

What are bylaws?

Bylaws are the written rules that control the internal affairs of our Policy Council. Bylaws generally define things like the group's official name, purpose, requirements for membership, officers' titles, and responsibilities, how officers are to be assigned, how meetings should be conducted, and how often meetings will be held.

Brevard Public Schools – Head Start Program Policy Council By-Laws

ARTICLE I: NAME

The name of the organization shall be School Board of Brevard County Head Start Policy Council. The official address of the School Board of Brevard County Head Start Policy Council shall be Clearlake Education Center, 1225 Clearlake Road, Cocoa, FL 32922.

ARTICLE II: PURPOSE AND FUNCTIONS

Section I - Purpose

The purpose shall be to implement the Head Start Program Performance Standards (2016) and Head Start Act. The Policy Council shall be responsible for the direction of the Head Start program, including program design and operation, and long and short-term planning goals and objectives, taking into account the community assessment and self-assessment. Policy Council members shall perform the following functions directly with the support of staff:

- a. Serve as a link to the Parent Committees.
- b. Assist Parent Committees in communicating with parents enrolled in the program 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 (i.e., Parent Activity Fund).

d. Assist in recruiting volunteer services from parents, community residents, and community organizations.

The School Board of Brevard County, as the Head Start Grantee, shares governance responsibilities with the Policy Council. The Florida Statutes Chapter 230.23 refers to the powers and duties of the school board for special programs.

Section II - Functions

The general functions of the ~~School Board of Brevard County Head Start~~ Policy Council are to work in partnership with key management staff and the Governing Body to approve and submit to the Governing Body decisions about the following:

a. Activities which 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 Head Start, including administrative services, prior to the submission of such applications to the responsible federal official.

d. Budget planning for program expenditures.

e. By-laws for the operation of the Policy Council.

f. Program personnel policies and decisions 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. Developing procedures for how members of the Policy Council of the Head Start agency will be elected.

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:

- Monthly financial statements, including credit card expenditures.
- Monthly program information summaries.
- Program enrollment reports, including attendance reports for children whose care is partially subsidized by another public agency.

- Monthly reports of meals and snacks provided through programs of the Department of Agriculture.
- Financial audit.
- Annual self-assessment, including any findings related to such assessment.
- Community wide strategic planning and needs assessment of the Head Start agency, including any applicable updates.
- Communication and guidance from the Secretary.
- Program information reports.

ARTICLE III: MEMBERSHIP

Section I – Composition

Parents of children currently enrolled in the Head Start program will constitute a majority of the membership. The composition will include up to three community representatives.

Section II – Categories and Selection of Members

Membership will consist of two categories: parent representatives and community representatives. One member of the Governing Body is designated as a liaison.

a. Parent representatives will be elected by current Head Start parents. Parent representation will include no more than one parent representative and no more than one alternate from each school.

b. Community representatives will be presented for approval by the parent members. Community representatives will be drawn from the local community organizations; and those who are familiar with resources and services for Head Start children and families, including the parents of children who were formerly enrolled in the agency program within the past two years. Volunteer members and visitors consist of anyone interested in attending the Policy Council meeting. They may attend the Council meetings with no voting rights.

Section III - Terms of ~~Office~~ Membership

Policy Council members will serve for a term of one year. No member will serve for more than five one-year terms.

Section IV - Voting Rights

Each ~~member~~ center/school will have one vote. Alternates will only vote in the absence of the Representative. Members receive new member orientation (program governance) training, prior to becoming a voting member.

Section V - Termination of Membership

A member may be terminated from the Policy Council, for absenteeism or actions that violate the Code of Conduct. ~~by a two-thirds vote of the Policy Council.~~ Multiple absences by a member will be reviewed by designated staff and Policy Council Officers on a case-by-case basis to determine recommendation of termination.

Notification of Absence

To ensure that each site is represented by a voting member, Representatives must call the Head Start Administrative Office at 321-617-7786 ext. 31385 or 31387. The Representative is responsible for contacting the Alternate for the school.

Absence

If a Representative has three (3) unexcused absences, members will be replaced by the Alternate or by a re-election conducted by the Parent Committee. Multiple excused absences by a member will be reviewed by designated staff and Policy Council Officers on a case-by-case basis to determine recommendation of termination. If an officer is absent for three consecutive meetings (whether excused or unexcused) an election will be held to elect a new officer. This election will be held during the meeting of the third consecutive absence of the officer.

Section VI - Resignation of Members

~~A member may be asked to give a written statement prior to resignation from the Council.~~ Any resignation should be in writing; however, a verbal resignation to a staff member will be accepted.

Section VII – Vacancies

~~During the program year, whenever a parent vacancy occurs, the alternate for that school may take the place of that parent representative. A new alternate may be elected by current Head Start parents. Whenever a community representative vacancy occurs, the Head Start Director will recommend a replacement.~~ Vacancies shall be filled as soon as possible by the center or organization represented.

Section VIII – Conflict of Interest

No grantee staff (or members of their immediate families) may serve on the Policy Council. Members will not have a conflict of interest with the Head Start agency.

ARTICLE IV - OFFICERS

Section I - Officers – Definition

A Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson and Secretary will be elected. Other officers will be elected as deemed necessary by the Council.

Section II - Election and Term of Office

Each officer will be elected by the Policy Council members and will serve a term of one (1) year. Every effort will be made to seat the Council in October each year.

Section III - Removal from Office

Any officer of the Policy Council, who fails to perform the duties as outlined in the by-laws, can be removed by a two-thirds vote of the Policy Council.

Section IV - Officer Vacancy

Each officer vacancy will be elected by the full membership of the Policy Council and will serve the remainder of the term for which they are elected.

Section V - Duties of the Chairperson

- a. To preside at all meetings and conduct meetings by Robert's Rules of Order with the support of designated staff.
- b. To communicate and coordinate with the Vice Chairperson and Head Start Director regarding absences.
- c. Will extend every courtesy possible and refrain from entering into debates during the meeting.
- d. Will call to order and adjourn all meetings.

Section VI - Duties of the Vice Chairperson

- a. To preside over the meeting in the absence of the Chairperson.
- b. To communicate and coordinate with the Chairperson regarding special committees, meetings, and absences.
- c. To perform such duties as may be requested by the Chairperson.
- b. Vice Chairperson shall assume the chair in the absence/tardiness of the Chairperson.

Section VII - Duties of the Secretary

a. To record what was done at the meeting (minutes) of the Council and promptly forward a copy to the designated staff member. Per Robert's Rules of Order, it is improper to summarize matters discussed at a meeting in the minutes. Minutes are a record of what was done at a meeting, not a record of what was said.)

b. To assist the Chairperson in following the agenda and record and read motions as they are made.

c. To read the minutes of the last meeting and perform other duties with the support of staff as needed.

Section VIII – Parliamentarian

a. To ensure that Robert's Rules of Parliamentary Order are being followed at all meetings.

ARTICLE V - COMMITTEES

Committees may be formed as necessary to conduct the business and/or to assist with program operations. Such committees will have membership determined at the time of their formation and will serve for the time necessary to complete their designated responsibility. Representatives, alternates, or community members may serve on committees.

ARTICLE VI - MEETINGS

Section I - Regular Meetings

Regular meetings will be held at Clearlake Education Center, 1225 Clearlake Road, Cocoa, FL 32922. Regular meetings are held the third Tuesday of each month. The date of any regular meeting may be changed in a scheduled meeting where a quorum of members is present.

Section II - Special Meetings

There will be special meetings only when there is a need, and all special meetings will be called by the Chairperson or the Head Start Director at least 48 hours in advance.

Section III - Notice of Meetings

Written, electronic and/or notice by phone call will be given to each member no less than three (3) days prior to the date of each regular meeting. A draft copy of the agenda with supporting documents (as appropriate) may be provided electronically. Written notices of special meetings will be provided to each member at least 48 hours prior to the date of the meeting, with an explanation for the special meeting.

Section IV - Decisions of the Policy Council

The Policy Council shall approve and submit to the Governing Body decisions about identified program activities.

Section V – Quorum

A simple majority or 51% of the members will be present to constitute a quorum in order to transact substantial business for regular or special meetings. Vacant seats are not counted when determining quorum. When it is not possible to obtain the attendance of a simple majority, the quorum consists of those who are in attendance at the meeting, provided it is either a stated meeting or one that has been properly called. A quorum may be established electronically when the members are not present to constitute a quorum.

Section VI - Conduct of the Meeting

All meetings will be conducted in accordance with Robert’s Rules of Order and any other special or standing rules set forth by the Administration for Children and Families, Department of Health Human Services.

ARTICLE VII – AMENDMENTS

Policy Council may debate an amendment before its adoption. Amendments will be approved by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the members present at the Policy Council meeting.

Approved by Policy Council: January 30, 2013, December 11, 2018, April 14, 2020

Approved by Governing Body: May 14, 2013

Amended: September 2013, December 2015, November 2017, April 2020, November 2022