

# **Family Development Services**

*~A Head Start Organization~*

## **POLICY COUNCIL BYLAWS**

### **ARTICLE I      NAME**

The name of this organization shall be the Family Development Services Head Start Policy Council.

### **ARTICLE II      PURPOSES AND FUNCTIONS**

#### **Section 1    Purposes**

The purpose shall be to implement the applicable rules and regulations regarding program governance as defined in the Improving Head Start for School Readiness Act 2007 and any subsequent direction and/or Performance Standards issued by the federal Office of Head Start.

#### **Section 2    Responsibilities**

In accordance with the Improving Head Start for School Readiness Act 2007. the Family Development Services Head Start Policy Council is responsible for assisting with the direction of the Agency's 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 and needs assessment and self-assessment.

The Family Development Services Head Start Policy Council shall approve and submit to the Board of Directors decisions or input as required by the Office of Head Start in each of the following subject areas:

- a.      Policies and initiatives to support the active involvement of parents in program operations and to facilitate the responsiveness of Family Development Services to community and parent needs.
- b.      Program recruitment, selection and enrollment priorities.
- c.      Applications for federal funding and amendments to applications for federal funding for Head Start programs, prior to submission.
- d.      Budget planning for program expenditures, including policies for reimbursement and participation in Family Development Services Head Start Policy Council activities.
- e.      By-laws for the operation of the Family Development Services Head Start Policy Council.

- f. Program personnel policies and actions 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.
- g. Election procedures for the Family Development Services Head Start Policy Council.

## **ARTICLE III      MEMBERSHIP**

### **Section 1              Composition**

The Family Development Services Head Start Policy Council shall be comprised of parents of currently enrolled children and community representatives. At least 51% of the membership shall be comprised of parents of currently enrolled children.

### **Section 2              Selection**

The Family Development Services Head Start Policy Council shall be elected by the parents of children who are currently enrolled in the Family Development Services Head Start program.

Each Center Parent Committee will elect one (1) parent member. In addition, one alternate member will be elected for every parent member who will act in place of the parent member in his/her absence, **when feasible**.

Community representatives will be elected from the local community; businesses; public or private community, civic and professional organizations; and others who are familiar with resources and services for low income children and families. Former Head Start parents may also be community representatives.

### **Section 3              Term of Office**

The Family Development Services Head Start Policy Council shall serve for a term of one (1) year. No member shall serve on the Family Development Services Head Start Policy Council for more than a total of three (3) one-year terms. Serving terms at other Head Start programs are also counted for this requirement.

### **Section 4              Voting Rights**

Each member of the Family Development Services Head Start Policy Council shall have one (1) vote for their program option. There shall be no substitute voting by, or for, any member. Elected alternates shall have voting rights only in the absence of the Policy Council member from their child's center.

## **Section 5 Termination of Membership**

A member of the Family Development Services Head Start Policy Council can be terminated, if absent from three (3) consecutive meetings without having communicated a legitimate excuse to the Family Advocate Coordinator/Designee, prior to the meeting. A member of the Family Development Services Head Start Policy Council may also be terminated if the member violates the signed Policy Council Member Expectations.

## **Section 6 Resignation**

A member may give a written statement prior to resignation from the Family Development Services Head Start Policy Council.

## **Section 7 Vacancy**

All Center Parent Committees shall elect a new parent member within 30 days whenever there is a vacancy from that center. **Head Start vacancies will not be filled, if the vacancy occurs May-August. Early Head Start vacancies can be filled throughout the year.**

## **Section 8 Exclusions**

No current agency staff (or members of their immediate families) may serve on the Family Development Services Head Start Policy Council. No former agency staff may serve on the Family Development Services Head Start Policy Council.

## **Section 9 Reimbursement**

Members of the Family Development Services Head Start Policy Council may be reimbursed for travel from their home to meetings or other assigned business based on mileage traveled. Reimbursement rates are the same as for Family Development Services employees.

## **ARTICLE IV OFFICERS**

### **Section 1 Officers**

The Family Development Services Head Start Policy Council shall elect a Chairperson; Vice-Chairperson; Treasurer and at least one Policy Council Representative to the Board. 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, once the full Council has been seated and shall serve a term of one (1) year. The Family Development Services Head Start Policy Council will be seated in October of every year.

**Section 3                    Removal from Office**

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

**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 Director and Family Advocate Coordinator/Designee. The Chairperson also serves on committees and coordinates activities, as needed; works closely with the Head Start Director and Executive Director, as necessary; acts as the official representative of the Council; is knowledgeable of the 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.

**Section 6                    Treasurer**

The Treasurer shall preside in the absence of the Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson. The Treasurer may work closely with the Finance Director and assist in interpreting and explaining fiscal issues to the Policy Council and parents.

**Section 7    Policy Council Representatives to the Board**

The Policy Council Representative to the Board shall be a parent of a child currently enrolled in the Family Developments Services Head Start program. The Policy Council Representative to the Board attends all governing board meetings and serves on the Governance Committee of the Board. In addition, this officer serves as the liaison between the Council and Board of Directors. If needed to provide at least two parents or former parents to serve on the Board, two Policy Council Representatives may be elected.

**ARTICLE V                    COMMITTEES**

**Section 1                    Establishment of Committees**

The Family Development Services Head Start Policy Council shall appoint such committees as are necessary to the proper conduct of business.

**ARTICLE VI                    MEETINGS**

**Section 1                    Regular Meetings**

The Family Development Services Head Start Policy Council will meet a minimum of four times per calendar year.

**Section 2                    Special Meetings**

There will be special meetings of the Family Development Services Head Start Policy Council only when there is a need and with advance notice.

**Section 3                    Notice of Meetings**

Written notices shall be mailed and or posted on the governance website to each member at least five (5) days prior to the date of each regular meeting. A copy of the agenda for the meeting will also be enclosed.

**Section 4                    Quorum**

A majority of 51% of the members (does not include alternates) of the Family Development Services Head Start Policy Council constitutes a quorum in order to transact business for regular or special meetings. In the event that a quorum is not present at a meeting or timeliness of an issue prohibits calling a meeting, a telephone and/or mail and/or electronic vote may be taken by the Family Advocate Coordinator/Designee with the knowledge of the Council Chairperson.

**ARTICLE VII            CONFLICT OF INTEREST**

Members of the Family Development Services Head Start Policy Council shall not have a conflict of interest with Family Development Services and its service or financial associations and may not receive compensation for serving on the Council or for providing services to the agency.

**ARTICLE VII            AMENDMENTS**

These by-laws may be amended by sending a copy of the proposed amendment to each Council member at least five (five) days before a meeting. The Council may debate and amendment before adoption. All amendments must be approved by a two-thirds majority of the Family Development Services Head Start Policy Council.