



Northern California Child Development, Inc.

Head Start & Early Head Start Programs

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HEAD START and EARLY HEAD START POLICY COUNCIL BY-LAWS

Revised, August 2017

MISSION STATEMENT:

The mission of Northern California Child Development is to ***enrich children's lives, empower families, and engage our community.***

ARTICLE I: NAME OF GOVERNING BODY ORGANIZATION

The name of this governing body is the Head Start & Early Head Start Policy Council of Northern California Child Development, Inc., hereafter referred to as the POLICY COUNCIL, pursuant to the Head Start ***Act of 2007 and the Head Start Program Performance Standards.***

ARTICLE II: PURPOSE & RESPONSIBILITIES

The purpose of the POLICY COUNCIL is to establish responsible policies for the NCCDI Head Start and Early Head Start programs, hereafter referred to as Head Start; including program design and operation, and long and short-term planning goals and objectives; taking into account the annual community needs assessment and the program self-assessment.

ARTICLE III: PHILOSOPHY

The philosophy of the Policy Council is to share responsibility for, and to actively participate as parents and Community Representatives in the delivery of high-quality services to children and families as provided by the Head Start and Early Head Start laws and regulations. The Policy Council will work to promote school readiness of children by enhancing their cognitive, social, and emotional development (1) in a learning environment that supports children's growth in language, literacy, mathematics, science, social and emotional function, creative arts, physical skills, and approaches to learn; and (2) through the provision of low-income children and their families of health, educational, nutritional, social and other services that are determined, based on family needs assessments to be necessary.

ARTICLE IV: FUNCTIONS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Section 1 - Responsibilities of the *POLICY COUNCIL* are to approve and submit to the governing body decisions about each of the following activities:

- a. Annually review the POLICY COUNCIL By-laws and revise as needed.
- b. Activities that support the active involvement of parents in supporting Head Start and Early Head Start operations including policies to ensure responsiveness to community and family needs.
- c. Criteria for defining recruitment, selection, and enrollment priorities.
- d. Approve all Head Start & Early Head Start funding applications and amendments.

ARTICLE IV: FUNCTIONS AND RESPONSIBILITIES (CON'T)

1. POLICY COUNCIL has the authority to establish committees in order to participate and assist in the development of the aforementioned applications and amendments.
 - e. Approve, at a minimum, procedures for conducting the annual Head Start & Early Head Start community assessment, self-assessment, and school readiness goals.
 - f. Budget planning for Head Start and Early Head Start expenditures including, but not exclusive to, policies for reimbursements and participation in POLICY COUNCIL activities.
 - g. Develop procedures for how members of the POLICY COUNCIL will be elected.
 - h. Approve Head Start and Early Head Start personnel policies and decisions regarding the employment of Head Start and Early Head Start staff, including standards of conduct for staff, contractors, volunteers, and criteria for the employment and dismissal of staff.

Section 2 – Additional Responsibilities

- a. To serve as a link between the N.C.C.D.I. Governing Board, Head Start and Early Head Start administration, and the local Head Start and Early Head Start Parent Committees.
- b. Assist Parent Committees in communicating with families enrolled in Head Start and Early Head Start to ensure they understand their rights, responsibilities, opportunities and to encourage family participation.
- c. Assist in recruiting volunteer services for Head Start and Early Head Start.
- d. Jointly with the Governing Board, establish and maintain procedures to resolve community complaints about the program, and resolution of internal disputes including impasse procedures.
- e. To promote the goals, philosophy, and objectives of Head Start and Early Head Start and sensitize communities to the importance of Head Start and Early Head Start services which contribute to the enhancement of children’s early development and family self-sufficiency.
- f. Report back to the Local Parent Groups and Alternate POLICY COUNCIL members.
- g. NCCDI management and POLICY COUNCIL are responsible for recruiting potential Community Representatives as defined in Article V Section 1(c) as these positions become vacant.

ARTICLE V: REPRESENTATIVE COMPOSITION and FORMATION

Section 1 – Composition of Policy Council: Number of Representatives

The composition of the POLICY COUNCIL and the procedures by which its representatives are chosen is determined by the Governing Board and POLICY COUNCIL. However, the total number of POLICY COUNCIL Representatives at any given time will be based on the number of ***enrolled children in each program option. To ensure each program option is proportionately represented on the POLICY COUNCIL, every program option will have***

ARTICLE V: REPRESENTATIVE COMPOSITION and FORMATION (cont.)

at least one representative, and each program option will have one additional representative for every 50th child enrolled in that program option.

- a) ***Program Options are defined as:***
 - a. ***Center Based***
 - b. ***Home Base***
 - c. ***Family Child Care***
 - d. ***Locally Designed***
- b) ***Each Program Option Representative must have a child currently enrolled in the program.***
- c) Each ***Program Option*** Representative must be elected by parents of ***the same program option*** their child is currently enrolled.
- d) ***Representatives will be elected by a simple majority of returned ballots from parents in each Program Option.***
- e) ***In order to have equal representation among classrooms and Home Base Groups, it is preferred that when there are multiple Representatives from a specific Program Option, each one represents a different classroom type (Inclusion, Stepping Stones, full day, etc.) or Home Base group.***
- f) At least one (1) but no more than three (3) Community Representatives who either are a former Head Start/Early Head Start parent or reside/work in and have a background in child development, health, social services, or other field as deemed appropriate by elected representatives.
- g) Pursuant to ***section 642(c)(2)(B) of the Head Start Act, a majority of the Policy Council Representatives*** must be the parents of currently enrolled children.
- h) Policy Council members shall elect three (3) Governing Board Representatives for representation at all Governing Board meetings.

Section 2 – Alternate Representatives

Each ***Program Option*** will be responsible for electing an Alternate POLICY COUNCIL representative. The Alternate is subject to the same selection requirements as their primary POLICY COUNCIL Representative. Although the Alternate is a participating representative on the POLICY COUNCIL, they have no voting privileges, except in the absence of their primary representative. The Alternate POLICY COUNCIL Representative is to become a voting representative in the absence of their elected primary POLICY COUNCIL Representative. In addition, in the event the primary POLICY COUNCIL Representative seat on the POLICY COUNCIL is terminated, the elected Alternate will become the primary POLICY COUNCIL Representative. Therefore, the Alternate is encouraged to attend each POLICY COUNCIL meeting in order to keep up with the current affairs and business of the POLICY COUNCIL in order to make an informed decision when called upon to vote.

- a) If for any reason the elected representative child is dropped from the program, the representative will forfeit membership on the Policy Council and the elected Alternate will assume the role of the Policy Council representative. If there is no Alternate available, a current parent representative will be elected by ***parents*** from that respective ***Program Option***.

Section 2 – Alternate Representatives (cont.)

- b) In order to have equal representation among classrooms and Home Base Groups, it is preferred that the Alternate Representative is from a different classroom type (Inclusion, Stepping Stones, full day, etc.) or Home Base group than those of the elected Representatives.**

Section 3 - Selection of Members

Selection of Policy Council representatives/alternates will be as follows:

- a. Head Start and Early Head Start members as defined in Article V Section 1a and 1b and their Alternates as defined in Article V Section 2 will be elected in September of each year **by the parents of each Program Option** in which their child is enrolled.
- b. No more than one (1) voting member from the same household may be seated on the POLICY COUNCIL at the same time. However, a member of the same household can serve as an Alternate, but only for their spouse or significant other.
- c. Community Representatives as defined in Article V Section 1c must be interviewed by the POLICY COUNCIL and elected by simple majority of current POLICY COUNCIL members.
- d. **Pursuant to section 642(c)(2)(C) and section 642(c)(3)(B) of the Head Start act, NCCDI must ensure that POLICY COUNCIL Representatives do not have a conflict of interest. In addition,** no agency staff or relatives of agency staff may serve on Policy Council, even if they have children enrolled in Head Start.

Section 4 - Terms of Office

- a. **Program Option** representatives as defined in Article V Section 1(a) and 1(b) and Alternates as defined in Article V Section 2 will serve a one year term running the beginning of October through the end of September. Any partial term of at least six (6) months served will be counted as one (1) full year.
- b. Community Representatives as defined in Article V Section 1(c) will serve a **one** year term running the beginning of October through the end of September. Any partial term of at least six (6) months served will be counted as one (1) full year.
- c. In accordance with Performance Standard 1301.3(d), no member shall serve longer than **five (5)** years in any capacity, whether consecutive years or not. Alternate status does not constitute membership.

