

## **POLICY COUNCIL COMPOSITION**

Revised September 2025

### **HSPPS 1301.3 Policy council and policy committee.**

**(a) Establishing policy councils and policy committees.** Each agency must establish and maintain a policy council responsible for the direction of the Head Start program at the agency level, and a policy committee at the delegate level. If an agency delegates operational responsibility for the entire Head Start or Early Head Start program to one delegate agency, the policy council and policy committee may be the same body.

**(b) Composition.** (1) A program must establish a policy council in accordance with section 642(c)(2)(B) of the Act, or a policy committee at the delegate level in accordance with section 642(c)(3) of the Act, as early in the program year as possible. Parents of children currently enrolled in each program option must be proportionately represented on the policy council and on the policy committee at the delegate level.

(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) and 642(c)(3)(B) of the Act. Staff may not serve on the policy council or policy committee at the delegate level except parents who occasionally substitute as staff. In the case of tribal grantees, this exclusion applies only to tribal staff who work in areas directly related to or which directly impact administrative, fiscal, or programmatic issues.

**(c) Duties and responsibilities.** (1) A policy council is responsible for activities specified at section 642(c)(2)(D) of the Act. A policy committee must approve and submit to the delegate agency its decisions in each of the following areas referenced at section 642(c)(2)(D)(i) through (vii) of the Act.

(2) A policy council, and a policy committee at the delegate level, must use ongoing monitoring results, data on school readiness goals, other information described in §1302.102, and information described in section 642(d)(2) of the Act to conduct its responsibilities.

**(d) Term.** (1) A member will serve for one year.

(2) If the member intends to serve for another year, s/he must stand for re-election.

(3) The policy council, and policy committee at the delegate level, must include in its bylaws how many one-year terms, not to exceed five terms, a person may serve.

(4) A program must seat a successor policy council, or policy committee at the delegate level, before an existing policy council, or policy committee at the delegate level, may be dissolved.

**(e) Reimbursement.** A program must enable low-income members to participate fully in their policy council or policy committee responsibilities by providing, if necessary, reimbursements for reasonable expenses incurred by the low-income members.

- A. A Policy Council term will be defined as a Policy Council Year – beginning at the first Policy Council meeting for the year and ending when the next year’s Policy Council has been seated. Each Policy Council member is only allowed to participate for five (5) Policy Council terms in their lifetime (Performance Standard 1301.3 (d) (3)). Being seated as a Policy Council member any time during a term will be considered a full term.
- B. Once a member of Policy Council has been removed by a majority vote, that member will never be seated as a member of Bear River Head Start Policy Council in their lifetime. If a member breaks the By-laws, Code of Conduct, or other policy, the Executive Committee will meet to review the seriousness. They will determine if a written warning is sufficient or if a motion to vote off is necessary. If it involves a member of the Executive Committee the Board Chair will be involved.
- C. Policy Council Representatives will be elected by, and composed of, parents of children who are currently enrolled in the Head Start program along with members of the community served by the Head Start agency which may

include parents of children who were formerly enrolled in the Head Start program. Parents of enrolled children will constitute a majority of the members of the Policy Council. (Head Start Act Section 642 (c)(2)(B)(i-ii)).

- D. If a classroom dissolves during the Policy Council Year, the Policy Council Representative for that area may continue to serve their Policy Council Year term.
- E. A Quorum will consist of 51% of currently seated Representatives. (This does not include the Chairperson.)
- F. No more than five (5) community members shall serve on Policy Council each year. They must be representative of the communities served by Bear River Head Start. They cannot be currently receiving services from Bear River Head Start. Policy Council must approve all community members.
- G. All new Policy Council members will receive Policy Council training before being seated as a voting member. Anyone voted onto Policy Council after the initial training will receive training before they can attend Policy Council as a voting member.
- H. Translation services will be provided, as needed, at Policy Council and Board meetings.
- I. The Board will elect a rotating Board member to a seat on the Policy Council as a voting member.
- J. The Policy Council Chairperson automatically serves as a voting member of the Board. If the Policy Council Chairperson cannot attend a Board meeting they will have access to the Board meeting minutes for review. A Board member also attends the Policy Council meetings and can give a report on the Board meeting.
- K. No immediate family of staff members will serve on Policy Council (Performance Standard 1301.3(b) (2)). This will include: wife, husband, mother, father, sister, brother, daughter, son, mother-in-law, father-in-law, brother-in-law, sister-in-law, daughter-in-law, or son-in-law, or anyone residing in the same household.
- L. It is the policy of Bear River Head Start to prohibit staff, parents, volunteers, Board of Trustees, and Policy Council members from engaging in any activity, practice or conduct which conflicts with, or appears to conflict with the interests of the program. Since it is impossible to describe all situations that may occur that cause or gives the appearance of a conflict of interest, the prohibitions included in this policy are not intended to be exhaustive. If there is a question or uncertainty about whether a conflict exists, members of the Policy Council may direct questions to the Director who may consult with program legal counsel.
- M. Each year, all community members interested in holding a seat on Policy Council must fill out an application. The applications will be reviewed by the current Policy Council for selection and approval. All applicants present must leave the meeting during the election procedure. No campaigning will be allowed for any Policy Council position besides a brief introduction.
- N. Policy Council members who have three (3) unexcused and/or five (5) total, unexcused or excused, absences from Policy Council meetings will have staff work with them and offer support to encourage their attendance at the meetings on a regular basis. Policy Council members' seats may need to be vacated. The Parent Committee will be notified of the vacant seat. A letter will be sent to the member whose seat has been vacated. Any excused absences will be decided upon at the discretion of the Policy Council Chairperson.
- O. Only one person per household or immediate family may be elected to Policy Council. This will include: wife, husband, mother, father, sister, brother, daughter, son, mother-in-law, father-in-law, brother-in-law, sister-in-law, daughter-in-law, or son-in-law, or anyone residing in the same household.
- P. *Policy Council meetings are open to the public for observation only. Those attending may not speak or disrupt the meeting unless invited to by the Chairperson.* The Policy Council Specialist, Family Services Coordinator and the Director are to attend Policy Council in an advisory capacity only, unless requested not to attend by the executive committee of Policy Council.

➤ For a breakdown of Representatives elected please see Policy Council Training Composition chart.

The Policy Council Composition was presented to Board and Policy Council for Approval.

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Board Chairperson Signature

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Date

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PC Chairperson Signature

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Date