

**CITY of ALBUQUERQUE
EARLY HEADSTART
POLICY COUNCIL
BY-LAWS**

ARTICLE I

Section I: Policy Council

This Policy Council is established in accordance with 45 CFR 1301.3 and Sec. 642(c)(2) of the Head Start Act and shall be known as the City of Albuquerque Early Head Start Policy Council, hereafter known as Policy Council.

Section II: Principal Office

The principal office for the transaction of business of the City of Albuquerque Early Head Start program is located at 1820 Randolph Rd SE, Albuquerque, New Mexico 87106, or other such location as may be determined by Policy Council and the Governing Board.

ARTICLE II

PURPOSE & FUNCTIONS

Section1: Purposes:

Sec: 642 (c)(2)(A)

This Policy Council shall have responsibility for the direction of the Early Head Start program, including program design and operation, and long and short term planning goals and objectives, taking into account the annual communitywide strategic planning and needs assessment and self-assessment. The purpose of the Policy Council is to:

1. Provide an opportunity for parents to have a voice in decisions that affect themselves, their families and their children.
2. Provide a means for sharing problems related to the Early Head Start program and working to solve those problems.
3. Understand and promote the goals and objectives of the Early Head Start program.
4. Carry out the duties and responsibilities required by Federal guidelines governing the Early Head Policy Council.

5. Bring together parents of children in the program, former Early Head Start parents, representatives of the community and agency representatives so the Early Head Start program is responsive to the needs of the children, their families and the communities in which they live and work.
6. Serve as a link between public and private organizations, the Grantee, City Council, the communities served and the parents enrolled in the Early Head Start program, so as to assist in the planning and coordination of Early Head Start.

Section II: Functions:

642 (c)(1)(E)(i),(ii),(iii),(iv),(IV)-(V)-(VIII)-(X)

642(d)(2)

The functions of the Policy Council of Early Head Start, in accordance with applicable Federal Head Start/Early Head Start regulations, are:

1. General responsibility for establishing a method of hearing and resolving community complaints about the Early Head Start program. (See Complaint Policy).
2. Operating responsibility for a Self-Assessment of the agency's Early Head Start program.
3. Responsibility for approval or disapproval for the following functions:
 - a. Goals for the Early Head Start program and develop ways to meet them within the Head Start Act guidelines.
 - b. Plans to use all available community resources in Early Head Start.
 - c. Criteria for selection, recruitment and enrollment of children within applicable laws and the Head Start Act guidelines.
 - d. Composition of the appropriate policy group and the method for setting it up (within Head Start Act guidelines)
 - e. Early Head Start Personnel Policies (including establishment of hiring and firing criteria for Early Head Start staff, career development plans and employee grievance procedures).
 - f. Hire of Early Head Start Director and core management staff of the agency.
 - g. Requests for funds and proposed work plans prior to sending to DHHS.
 - h. Major changes in budget and work plans prior to sending to DHHS.
 - i. Information needed for review to DHHS.
 - j. Review and revise (when applicable) the By-Laws
 - k. Review 642 (c) (2)(D) of the Head Start Act
 - l. Review 642 (d)(2)

4. Responsibility for providing input for the following functions:
 - a. Identifying child development needs in the area to be served.
 - b. Ensuring that standards for acquiring space, equipment, and supplies are met
5. Responsibility for offering input on day-to-day operations, if consulted.
6. To participate in planning, coordinating, and organizing agency-wide activities for parents with the assistance of staff (i.e., Parent Orientation).
7. Offering suggestions and ideas for program improvements and receiving a report on actions taken by the administering (Grantee) agency with regards to its recommendations.
8. Recruiting volunteer services from parents, community residents and community organizations and mobilizing community resources to meet identified needs.

