

Westmoreland Community Action Program

Head Start Policy Council Bylaws

(as governed by the Head Start Performance Standards)

Head Start Policy Council Approval:

WCA Board Approval:

Bylaws Of The Westmoreland Community Action Head Start/Early Head Start Policy Council

Article I - Name

The name of this organization shall be Westmoreland Community Action Head Start/Early Head Start Policy Council (hereinafter Policy Council).

Article II - Purposes and Functions

Section 1: Purposes

The purpose shall be to implement the Head Start Program Performance Standards and PL 110-134 (Head Start Act) The policy council shall be responsible for 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 communitywide strategic planning and needs assessment and self-assessment. The Policy Council will perform the following functions directly:

- a. Serve as a link to the Parent Committees, grantee agency governing bodies, public and private organizations, and the communities they serve.
- b. Assist Parent Committees in communicating with parents enrolled in all program options to ensure that they understand their rights and responsibilities and the opportunities available in Early Head Start and Head Start, and to encourage their participation in the program.
- c. Assist Parent Committees in planning, coordinating, and organizing program activities for parents with the assistance of staff, and ensure that funds set aside from program budgets are used to support parent activities (Parent Activity Funds).
- d. Assist in recruiting volunteer services from parents, community residents, and community organizations, and assist in the mobilization of community resources to meet identified needs.

Section 2: Functions

Policy Council is responsible for the direction of the program, including:

- Program design and operation
- Long- and short-term planning goals/objectives
- Taking into account communitywide strategic planning and needs assessment and self-assessment

The general functions of Policy Council, are to work in partnership with key management staff and the governing body and to approve or disapprove and submit to the governing body decisions about the following:

- a. 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.
- b. Program recruitment, selection, and enrollment priorities.
- c. Applications for funding and amendments to applications for funding for Early Head Start and Head Start, including administrative services, prior to the submission of such applications to the responsible federal official.
- d. Budget planning for program expenditures, including policies for reimbursement and participation in policy council activities.
- e. Bylaws for the operation of the policy council.
- f. 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.
- g. Developing procedures for how members of the policy council of the Head Start agency will be elected.
- h. Recommendations on the selection of delegate agencies and the service areas for such agencies.

Article III - Membership

Section 1: Composition

Parents of children currently enrolled shall constitute a majority of the membership of the Policy Council. Parents of all program options must be proportionally represented.

Section 2 Categories

Membership shall be comprised of two types of representatives: parents of children currently enrolled and members at large of the community.

- a. Every attempt should be made to elect 1 parent member, and one alternate who will act in place of the representative in his or her absence to Policy Council from Parent Power Hour (Head Start/Early Head Start Parent Committee). An alternate is classified as a member and is subject to the same term limitations as the regular member. They must be parents of Head Start Early Head Start enrolled children.
- b. All members at large will be drawn from the community served by the Head Start agency. Former Head Start parents may also be members at large. Community members may not exceed 49% (including the Board of Directors' designee if not also an elected parent member) of the total Council.

Section 3: Term of Office

Policy Council members shall serve for a term of one (1) year. No member shall serve on the Policy Council for more than five (5) one-year terms.

Section 4: Voting Rights

Each Policy Council Member will have one vote, including the Chairperson. In the event of a tie, the Chairperson will ask members to express the basis of his/her vote, solely for the purpose of hearing all issues. After discussion, the Chairperson will cast the final vote

Proxy voting, electronic, mailed or faxed voting may be allowed if there is not a quorum present. The voting process may include voice vote, vote cards, roll call, etc at the request of a member. Proxies must be delivered in writing, signed and dated by the giver of the proxy, given only to another member of the Policy Council in good standing, and formally designate the holder of the proxy as the absent member's voting representative.

Section 5: Termination of Membership

A member of the Policy Council can be terminated by a two-thirds vote of the Policy Council if absent from three (3) consecutive meetings without having submitted a legitimate excuse in writing to the Chairperson prior to the meeting. A member of the Policy Council may also be terminated if the member violates the signed Standards of Conduct for program staff, consultants, and volunteers.

Section 6: Resignation

A member shall give a written statement prior to resignation from the Council.