Section 5 - Voting Rights

- a. Voting Members: Each voting member, with the exception of the POLICY COUNCIL Chairperson, is entitled to one (1) vote on each matter. The POLICY COUNCIL Chairperson will only vote in the event of a tie. However, the Chairperson may relinquish their duties upon the Vice-Chairperson in order to vote on a matter that directly affects the **Program Option** for which the Chairperson represents.
- b. Alternates: Alternates may only vote in the absence of their elected primary POLICY COUNCIL Representative.
- c. Proxy voting: There will be no proxy votes. A proxy vote is a voting right given to any other person other than their elected alternate.

ARTICLE V: REPRESENTATIVE COMPOSITION and FORMATION (cont.)

- d. A telephone/email vote may be taken at the discretion of the Chairperson only in the event a quorum is not met at the time of the meeting. E-mail would be the preferred

Section 5 - Voting Rights (cont.)

method of voting under these circumstances. However, a telephone vote would be acceptable if the representative does not have access to e-mail. In the situation of a telephone vote, the vote will be documented and later signed the POLICY COUNCIL Representative. In order for a telephone/email vote to pass, 51% of all active voting members must approve the action.

Section 6 - Termination of Membership

- a. Voting members with three (3) consecutive unexcused absences or less than 50% **Program Option** representation (i.e., if the Alternate also does not attend) during a six-month period will be automatically dismissed from the POLICY COUNCIL and notified by a letter signed by the Chairperson. Excused absences include any reason for which the POLICY COUNCIL has been notified. Representatives are responsible for notifying their Alternates in the event of absence.
- b. Vacant positions are filled according to Section 9 - Vacancy, of this Article.
- c. Any POLICY COUNCIL Member can be removed by a majority vote of the POLICY COUNCIL for reasonable cause. In the event of misconduct, the POLICY COUNCIL Chairperson will issue an appropriate warning to the POLICY COUNCIL member in question, unless conduct requires immediate removal.

Section 7 - Transfer of Membership

Membership on the POLICY COUNCIL is not transferable.

Section 8 – Resignation

Any member may resign by submitting a letter of resignation to the POLICY COUNCIL, as soon as possible. Representatives are responsible for notifying their Alternates in the event of a resignation.

Section 9 – Vacancy

Any vacancy on the POLICY COUNCIL must be filled as soon as possible and for the remainder of that term. In the event of a vacancy for a primary POLICY COUNCIL representative, the elected Alternate will fill that seat automatically. Any remaining vacant position would be selected following the process set forth in Article V, Section 1a, 1b, and 1c; selection must be from the Local Parent Group in which the vacancy was created.

ARTICLE VI – OFFICERS

Section 1 – Officers: Definition

The officers of the POLICY COUNCIL are Chairperson, Vice Chairperson, Treasurer, Health & Safety Officer, and Secretary. Any officer must be a primary POLICY COUNCIL representative.

ARTICLE VI – OFFICERS (cont.)

Section 2 - Election and Term of Office

The officers of the POLICY COUNCIL are to be elected at the October meeting each year and will serve a one (1) year term. The Parent Engagement Coordinator will conduct the election at the October meeting. Nominations will be taken from the floor and positions filled by a majority vote.

Section 3 - Removal from Office

Any officer elected or appointed by the POLICY COUNCIL can be removed from that position by a 2/3 vote of all active voting members, whenever the best interests of the POLICY COUNCIL would be served. The Officer removed from their position will remain an active voting member of the POLICY COUNCIL unless membership is also terminated in accordance with Article V Section 6.

Section 4 - Officer Vacancy

In the event of an Officer vacancy, a line of succession will be as follows: Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson, Treasurer, Health & Safety Officer, and Secretary. Any remaining vacant positions would be selected following the process set forth in Article VI, Section 2.