ARTICLE III

MEMBERSHIP

Section I: Composition of Policy Council:

Sec. 642 (c) (2) (B)

Composition of the Policy Council:

1. At least 51% of the Policy Council members shall be parents of currently enrolled children. No more than 49% shall be community representatives. Current parents are defined as a primary, foster, or legal caregiver having at least one child enrolled in the Early Head Start program.
 - The total membership of Policy Council shall not exceed **twelve (12)**. **Nine (9)** will be parents currently enrolled in the program. **Two (2)** from the Home Base program option, and **seven (7)** from the Center Based program option. **Two (2)** will be a Community Representative at large from the community served by the Early Head Start agency, and may be the parent of children who were formally enrolled in the Early Head Start program.
 - **One (1)** will be a City Council representative and will act as a liaison between the City of Albuquerque City Council and the Early Head Start program. Such person will be appointed by the City of Albuquerque City Council President. The appointed City Council representative (liaison) who is acting on behalf of the City Council has full decision making/voting rights.

- Alternates from each program option may also be selected, and must be approved by Policy Council.
 - Parents will receive Policy Council information during the first Home Visit at the beginning of the program year and as part of the enrollment process of each program option.
 - The selection of these members will take place prior to the first meeting in September. The process varies for each site.
2. The City of Albuquerque (Grantee agency) will be responsible for Policy Council input as required by Head Start/Early Head Start Act guidelines.
 3. All community representatives will be selected annually with no member serving more than five (5) years.
 4. Parents and Community Representatives must stand for election on an annual basis.
 5. City of Albuquerque Early Head Start staff (or members of their immediate families) may not serve on the Policy Council.

Section II: Voting Procedures:

The center based and the home base program will elect a Policy Council representative in a primary election held at each program site. A general election will be held to elect Policy Council representatives for each of the following; one each from each of the centers, and two from the home based option. Alternates are selected when representatives are being chosen. The City of Albuquerque City Council appointee (liaison) will be seated with full voting rights and privileges assigned to him/her by the City Council President. Community representatives will be selected by the parent Policy Council and must be approved by the parent membership from Policy Council on an annual basis. The City of Albuquerque City Council representative (liaison) does not approve community representatives.

1. The procedures will be that any parent in the program who wishes to represent their program option (center/home base) must contact the Lead Teacher/ at their site, or their home visitor.
2. Each location (center) may send one (1) member or caseload (home visitor) may send two (2) members to run for Policy Council.
3. One (1) Policy Council member from each center and two (2) from the home base program option will be seated as the official Policy Council members for that center/home education program option.
4. The Policy Council will be seated at a regularly scheduled Policy Council meeting.

Section III: Term of Membership:

Policy Council members shall be elected for a one year term. No member shall serve for more than five (5) years in any role or combination of roles. This applies to both parents, community representatives, and/or former parents. The City Council representative (liaison) is appointed every two years by the City Council President.

The term of membership for each member shall begin in August and end when his/her replacement is duly elected.

Section IV: Vacancies:

Vacancies on the Policy Council shall ordinarily be filled by the same groups' alternates and by special election, if necessary.

Ballot elections will be held. Each member will have a few minutes to explain their interest and intentions of serving on Policy Council.

Section V: Terminations:

1. An elected parent representative who no longer has a child enrolled in the program will serve only until his successor can be elected by the group of parents that he/she represents. The parent will be provided the opportunity to serve as a community representative.
2. Any Policy council member may resign from Policy Council by sending a letter of resignation to the Policy Council Chairperson.
3. Any Policy Council member who misses **three (3)** regular scheduled Policy Council meetings shall be considered to have resigned from the Policy Council. The Policy Council Chairperson will be responsible for initiating the resignation process.

Section VI: Voting Rights

Each member of the Policy Council shall have one vote. There shall be no proxy voting by, or for, another member. In the event that a regular member is not able to attend a meeting, his duly elected alternate shall be eligible to vote in his/her place. In special circumstances, a telephone poll may be conducted by the chairperson or their designee. The vote will be ratified at the next Policy Council meeting.

