

ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES FOR HEAD START POLICY COUNCIL
(Attachment for Policy No. 225)

Purpose:

In accordance with the overall purpose of the Federal Head Start Act, the Board of Education declares its commitment to delivering comprehensive preschool education programming consistent with the belief that all children, regardless of background or circumstance, has the ability to be successful in school and in life.

Consistent with this belief and the requirements of the Federal Head Start Act, the Board of Education is committed to engaging parents, caregivers and the larger community as partners in the delivery of the District's Head Start program through the establishment of a formal Head Start Policy Council at the District level.

Definitions:

Head Start: Head Start is a preschool program promoting the school readiness of children aged three to five years old by providing comprehensive services to eligible young children and their families.

Head Start Policy Council: The Head Start Policy Council for the District's Head Start program is elected each year by the parents/legal guardians of children currently enrolled in the District's Head Start program, and has responsibility for working with the District's Head Start management team to shape and inform the overall direction of the Head Start program, consistent with the Federal Head Start Act.

Head Start management team: The District employees identified in the Federal Head Start grant who are charged with the management and operation of the District's Head Start program.

Procedures:

Composition and Selection of Head Start Policy Council Members

The Head Start Policy Council shall be elected by the parents of children who are currently enrolled in the District's Head Start program. Elections shall occur annually.

The Head Start Policy Council shall be composed of:

1. Parents of children who are currently enrolled in the District's Head Start program, who shall constitute a majority of the members of the Head Start Policy Council; and
2. Members at large of the community served by the District's Head Start program, who may include parents of children who were formerly enrolled in the District's Head Start program.

Members of the Head Start Policy Council shall:

- Not have a conflict of interest with the School District of Philadelphia; and Not receive compensation for serving on the council or for providing services to the School District of Philadelphia. This does not preclude a member from receiving reimbursement for transportation to and from council meetings and other required activities, nor from receiving reimbursement for reasonable expenses associated with attendance at Head Start conferences where a member attends as a formal representative of the Head Start Policy Council.

By-Laws of Head Start Policy Council

The Head Start Policy Council shall operate under a set of formal by-laws, which shall be reviewed annually with new members. By-laws shall be revisited by the Head Start management team and the Head Start Policy Council immediately after the scheduled review of these Administrative Procedures as described under "Maintenance Schedule," below.

Responsibilities

The Head Start Policy Council shall:

- Develop activities to support the active involvement of parents in supporting program operations, including ensuring that programming is responsive to parent, family and community needs.
- Engage in the development of, review and approve changes to program recruitment, selection and enrollment priorities, consistent with all applicable laws and regulations.
- Engage in the development of, review and approve Federal Head Start applications, and application amendments, for funding.
- Engage in the development of, review and approve budget plans for major new program expenditures.
- Review and approve hiring procedures for Head Start program staff, within the District's required procedures, to ensure that parent and community needs are taken into account.

Should any of the above require significant changes to existing School District operations or budgets, as determined by the Head Start management team, these changes shall be subject to approval by the Board of Education as the legal grantee.

In order to ensure that the Head Start Policy Council has access to data and information to support its work, the Head Start management team shall provide the following information to the Head Start Policy Council:

- monthly family and child enrollment reports;
- monthly financial reports as well as any annual financial audits;
- monthly education and child development reports;
- monthly health and nutrition reports;
- monthly family service and parent engagement reports;
- the annual program information reports (PIRs) and self-assessments; and
- the Federally-required communitywide strategic planning and needs assessment.

At least five days prior to each meeting of the Head Start Policy Council, the Head Start management team shall provide the Head Start Policy Council with copies of all materials relevant to items that are to be considered for action at the Head Start Policy Council meetings.

Impasse Procedures:

In the event that the Head Start management team and the Head Start Policy Council are in disagreement on any matter within their mutual interests, the differences shall be stated in writing and representatives of each shall be authorized to meet and in good faith attempt to resolve any such differences. If the parties' representatives are not able within a reasonable time to reach agreement, the following arbitration procedures shall be followed:

1. The parties shall attempt to agree upon a single individual who shall hear from each party and receive such supportive documents as she or he may request and shall determine the resolution of the issue, which decision shall be binding upon the parties.
2. If the parties are not able to agree upon a single arbitrator, or if the single arbitrator is unable to reach a decision within a reasonable time, each party shall select an arbitrator and the two selected by the parties shall select a third arbitrator. The three arbitrators by majority vote shall determine the resolution of the issue, which decision shall be binding upon the parties.
3. Procedures for the arbitration shall be determined by the arbitrator(s) so selected.
4. All costs, if any, of arbitration shall be borne in equal amounts by (1) the Parent Activities budget and (2) the Head Start management budget.

These impasse procedures shall be included in any by-laws adopted by the Head Start Policy Council.

Maintenance Schedule:

The Head Start management team shall be required to conduct a comprehensive review of these Administrative Procedures with the Head Start Policy Council every three years, or sooner if required by changes to the Federal Head Start Act and/or the Head Start Program Performance Standards.

Related Procedures: N/A