Section 5 - Duties of the Chairperson

The Chairperson presides over and impartially directs all meetings of the POLICY COUNCIL in accordance with Robert's Rules of Order. The Chairperson is required to sign all letters, reports, and POLICY COUNCIL approved documents submitted to the Governing Board, and other communications required to be signed by a member of the POLICY COUNCIL. The Chairperson is responsible for ensuring that all functions and responsibilities of the POLICY COUNCIL are carried out. The Chairperson also oversees the progress of all POLICY COUNCIL Committees by reviewing committee meeting minutes and meeting with committee members as deemed necessary. In general, he/she performs all duties pertaining to the office of the Chairperson and such other duties as may be prescribed to by the POLICY COUNCIL, from time to time. The Chairperson also has right of first refusal in accepting a membership to the Governing Board.

Section 6 - Duties of the Vice Chairperson

In the absence of the Chairperson or in the event of his/her inability or refusal to act, the Vice-Chairperson will perform the duties of the Chairperson and when so acting, will have all the powers of and be subject to all the restrictions normally given the Chairperson. The Vice Chairperson will perform such other duties as assigned to him/her by the Chairperson, or by the POLICY COUNCIL. The Vice Chairperson will serve as a Time Keeper for the POLICY COUNCIL to ensure that the time parameters of the meeting are followed. The Vice-Chairperson also serves as an assistant to the Chairperson in offering observations, ideas, and solutions to whatever problems might arise. The Vice-Chairperson also has right of the second refusal in accepting a membership to the Governing Board

ARTICLE VI – OFFICERS (cont.)

Section 7 - Duties of the Treasurer

The Treasurer will be responsible for reporting the amount of Community Development Funds available on a monthly basis. The Treasurer will be responsible for monitoring any discrepancies or fiscal issues related to Community Development Funds.

The Treasurer is responsible for reporting to the Policy Council how the Community Development funds will be used. The Treasurer is encouraged to become a member of the Finance Committee, as necessary. In the absence of the Chairperson and Vice Chairperson or in the event of his/her inability or refusal to act, the Treasurer will perform the duties of the Chairperson and when so acting, will have all the powers of and be subject to all the restrictions normally given the Chairperson.

Section 8 - Duties of the Health & Safety Officer

The Health & Safety Officer will be a member of NCCDI's Health Services Advisory Committee and the Health & Safety Committee. They will be responsible for attending regularly scheduled meetings of both committees and providing a report summary to the POLICY COUNCIL at the next scheduled POLICY COUNCIL meeting. In the absence of the Chairperson, Vice Chairperson, and Treasurer or in the event of his/her inability or refusal to act, the Health & Safety Officer will perform the duties of the Chairperson and when so acting, will have all the powers of and be subject to all the restrictions normally given the Chairperson.

Section 9 - Duties of the Secretary

The Secretary and designated Head Start employee will ensure minutes of the Policy Council are recorded and accurate. The Secretary is also responsible for making sure the next POLICY COUNCIL meeting agenda is disseminated in advance of the actual POLICY COUNCIL meeting, so all POLICY COUNCIL members have a chance to read over Policy Council meeting minutes and be prepared to participate in the meeting discussions. The Secretary will perform such other duties as assigned to him/her by the Chairperson or by the POLICY COUNCIL. The Secretary also serves as Attendance Officer and must call the roll at each meeting, make certain there is a quorum, and attend to unexcused absences according to Article V, Section 6a. The Secretary will notify the Parent Engagement Coordinator of any membership attendance issues. In the absence of the Chairperson, Vice Chairperson, Health & Safety Officer, and Treasurer or in the event of his/her inability or refusal to act, the Secretary will perform the duties of the Chairperson and when so acting, will have all the powers of and be subject to all the restrictions normally given the Chairperson.