Section VII: Conflict of Interest:

Sec. 642 (c) (2) (C) (D) (i-ii)

No person employed by the program shall be eligible to be a voting member of the Policy Council. In accordance with applicable Head Start/Early Head Start Regulations, no person can

serve as a member of the Policy Council while any member of his/her immediate family (as defined by Head Start/Early Head Start Guidelines) is employed in the Head Start/Early Head Start program.

Section VIII: Duties of Policy Council Members:

Sec. 642 (c) (2) (C) (D) (i-ii) cont.

Upon nomination and election of the Policy Council members, understand that this position bears serious responsibility. Policy Council business is dependent upon member participation and the establishment of a quorum to include a majority of parents. 51% of Policy Council quorum **five (5)** must be current or former parents.

All members of the Policy Council, by their acceptance of election to the Policy Council, agree to:

1. Attend all regularly scheduled meetings.
2. Arrive on time for all Policy Council and committee meetings.
3. Actively participate in meetings by reading the agenda prior to the meeting, and if possible, discussing matters to be considered with other parents he/she represents.
4. Keep informed of the Policy Council's purpose, plans and progress.
5. Report to the Center Parent Meeting and Home Education Socialization meetings regarding Policy Council business.
6. Bring to the Policy Council ideas, suggestions, and recommendations from the parents he/she represents.
7. Remember the rights of others to express their opinions.
8. Consider all information and arguments before voting.
9. Debate and discuss the issues, not persons or personalities.
10. Accept and support any final decisions of the majority of the Policy Council.
11. Respect and honor the confidentiality of any personal information or personnel issue that is brought before the Policy Council or its committees.
12. Establish and participate in committees as determined by the Chairperson.
13. Promote an open line of communication.
14. Serve on the Self-Assessment team.
15. Attend and Serve on the Health Advisory Team meetings
16. Maintain a written complaint procedure for community/parent concerns about the Early Head Start program. **(not employee grievances)**

Complaint Procedures:

- All complaints should be submitted to the Early Head Start Director.
- Complaints must be in writing. The policy and appropriate form will be available at the main principal office, as well as, all of the Early Head Start sites.

- Any staff member receiving a complaint is to refer that complaint to the Early Head Start Director.
- The Early Head Start Director will review all complaints and refer programmatic complaints to the Policy Council Chairperson.
- All programmatic complaints will be reviewed by the grievance Committee as assigned by the Policy Council Chairperson.
- The Early Head Start Director will have five (5) working days to reply to the parent and or community complaint. (Refer to the City of Albuquerque Personnel Policies and Procedure Manual Addendum.)

ARTICLE IV

OFFICERS

Section I: Officers

The Policy Council shall elect from its membership the following officers:

1. Chairperson
2. Vice Chairperson
3. Secretary

Section II: Terms of Office for Officers

Officers shall be selected for a one year term.

The term of membership for each member shall begin with the first Policy Council meeting following his/her election.

Section III: Election of Officers

After seating Policy Council members in the fall of each year (no later than October), an election for executive officers will be held. The officers include: Chairperson, Vice Chairperson, and Secretary. The duties of these officers are described in Section VI (Duties of Officers) below. An officer shall serve until his replacement is duly elected. There will be nominations from the floor. The Chairperson and Vice Chairperson will always be parents of children currently enrolled.

Section IV: Vacancies

Vacancies among the officers shall be filled by election of a majority vote of the Policy Council and shall be for the unexpired portion of the year term of the original person elected officer.

Section V: Removal

Any officer of the Policy Council who fails to perform his/her duties as outlined in the by-laws can be removed by a majority vote of the Policy Council.

