

Bylaws approved 00.00.18 by Hidalgo County Head Start Program Policy Council Members

Approved 00.00.18 by Hidalgo County Commissioners Court

HIDALGO COUNTY HEAD START PROGRAM 2018-2019 POLICY COUNCIL BYLAWS

Article I **Name:**

The name of this organization is the **Hidalgo County Head Start Policy Council**, hereinafter referred to as the Policy Council.

Mission Statement: To break the cycle of poverty and illiteracy

Vision Statement: We are dedicated to the economic and social well-being of children and families and committed to their safety, education, and healthy development, with strong community support.

Article II **Purpose: (CFR§1301.3& HS Act 642(c)(2)(A))**

The purpose of the **Policy Council Bylaws** shall be to assist in the implementation of the Head Start Program Performance Standards and the Head Start Act of 2007. In general, the **Policy Council** is responsible for the direction of the Head Start Program **at the agency level**, 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.

Article III **Responsibilities, Duties and Functions (§1301.3(c) & HS ACT 642(c)(2)(D))**

1. **Responsibilities:** The policy council shall approve and submit to the governing body decisions about each of the following activities:
 - 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 programs under this subchapter, prior to submission of applications described in this clause.
 - 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) **of the Head Start Act of 2007 as amended** and CFR 1302.90(c)(i-v), 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.
2. **Duties:** Each Head Start agency shall ensure the sharing of accurate and regular information for use by the governing body and the policy council, about program planning, policies, and Head Start agency operations, including—
- A. Monthly financial statements, including credit card expenditures;
 - B. Monthly program information summaries;
 - C. Program enrollment reports, including attendance reports for
 - D. Monthly Reports of meals and snacks provided through programs of the Department of Agriculture;
 - E. The financial audit;
 - F. The annual self-assessment, including any findings related to such assessment;
 - G. The communitywide strategic planning and needs assessment of the Head Start agency, including any applicable updates;
 - H. Communication and guidance from the Secretary; and
 - I. The program information reports (PIR).
3. **Functions:** The Policy Council will perform the following functions:
- 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.
 - D. Coordinate the efforts of parents and committee representatives to work together to serve the best interests of all children enrolled in the Head Start Programs.
 - E. Recruit volunteer services from parents, community residents, and community organizations and mobilize community resources to meet identified needs.

Article IV Composition of Membership (CFR §1301.3(b)(2) & HS Act 642(c)(2)(B))

- 1. Composition
 - A. The policy council shall be elected by the parents of children who are currently enrolled in the Head Start program of the Head Start agency.
 - B. The policy council shall be composed of:

1. Parents of children who are currently enrolled in the Head Start program of the Head Start agency (including any delegate agency), who shall constitute a majority of the members of the policy council; and
 2. Members at large of the community served by the Head Start agency (including any delegate agency), who may include parents of children who were formerly enrolled in the Head Start program of the agency.
- C. The Hidalgo County Head Start **Policy Council** shall be comprised of six (6) Parent Representatives members and two (2) Alternates for each, elected from the Parent Committees in the six (6) service areas in the County, and (5) members who are representatives of the community ("**Community Representatives**") and recommended by the Commissioner's Court of Hidalgo County (Grantee Board). At least fifty-one percent (51%) of the membership shall be parents of children currently enrolled in the Hidalgo County Head Start program unless otherwise specified in these Bylaws, all members are voting members.
- D. Eligibility: The eligibility of the **Policy Council** members shall be as follows:
1. Parent Representative Members shall have children currently enrolled in the center they represent, and shall be elected officers of the Center Parent Committee.
 2. Community Representatives members shall be representative of the community, civic or professional organizations which have a concern for children of low income families. Former County or Head Start employees are eligible to be recommended to serve as Community Representatives after at least 1 year from date of resignation.
 3. Employees of the Head Start Program, employees of Hidalgo County, and any immediate family members of such employees are not eligible to serve as members of the **Policy Council**. Under these Bylaws, an "immediate family" means: wife, husband, son, daughter, mother, father, brother, sister, grandparents, and grandchildren, partner sharing a home, or relative by marriage of comparable degree (in-laws). Volunteers and temporary employee substitutes are not considered "employees" for the purposes of this section.
- E. Voting Rights: Each Parent and Community Representative has one vote. All Representatives may vote on any matter that comes before the **Policy Council** and may hold any office. Generally accepted practice states that the Chairperson of the **Policy Council** does not vote except to break a tie vote.

