

**Education Service Center, Region 20  
Head Start Program**

**Policy Council Roles & Responsibilities**

In order to ensure the implementation of a high quality Head Start program, the Policy Council, will perform their roles and responsibilities as outlined in the Policy Council By-Laws and the Head Start Performance Standards. (45 CFR Part(s): 1304.50(g)(1), 1304.52(k)(4), 1304.50 Appendix A – Governance & Management Responsibilities as well as SEC. 642. POWERS AND FUNCTIONS OF HEAD START AGENCIES. [42 U.S.C. 9837] of the Head Start Act)

**Procedure:**

1. Head Start is the sole program for which the Policy Council has oversight. The Policy Council members' roles and responsibilities are outlined in the Policy Council By-Laws and Head Start Performance Standards.
2. The Policy Council must have general responsibilities and operating responsibilities as stated in Appendix A—Governance and Management Responsibilities (Performance Standard 1304.50)
3. The Policy Council must approve or disapprove the following functions as stated in Appendix A—Governance and Management Responsibilities:
  - Procedures for program planning
  - Program's philosophy and long- and short-range program goals and objectives
  - Criteria for defining recruitment, selection, and enrollment priorities
  - All funding applications and amendments to funding applications for Head Start, including administrative services, prior to the submission of such applications to the grantee or to HHS
  - Policy Council and Parent Committee reimbursement
  - The annual self-assessment of the grantee agency progress in carrying out the programmatic and fiscal intent of its grant application, including planning or other actions that may result from the review of the annual audit findings from the Federal Monitoring review
  - Composition of the Policy Council and the procedures by which policy group members are chosen
  - Procedures describing how the governing body and the Policy Council will implement shared decision-making
  - Internal dispute resolution procedures for resolving internal disputes, including impasse procedures, between the governing body and Policy Council
  - Program personnel policies and subsequent changes to those policies...including standards of conduct for program staff, consultants and volunteers
  - Decisions to hire or terminate the Head Start director of the grantee agency
  - Decisions to hire or terminate any person who works primarily for the Head Start program of the grantee agency
4. The following items will be presented annually to the Policy Council along with a regular ESC-20 Board report:
  - September Policy Council meeting - Policy Council reimbursement, personnel policies / standards of conduct, annual contracted services, new hired staff, PIR report

- October Policy Council meeting – Policy Council training of Governing Body Roles & Responsibilities & the composition of ESC-20 Board members
  - November Policy Council with Finance Committee meeting – Revised program plans and procedures to include: procedures for program planning, internal dispute resolution, shared decision-making, Policy Council composition
  - January Policy Council meeting – Community assessment revisions / up-date, ESC-20 Financial Audit results, self-assessment process & recruitment of volunteers to participate
  - February Policy Council with Finance Committee meeting
  - March Policy Council meeting – Self-Assessment / Strategic Improvement Plans report, Criteria for defining recruitment, selection, and enrollment priorities, Mid-year Child Outcomes summary results
  - April Policy Council with Finance Committee meeting – Preliminary continuation grant application discussion
  - May Policy Council meeting – Continuation grant application, Program philosophy and long- and short-range program goals and objectives
5. At each Policy Council meeting the Policy Council members receive information about the Head Start program as well as requests for any action that needs to be taken. The Policy Council is given the opportunity to respond and make comments or suggestions on all Policy Council agenda items related to Head Start. Some items that come to the Policy Council's attention as needed are:
- Procedures designated for approval by the Policy Council
  - Approval of new staff positions
  - Information on personnel decisions – new hires, resignations, terminations
  - Program reports such as Head Start Financial Reports
  - Any items required for approval as stated in Appendix A—Governance and Management Responsibilities
6. In order to facilitate shared decision-making and keep communication open between the Policy Council and the ESC-20 Board the following actions will be taken:
- A Policy Council representative attends ESC-20 Board meetings and presents a report to the Policy Council concerning action of the ESC-20 Board as related to Head Start.
  - Mr. Charles Carlson serves as the liaison between the ESC-20 Board and the Policy Council and attends meetings for both entities and reports a summary of the Policy Council meeting back to the ESC-20 Board.
  - The ESC-20 Board is invited to each Policy Council meeting and receives a copy of the Policy Council meeting agenda.
7. The Policy Council shall not:
- Have a financial conflict of interest with the Head Start agency.
  - Receive compensation for serving on the Policy Council or for providing services to the Head Start agency.
  - Shall not be an employee of the Head Start grantee or the partnership school district in direct connection to the Head Start program.

*Revised October 2011/CM*  
 ESC-20 Board Approved:  
 Policy Council Approved: