any current parent in the Head Start program may participate in committee meetings.
2. All meetings are open (public) sessions, unless stated closed.
3. All committee members shall serve for one (1) school year, beginning in November.
4. All committee members may serve as many years as interested, up to a total of three (3) years.

Section 2 - Responsibilities of Committees

All committees will strive to fulfill their mandated requirements as listed below. Each committee is responsible for reviewing information and making reports and recommendations to the Policy Council and may be assigned additional responsibilities with Executive Board approval as determined by program need.

OPERATIONS: This committee is made up of members of the PC Exec Board and oversee fiscal operations and personnel

This committee meets as needed to:

- Review and provide input to program planning, proposed budgets, and revisions for all grants to ensure they meet program priorities and goals.
- Review and provide input to program planning and related policies and service plans.
- Oversee the fundraising activities, including:
  - Determine appropriate fund-raising activities and bring proposals to PC for approval.
  - Coordinate and participate in activities.
  - Review and make recommendations to update policies and procedures for access, use and amount of funds.

FAMILY ADVOCACY

This committee meets as needed to:

- Encourage parent involvement in the Head Start program.
- Review and provide input on community issues and services.
- Review and provide input to the Family Partnerships, Community Partnerships, and Eligibility Service Plans and Program Policies.
- Review and provide input to program Community Assessment and Three-Year Goals.
- Review criteria for Recruitment, Selection, and Enrollment priorities.
- Plan and coordinate activities that “empower” parents.
- Review updates on Federal/State/Local issues and information.
- Recommend advocacy actions (phone calls, letter writing, emails, visits, etc.).
- Increase family participation in and access to Family Literacy materials, activities, and services.
- Participate in specialized training in areas related to emergent literacy.
- Provide support for fathers as educators and nurturers of their children.

HEALTH SERVICES ADVISORY

This committee meets at least three (3) times a year to:

- Assist parents with opportunities to learn and access preventive medical and dental health, nutrition, and emergency first-aid and safety practices for home, classroom, and community.
- Participate in Program Self-Assessment Health activities.
- Review and provide input to the Child Health and Development, Health and Safety, Nutrition, Mental Health Services Plans and Program Policies.
- Help identify community health needs, provision of services, available resources, and education.

SCHOOL READINESS

This committee meets as needed to:

- Review and provide input to the Early Childhood Education, Disabilities, Human Resources, and Facilities-Materials-Equipment Service Plans and Program Policies.
- Participate as an integral part of the annual Program Self-Assessment process in which parents actively participate as part of the assessment teams.
- Review and provide input to any Program Improvement Plans necessary in response to the Program Self-Assessment findings and any Program Expansion plans.
- Review and provide input for the Head Start Grant application.

ARTICLE VIII: BY-LAWS REVISION PROCEDURES

These Bylaws may be amended by a simple majority of members in attendance at any regular meeting, or at a special meeting called for that purpose, whether in person or virtual attendee. Contents of the proposed amendments shall be presented a minimum of two (2) weeks prior to the meeting on which they will be voted. Proposed amendments must be consistent with the purposes and objectives of the Policy Council included in these by-laws and may not violate or confer any power or responsibilities beyond those authorized by current Federal regulations pertaining to the Head Start program or School District policies and procedures. All parts of the Bylaws can be suspended by a simple majority until the next regular Policy Council meeting or until a special meeting within this time is called to amend the Bylaws.