Article V Election of Parent Members and Terms of Office for All Members 642(c)2(b)

1. All the Head Start centers will be divided into six (6) Service Areas in the County and each area will elect a parent representative from the Parent Committee officers. The parents of each center will elect the Parent Committee Officers consisting of a President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer and Parliamentarian. In order for a parent to be eligible to serve on the **Policy Council** he/she must be elected to one of these positions at the center level, and maintain that position throughout the year.
2. The Parent Committee Officers of each **service** area will caucus at the Annual Leadership Training Conference, in September **of each year** to elect one (1) parent to serve on the **Policy Council**. At the caucus, each Parent Committee Officer will be eligible to be elected to the **Policy Council** and will have one (1) vote.
3. In addition to the Parent Representatives, two (2) Alternates, 1st and 2nd Alternates, will also be elected from each area. The Alternates should not be from the same center **within the service area** as the elected Parent Representative and will be available to serve when the Parent Representative is absent, resigns or abandons his/her position.
4. Formal installation of new **Policy Council** members shall be carried out at the first **Policy Council** meeting after the Parent Leadership Training Workshop and election of Parent Representatives.
5. The members of the Policy Council shall elect a Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson, Secretary, Treasurer and Parliamentarian after the installation of the Policy Council members.

Article VI Terms Of Office (CFR 1301.3(d)(3)

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.

Article VII Conflict of Interest (CFR 1301.3(b)(2)

The program must ensure members of the policy council, and of the policy committee at the delegate level, do not have a conflict of interest pursuant to sections 642(c)(2)(C) of the Act. Staff may not serve on the policy council except parents who occasionally substitute as staff.

Article VIII Standards of Conduct and Confidentiality

1. Standards of Conduct:

Each volunteer member of the **Policy Council** has an obligation to observe and follow Hidalgo County Head Start's policies and to maintain proper standards of conduct at all times **in accordance with Article XIV of these Bylaws**. If an

individual's behavior interferes with orderly and efficient operations, corrective disciplinary measures will be taken up to and including removal from the **Policy Council**.

2. **Confidentiality:**

Every member of the **Policy Council** is bound by the Confidentiality Policy that ensures that confidential information shared in the **Policy Council** Meetings remains confidential.

Every **Policy Council** member shall respect the confidentiality of matters brought before the **Policy Council** in Closed Session.

3. The Chairperson and/or his/her delegate, is solely responsible for communication relating to the roles and responsibilities of the **Policy Council**. The Executive Director and/or his/her delegate, is solely responsible for communication relating to the operations of the Program.

Article IX **Resignation from or Termination of Membership**

1. **Resignation/Termination**

A member of the **Policy Council** can be terminated by a majority vote of the **Policy Council** if absent from three (3) consecutive meetings without having such absences officially approved by the **Policy Council**. A member of the **Policy Council** may also be terminated if the member violates the signed Standards of Conduct and Confidentiality Policy for program staff, consultants, and volunteers. A member may resign from the **Policy Council** by submitting a written letter to the Chairperson of the **Policy Council**. Such resignation shall be effective upon receipt of such notice by the Chairperson.

2. **Vacancy**

When a vacancy is created by a Parent Representative, the 1st and 2nd Alternate will fill the vacancy, respectively. If no Alternates are available, then the Center Parent Committee shall elect a new parent member and 1st and 2nd alternates, as appropriate, to the **Policy Council** from a given area.

When the vacancy is created by a Community Representative, the vacancy will be filled with a nomination from the appropriate **Commissioners Court (Grantee Board)** member. Community Representatives shall continue to serve until a replacement is appointed and approved by Parent Representatives. If the Grantee Board member's term expires, the newly elected Grantee Board member may recommend a new **Policy Council** Representative.

Article X **Officer/Duties/Committees**

1. **Officers/Duties**

Officers of the **Policy Council** shall consist of a Chairperson, Vice Chairperson, and Secretary, Treasurer and Parliamentarian. Officers shall be elected at the first **Policy Council** meeting of the new school year in October.

Chairperson: Presides at all **Policy Council** meetings; assists the Executive Director in preparing the agenda; calls special meetings and appoints committees; chairs the Executive Committee.

Vice Chairperson: Assumes the Chairperson's duties in case of absence; serves on the Executive Committee; performs other duties deemed necessary by the Chairperson.

Secretary: Calls the roll of members to establish a quorum; takes minutes, ensures a sign-in sheet that records the names of meeting participants and works closely with Head Start Staff responsible for preparation, securing and storing of the minutes.

Treasurer: Collaborates with the Chief Financial Officer to review and provide guidance in conducting fund raising activities at the centers.

Parliamentarian: Shall verify voting eligibility and ensures Robert's Rules of Order are followed during **Policy Council** meetings.

2. **Committees:**

Committees are appointed by the **Policy Council** Chairperson. The purpose of these committees is to review related information and present recommendations to the **Policy Council** for consideration. All committee information is confidential.

Executive Committee: The five officers of the **Policy Council** are automatically members of this committee. The purpose of the Executive Committee is to promote discussion and make recommendations regarding operations of the **Policy Council** and its policies and procedures. By-laws revisions are one of the primary functions of this Committee. The Executive Director or designee works directly with this Committee.

Finance Committee: This Committee includes at least three (3) members **who participate** in the grant/budget and budget amendment review process. The Committee will discuss concerns of all budgetary matters and will make recommendations to the **Policy Council**. The Chief Financial Officer works directly with and provides required information to this Committee.

