

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

Policy Council By-Laws

Article 1 Name of Organization:

The name of this organization shall be the Education Service Center, Region 20 Head Start Program Policy Council of Atascosa, Bandera, and Medina counties.

Article 2 Purposes:

The Policy Council is established as a formal structure of shared governance through which parents, families and community members can participate in policy-making decisions about the Head Start Program as per Subpart D – Program Design and Management 1304.50 Program Governance.

Article 3 Roles & Responsibilities:

The Policy Council will work in partnership with key ESC-20 Management Team staff and partnership school district staff to review, revise and approve:

1. Funding applications and amendments to funding applications for Head Start.
2. Procedures on how the governing body and the Policy Council will implement shared decision-making.
3. Procedures for shared planning in accordance with the requirements of 45 CFR 1305.3 – Determining community strengths and needs.
4. The program's Philosophy and Mission Statement, long and short-term goals and objectives.
5. The selection of partnership agencies and their service areas.
6. The composition of the local Policy Council and the procedures by which the group members are chosen.
7. Criteria for defining recruitment, selection and enrollment priorities.
8. The annual Self-Assessment of the grantee agency's 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 and findings from the Federal Review Team as documented from the PRISM.
9. Program personnel policies and subsequent changes to those policies in accordance with CFR 45 1304.52 and partnership district guidelines.
10. Decisions to hire or terminate the Head Start Director of the grantee agency.
11. Decisions to hire or terminate any person who works primarily for the Head Start program of the grantee agency.
12. Serve as a link to the Parent Committees, grantee governing bodies, public and private organizations and the communities they serve.
13. Assist Parent Committees in communicating with parents and families enrolled in all program options to ensure that they understand their rights, responsibilities and opportunities in Head Start and to encourage their participation in the program.
14. Assist Parent Committees in planning, coordinating and organizing program activities for parents with the assistance of staff and ensuring that funds set aside from program budget are used to support parent activities.

15. Assist in recruiting volunteer services from parents and families, community residents and community organizations, and assist in the mobilization of community resources to meet identified needs.
16. Establish and maintain procedures for working with the grantee agency to resolve community complaints about the program.
17. Follow the ESC-20 Policy to settle grievances with ESC-20 personnel or Head Start Program management, as outlined in the *Complaints & Grievances Procedures Plan Parents & Employees Plan*.
18. Follow the program *Dispute Resolution and Mediation Process Plan* to settle disagreements between the Head Start Policy Council and ESC-20 Board.
19. Review and monitor the annual operating budget for the program.
20. Provide input to the strategies described in all program service area plans.

Article 4 Composition, Membership, Rights, Termination and Alternates:

Section 1 The Policy Council will be comprised of two types of representatives:

- A. *Parent Representative* – one that has a child currently enrolled in the Head Start Program.
- B. *Community Representative* – a member from the local community: business, public or private community, civic, professional organization, parents of formerly enrolled children, parents of currently enrolled Pre-K children, or others who are familiar with resources and services for low-income children and families.

Section 2 Alternates:

- A. The Policy Council group will elect an Alternate to take the place of the duly elected member Representative upon his/her absence, resignation or termination.
- B. Alternates are to be officially recognized by the Policy Council at the time of their election so that they may take their place on the Policy Council when necessary.
- C. An Alternate must be a current parent of an enrolled Head Start child.

Section 3 Members of the Policy Council will be comprised of at least 51 percent of currently enrolled Head Start children:

The Policy Council will be comprised of 18 voting members, which is made from 12 Parent Representatives and 6 Community Representatives. Each center will have two Parent Representatives. Each center will have an Alternate person who substitutes as the Community Representative or the Parent Representative in the absence of the original representative. The Representatives and Alternate will be elected during the September Parent Committee meeting at each center.

Section 4 Length of Membership:

- A. Policy Council Representatives will serve a one-year term. A person only serves on the Policy Council for a combined total of three years.
- B. The Policy Council Officers will remain in office until the new members, the successor Policy Council, have been elected and taken position.

Section 5 Voting Rights:

A member will have the right to vote on items that are set in the agenda. Policy Council Officers have equal voting rights as other Policy Council members. An Alternate will only vote when the regular Parent Representative or Community Representative is absent.

Section 6 Termination of Membership:

- A. Members are subject to termination upon the decision of the Policy Council if such members fail to comply with Program and/or Policy Council's prescribed policy and instruction.
- B. Members will exercise optional rights to request voluntary termination by submitting their verbal or written resignation within reasonable advance notice.
- C. Any member who misses two consecutive meetings will automatically lose his/her seat on the Policy Council.
- D. Exceptions to the policy of removing members who miss two consecutive meetings will be considered by the Council membership and voted on for consensus. Exceptions could include family emergencies, illness and other unforeseen events.