ARTICLE VII – COMMITTEES

Section 1 - Committee Membership

- a. The Chairperson of the POLICY COUNCIL is responsible for calling upon members for appointment to Committees as needed.
- b. Examples of various committees and their roles as established by the POLICY COUNCIL can include, but not be limited to:
 - Personnel Committee – responsible for screening new Head Start/EHS hire applicants, conduct interviews, and making a recommendation to the POLICY COUNCIL to hire applicants.
 - Policy Committee – responsible for reviewing NCCDI policies that affect the Head Start/EHS programs and making recommendations to the POLICY COUNCIL for approval.
 - Finance Committee – responsible for reviewing fiscal reports, annual budgets, and annual audit report and making recommendations to the POLICY COUNCIL for approval.
 - Parent/Community Engagement Committee – responsible for assisting NCCDI in increasing awareness and parent/community participation in Head Start/EHS sponsored activities. Assist NCCDI in developing and monitoring progress toward School Readiness Goals, Parent/Community Engagement Goals.
 - Executive Committee – responsible for discussing major issues facing the Agency that have a direct impact on the Head Start/EHS programs and working with NCCDI management to develop a course of action to be approved by the POLICY COUNCIL. Responsible to annually review POLICY COUNCIL bylaws.
- c. In order for a Committee to be created, Committee membership must be comprised of at least 3 POLICY COUNCIL Members or Alternates.

Section 2 - Term of Office on Committees

Each member of any POLICY COUNCIL Committee will continue for the term of their appointment and/or until his/her successor is appointed.

Section 3 - Rules of Operation

Each Committee is to be guided by Robert’s Rules of Order - Committees.

The Committee will elect a Chairperson who will preside over and impartially directs all meetings of the Committee in accordance with Robert’s Rules of Order. The Chairperson is responsible for ensuring that all functions and responsibilities of the Committee are carried out and will report to POLICY COUNCIL.

The Committee will elect a Secretary and will ensure minutes of the Committee are recorded and accurate. The Secretary is also responsible for making sure the Committee minutes are included in the next POLICY COUNCIL meeting agenda. The Secretary also serves as Attendance Officer and must call the roll at each meeting, and will notify the Parent Engagement Coordinator of any attendance issues.

ARTICLE VIII – MEETINGS

Section 1 - Regular Meetings

The Policy Council will meet monthly. The meeting agenda must be approved the Executive Director in advance of each POLICY COUNCIL meeting.

Section 2 - Special Meetings

Special meetings and Committee meetings will be scheduled as needed. A Special Meeting can be called by the Chairperson or the Executive Director. Members of the POLICY COUNCIL must be notified of special meetings not less than 48 hours prior to the special meeting. No other business may be transacted or entertained at the special meetings of the POLICY COUNCIL except the business and/or discuss for which the special meeting was called.

Section 3 - Location and Scheduling of Meetings

The time, date and place of the POLICY COUNCIL meetings will be determined by the POLICY COUNCIL.

Section 4 - Notice of Meeting

All Meetings will be announced in writing whenever possible. The notices must state the time, date and location of each Meeting. There must be a minimum of five days notice given for all meetings (whenever possible). Notification of Emergency Special Meetings may be given via telephone. Meetings may be canceled by telephone due to unforeseen circumstances. Notices are to be posted on the parents' bulletin board at each site for center-based parents and by telephone or via home teacher notification for home-based meeting members.

Section 5 – Meeting Transportation

In the event of transportation difficulties and/or financial hardship, NCCDI staff can assist with transportation, if called in advance (preferably 48 hours notice). Please note that transportation is provided on a first-come, first serve basis due to staff limitations and seating availability. Please contact your Site Supervisor or Family Advocate for assistance if needed.

Section 6 - Decisions of the Policy Council

All decisions of the POLICY COUNCIL will become final upon approval via majority vote of POLICY COUNCIL members present at the POLICY COUNCIL meeting, except for amendments to the POLICY COUNCIL By-laws which requires a 2/3 majority. In the event, a quorum is not met at the time of the meeting, and telephone/email votes are taken in accordance with Article V Section 5(d), at least 51% of the active voting membership must approve the action.

Section 7 – Quorum

A Quorum consists of at least fifty-one percent (51%) of the active voting Membership.

ARTICLE IX – AMENDMENTS

These by-laws may be amended at any time by two-thirds (2/3) affirmative vote of the POLICY COUNCIL members present provided a quorum is met. The amendment is to further carry out the purpose and objectives of the POLICY COUNCIL as expressed in these By-laws.

Date Approved: _____

Signature of Policy Council Chairperson: _____