Personnel Committee: This Committee includes all **Policy Council** members and will review the proposed hiring/termination of staff and will make recommendations to the **Policy Council** for consideration. The Administrator for Human Resources

provides information and works directly with this Committee.

Children's Application Committee: This Committee includes all **Policy Council** members and will review and will submit all children's applications to the **Policy Council** for approval. The Director for Family Services works directly with this Committee and provides information as appropriate.

Article XI Meetings

1. Regular Meetings

Regular meetings of this **Policy Council** will be held monthly on the third Wednesday of each month at the Administration Building located in 1901 W. State Hwy 107, McAllen, Texas **beginning** at 6:30 p.m.

2. Special/Called Meetings

There will be special meetings of the **Policy Council** only when there is a need, and all special meetings shall be called by the Chairperson. **The Executive Director, upon instruction from the Chairperson, shall notify Policy Council Members at least seventy two (72) hours in advance of any special called meetings of the Policy Council.**

3. Quorum:

A simple majority of fifty one percent (51%) of the members of the **Policy Council** must be present to constitute a quorum in order to transact business for regular or special meetings. The Chairperson may contact absent **Policy Council** members by telephone or facsimile transmission to achieve a quorum.

4. Conduct of the Meeting

Robert's Rules of Order may guide the **Policy Council** actions, which shall be consistent with Head Start Standards.

Article XII Amendment of By-Laws

These by-laws may be amended, revised, or repealed and new By-Laws may be adopted at any meeting of the **Policy Council** by an affirmative vote of 75% of the duly constituted quorum, providing:

- A. Changes have been introduced, entered, and read into the minutes of the preceding meeting of the **Policy Council**; and
- B. Mailed to each member at least five days prior to the meeting at which the final action is to be taken.

Article XIII Impasses Procedures (CFR 45, 1301.6 (a))

1. To facilitate meaningful consultation and collaboration about decisions of the governing body and the policy council, each agency's governing body and policy

council jointly must establish written procedures for resolving internal disputes between the governing board and policy council in a timely manner that include impasses procedure. These procedures must:

- A. Demonstrate that the governing body considers proposed decisions from the policy council and that the policy council considers proposed decisions from the governing body.
 - B. If there is a disagreement, require the governing body and the policy council to notify the other in writing why it does not accept a decision; and,
 - C. Describe a decision-making process and a timeline to resolve disputes and reach decisions that are not arbitrary, capricious, or illegal.
2. If the agency's decision-making process does not result in a resolution and an impasse continues, the governing body and policy council must select a mutually agreeable third party mediator and participate in a formal process of mediation that leads to a resolution of the dispute.
 3. For all programs except American Indian and Alaska Native programs, if no resolution is reached with a mediator, the governing body and policy council must select a mutually agreeable arbitrator whose decision is final.

Article XIV Code of Conduct

1. Hidalgo County Head Start Program Policy Council
 - A. Will respect and promote the unique identity of each child, family, employee, Council Member and Commissioners Court (Grantee Board) member and refrain from stereotyping on the basis of gender, race, ethnicity, culture, religion, or disability.
 - B. Must uphold the Hidalgo County Head Start Program's confidentiality guidelines stated as follows:
 1. No information regarding children and families of children enrolled with Hidalgo County Head Start Program is to be discussed outside of the work setting or Policy Council meetings;
 2. Information is to be discussed within the work setting and at Policy Council meetings only as is necessary and related to program operations/business or decision-making;
 3. No information learned at Policy Council meetings or while conducting Policy Council business may be discussed or used in any way outside of Policy Council activities;

4. No information reviewed or discussed during “Closed Session” may be discussed outside the “Closed Session”.
- C. Will support and participate in a **teamwork** approach to decision making.
 - D. Will demonstrate professional respect and courtesy toward parents, staff, fellow members of the Policy Council, the **Commissioners Court (Grantee Board)** and others affiliated with the **Hidalgo County Head Start Program** while participating on the Policy Council or representing the **Hidalgo County Head Start Program** within the community.
 - E. Must have an interest and concern for children and their families.
 - F. May not accept gifts and/or gratuities as stated in the Hidalgo County Head Start Program Personnel Policy Manual.
 - G. Is prohibited from using his/her position on the Policy Council for purposes which are, or give the appearance of being, motivated by a desire for private gain for himself/herself or others, such as those with family, business or other ties.
 - H. Must not make public statements under the auspices of the Policy Council, the **Commissioners Court (Grantee Board)**, or the staff without the approval of the Executive Director.
 - I. Will not organize or meet with, or contact other Policy Council members to conduct the business of the Program outside the scope of these Bylaws.

IN WITNESS THEREOF, the parties hereto have caused their names to be affixed hereto this 18th day of December, 2018.

Policy Council Chairperson

Hidalgo County Judge

By: _____

Ramon Garcia: _____

Date: _____

Date: _____

ATTEST:

Arturo Guajardo, County Clerk

12.15.18