Section 7 Nepotism:

No employee of the partnership school districts or Education Service Center, Region 20 may serve on the Policy Council. Current parents who occasionally substitute for the school system may serve on the Policy Council.

Article 5 Election and Duties of Officers:

Section 1 Officers:

- A. Election of officers will be held in September at the first Policy Council meeting.
- B. Officers of the Policy Council will be a Chairperson, Co-Chairperson and Recording Secretary.
- C. The past Policy Council Chairperson, Co-Chairperson and Recording Secretary will conduct the September meeting until such time that the new officers are elected.
- D. In the event that the Policy Council Chairperson wishes to be considered for an office position and is eligible for another year of service, he/she will appoint an individual to oversee the election.

Section 2 The officers will be elected by the Policy Council membership using democratic procedures.

Members will be nominated by peers or nominate themselves. Each nominee will address the Policy Council with a brief autobiography and overview of their interest in running for an officer position. A confidential voting process will be used to elect each officer.

Section 3 Chairperson's Duties:

- A. The Chairperson shall conduct the meeting and be responsible for leading the Policy Council through all duties / functions referred to in Article 3 of this document.
- B. Endorse meeting minutes subject to committee approval.
- C. Inform membership of all meetings to be held.
- D. Be responsible for the agenda and making it available to all members of the Policy Council.

Section 4 Co-Chairperson’s Duties:

- A. The Co-Chairperson will assist the Chairperson with all the Policy Council’s activities and functions referred to in Article 3 of this document.
- B. He/She will assume the duties of the Chairperson’s office upon his/her absence.
- C. Any other duties as assigned by the Chairperson.

Section 5 Recording Secretary:

- A. The Recording Secretary will record proceedings of all meetings and present the minutes for the Policy Council’s approval at the succeeding meeting.
- B. Any other duties as assigned by the Chairperson.

Section 6 Committees:

Special committees will be appointed as needed by the Chairperson and shall not exceed more than eight members.

Article 7 Meeting of the Policy Council:

Section 1 Quorum:

A simple majority of the legal members of the Policy Council will form a quorum. This is defined as 2/3 of the elected membership. See chart below:

Elected Membership	Attendance Needed for Quorum
18	12
17	11
16	10

An Alternate may be counted if a regular Representative is absent.

Section 2 Regular Meetings:

The Education Service Center, Region 20 Head Start Program Policy Council will hold its regular meeting every third Thursday of the month unless otherwise discussed at the previous meeting. Meetings begin in September and run through May. There is no meeting during the month of December. All members will receive written notice of meetings at least five days in advance, which includes the meeting Agenda.

Section 3 Special Meetings During the School Year:

The Policy Council Chairperson, with the consent of 51 % of the membership, may call a special meeting. Proof of consent must be documented through individual signature.

Section 4 Special Meeting to Conduct Summer Business:

During months of the funding year, June, July and August, when school is not in session and business must be conducted, Policy Council approval can be gained at the discretion of the Policy Council Chairperson through one of the following methods:

- Information will be mailed to each Policy Council member. A written vote will be mailed back to ESC-20 as evidence of approval or disapproval. Approval will be indicated by the majority vote.

- A meeting of no less than 7 members will be conducted to discuss the issue needing approval and minutes will be taken as evidence of approval or disapproval. Approval will be indicated by the majority vote.

Article 8 Amendments:

- A. Amendments of the By-Laws must be approved by two-thirds of the Policy Council members.
- B. Advance notice of at least thirty days will be given concerning specific By-Laws to be amended.
- C. The amendment will be in effect upon the Policy Council approval.

Article 9 Limitations:

The Policy Council shall not:

- A. Make independent decisions regarding day-to-day operation.
- B. Solicit information that will violate confidentiality or organization lines of authority.
- C. Act as an independent entity or member.
- D. Hold meetings on their own to discuss Head Start program related issues unless there is a full meeting of the Policy Council.
- E. Violate any rules or regulations of the Head Start Program, the agency's Personnel Policies or the licensing requirements of the state.
- F. Rescind or reconsider any action that has been previously approved by the Policy Council at a previous meeting unless such action was in violation of a Head Start Performance Standard.
- G. Have a financial conflict of interest with the Head Start agency.
- H. Receive compensation for serving on the Policy Council or for providing services to the Head Start agency.
- I. Shall not be an employee of the Head Start grantee or the partnership school district in direct connection to the Head Start program.

Article 10 Parliamentary Authority:

Meetings will be conducted according to the revised "Robert's Rules of Order".