Section 7: Vacancy

All Parent Committees shall elect a new parent member to the Policy Council within 30 days whenever there is a vacancy from that center. If the vacancy is created by a community representative, that vacancy will also be filled within 30 days.

Section 8: Conflict of Interest

No grantee agency staff (or members of their immediate families) may serve on the Policy Council. Members of the policy council shall not have a conflict of interest with the Head Start agency (including any delegate agency); and shall not receive compensation for serving on the policy council or for providing services to the Head Start agency.

Article IV -Officers

Section 1 Officers

The Policy Council shall elect a Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson. Other officers shall be elected as deemed necessary by the Council.

Section 2: Election and Term of Office

Each officer shall be elected by the full membership of the Policy Council once the full Council has been seated, and shall serve a term of one (1) year. Every effort will be made to have Policy Council seated in September each year.

Section 3: Removal

Any officer or member of the Council who fails to perform the duties as outlined in the by-laws, can be removed by a two-thirds vote of the Policy Council.

Section 4: Chairperson

The Chairperson shall preside at all meetings and maintain order. Prior to the meeting, the Chairperson will prepare the agenda with the Head Start/Early Head Start Director and any other pertinent persons. The Chairperson also serves on committees and coordinate activities as needed; works closely with the Head Start/Early Head Start Director and Executive Director as necessary; acts as the official representative of the Council; is knowledgeable of Council By-Laws, Head Start policies and requirements; and performs other duties as appropriate.

Section 5: Vice-Chairperson

The Vice-Chairperson shall preside in the absence of the Chairperson or whenever the Chairperson temporarily vacates the chair. In case of resignation or death of the Chairperson, the Vice-Chair shall assume the office until a permanent chair is elected.

Article V - Committees

Section 1: Committees

The Policy Council shall appoint such committees as are necessary to the proper conduct of business, including but not limited to the following: Executive Committee, Personnel Committee, Complaints Committee, and Grants/Fiscal Committee.

Section 2: Executive Committee

The Executive Committee shall be composed of the Officers of the Policy Council. The Executive Committee shall have the power to conduct business for the Policy Council between regular meetings of the Policy Council.

Section 3: Personnel Committee

When possible and available committee members assists with interviewing and recommending candidates for hire.

Section 4: Health Advisory Committee

This committee is comprised of parents, staff and medical professionals, who look at current health practices and services, health educational program, identify areas of concern, and trends in order to make recommendations to the program as necessary. This committee meets twice a year.

Section 5: School Readiness Committee

Looks at the educational practice and trends in order to make recommendations to the program as necessary.

Section 6: Budget and program Planning Committee

This committee reviews spending and monitors Head Start and Early Head Start budgets, makes recommendations for adjusting the budget as the year progresses, monitors in kind and assists to develop the budget for the next program year. Program planning looks at all the information from the program and helps review goals for the program and they recommend changes for the program when appropriate. This committee meets twice a year or during Policy Council or as needed.

Section 5: Annual Program Assessment

Members look at the current Head Start classrooms, curriculum, fiscal, and day to day activities to ensure that Head Start is following the Head Start Program Regulations and Program Guidance.

Article VI - Meetings

Section 1: Regular Meetings

Regular meetings of this Policy Council will be held monthly on the second Friday of the month at the central office or via zoom starting at 10:30 am.

Section 2: Special/Call Meetings

There will be special meetings of the Council only when there is a need, and all special meetings shall be called by the Chairperson or by 2 members agreeing on the need for a meeting at least 48 hours in advance.

Section 3: Notice of Meetings

Written notices shall be mailed to each member at least two (2) days prior to the date of each regular meeting. A copy of the agenda for the meeting will also be enclosed. Notices of special meetings shall be mailed to each member at least 48 hours prior to the date of the meeting, with an explanation for the special meeting.

Section 4 Quorum

A simple majority of 5 of the members of the Council must be present to constitute a quorum in order to transact business for regular or special meetings.

Article VII - Amendments

These By-Laws may be amended by sending a copy of the proposed amendment to each Policy Council member at least two (2) day before the meeting. The Policy Council may debate an amendment before adoption. All amendments must be approved by a two-thirds vote of the Policy Council.

Signatures

Date

Chairperson of the Governing Body

Agency Executive Director

Chairperson of the Policy Council

Head Start Director

Effective Date: _____