Section VI: Duties of Officers

The Chairperson shall:

1. Preside at all meetings.
2. Talk no more than necessary when presiding.
3. Have an understanding of the by-laws of the Policy Council
4. Have an understanding of basic parliamentary procedures.
5. Extend every courtesy in the discussion of motions.
6. Call the meetings to order and formally close them.
7. Maintain an orderly meeting where all receive an opportunity to be heard but no one dominates the meeting or discussions.
8. Note whether a quorum is present and declare the same.
9. Review the agenda with the Early Head Start Director or assigned Early Head Start staff prior to each meeting and see that it is shared with each member.
10. At the request of the Early Head Start Director or assigned Early Head Start staff, call special meetings as needed and see that appropriate notices are sent to Policy Council and City Council members.
11. Appoint the Vice Chairperson to committee where he/she is not specifically appointed in these by-laws.
12. Appoint members to committees on an as-needed basis.
13. Vote in case of a tie.
14. Serve as an ex-officio member of all committees.

The Vice Chairperson shall:

1. Perform all duties of the Chairperson when the Chairperson is unable to perform any or all of these duties.
2. Preside in the absence of the Chairperson or whenever the chairperson temporarily vacates the chair.
3. Assume the office of chairperson in the event of the resignation, termination, or ineligibility of the Chairperson. He/she shall serve until the Policy Council elects a permanent Chairperson.

The Secretary shall:

1. Assist assigned Early Head Start administrative staff to ensure that notices of meetings, minutes of meetings, and agendas are distributed on time.
2. Work with the assigned Early Head Start administrative staff to ensure that accurate, up-to-date records of all Policy Council matters, and Policy Council attendance records (sign-ins), are maintained.
3. Maintain an up-to-date copy of the by-laws.
4. Maintain an up-to-date copy of the Policy Council roster.
5. Assist assigned Early Head Start administrative staff in the distribution of minutes of all Policy Council meetings.
6. Assure that a record of minutes and all aforementioned items are kept on file in the Early Head Start Director's office.

Agency Responsibilities:

Sec. 642 (d) (2) (A-D)

The City of Albuquerque is the program Grantee, which has legal and fiscal responsibility for the Early Head Start program. A representative from the City of Albuquerque Early Head Start program shall:

1. Meet with City Council on a quarterly basis. (yearly calendar)
2. Meet with the Fiscal Director to review the monthly fiscal report, and provide a copy of the report to Policy Council at regularly scheduled meetings.
3. Ensure that all component reports are submitted to Policy Council at regularly scheduled meetings.
4. Ensure that copies of all Policy Council minutes are distributed to the centers to be posted on a regular basis.
5. Distribute monthly reports to City Council and Policy Council members via e-mail, inter office mail, or regular mail if meetings are not held.
6. Ensure that the Community Needs Assessment and the Annual Self-Assessment are reflective of Policy Council participation and approval.
7. Share the annual Program Information Report (PIR) and Early Head Start Annual Report.
8. Provide monthly financial statements, including credit card expenditures
9. Provide monthly program reports; Directors and City Council
10. Share program enrollment data, including attendance;
11. Provide a monthly report of meals and snacks provided through programs of the Department of Agriculture. (CACFP)

ARTICLE V

COMMITTEES

The Policy Council may have the following committees with assigned duties.

Section I. Executive Committee:

The Executive Committee shall be composed of the (3) three officers of this Policy Council: Chairperson, Vice Chairperson, and Secretary.

The executive committee shall have the power to conduct business for the Policy Council between regular scheduled meetings of the Policy Council.

Minutes of the Executive Committee will be maintained and included in the next Policy Council meeting.

Decisions of the Executive Committee are subject to the ratification of the Policy Council at their next meeting.

Section II: Grievance Committee:

The Grievance Committee shall be composed of three Policy Council members to be appointed by the Chairperson.

The Grievance Committee will establish and review all community/parent concerns about the Early Head Start program. **(Employee grievances will be referred to the Early Head Start Director)**

ARTICLE VI

MEETINGS

Section I: Regular Meetings

Policy Council shall meet a minimum of six (6) times per year. Policy Council and the Governing body will receive meeting schedules once the Policy Council sets the meeting dates.

Section II: Place of Meeting

The regular meeting place of the City of Albuquerque Early Head Start is:
Trumbull Family Resource Center, 419 Pennsylvania SE, Albuquerque, NM 87106.

