

**CAPITAL REGION ESD 113**  
**SOUND TO HARBOR EARLY LEARNING PROGRAMS**  
**POLICY COUNCIL**  
**BY-LAWS**

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**ARTICLE I - NAME**

The Sound to Harbor Early Learning Programs Policy Council is established under the authority of Public Law 110-132 Improving Head Start for School Readiness Act of 2007, Sec 642 (c)(2) {42 U.S.C. 9837}, and Federal Head Start regulations 45CFR1301. The grantee, which is Capital Region Educational Service District 113 (ESD), is charged with the legal and fiscal responsibility for the overall administration of the Head Start and ECEAP grants.

**ARTICLE II - PURPOSE**

The purpose of this council is to engage in shared decision making with the ESD 113 Board of Directors related to the Early Learning Programs. The 2007 Improving Head Start Act for School Readiness Act and the Head Start Standards of 1301 articulate the roles and responsibilities of Policy Council and the Board of Directors. Subsequent updates to the performance standards related to Policy Council and the Board of Directors will supersede the Performance Standard references herein contained.

**ARTICLE III - MEMBERSHIP**

SECTION 1: Definition of Members

There shall be two categories of members: parents and community members. Parent members are the parents or guardians of children currently enrolled in the ESD 113 Sound to Harbor Early Learning Programs (ELP) Head Start program. Current parent members must comprise at least 51% of the membership.

Community representatives include:

- Past parents who do not have children currently enrolled in the program. It is preferred that past parents have been Policy Council parent representatives;
- Professionals who work in programs that serve low-income families with young children;
- The ECEAP representative elected by the separate ESD 113 ECEAP Policy Council to attend the Washington State Association of Head Start and ECEAP meetings.
- Parents who represented Elma, Shelton, and Family Partnership centers in 2018-2019 may serve as community representatives on the new Head Start policy council up to a maximum of four one-year terms, as per Article III, Section 2: Selection of Past Parent Representatives. They must be approved by the Policy Council before they have full voting and membership rights and responsibilities on Policy Council

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All Policy Council members must not be related by blood or marriage to program staff or be a regular substitute, and must not be employed by the program. Regular volunteers are defined as anyone who volunteers 10 or more hours in a month.

**SECTION 2: Election of Representatives**

Parent representatives will be elected from each Head Start center or ECEAP subcontractor. The Policy Council Representation Chart will limit the number of parent representatives.

**Parent Representatives:** Each center with enrollment of fifty (50) or fewer children will have one parent representative. Centers with enrollment from fifty-one (51) to ninety-nine (99) children will have two parent representatives. Centers with enrollment over one hundred (100) children will have three parent representatives. As larger centers are created, the number of parent representatives will increase proportionately as described above.

**Selection of Parent Representatives:** parents will select Parent representatives with children currently enrolled in the program at the center before the first Policy Council meeting, which is typically held in late October or early November.

**Selection of Parent Alternates:** Parent alternates will be selected by parents with children currently enrolled in the program at the center before the first Policy Council meeting, which is typically held in late October or early November. Centers can elect one parent alternate. Parent alternates are strongly encouraged to attend the training and all Policy Council meetings. Alternates will vote only when a center elected parent representative from their center, regardless of funding, is absent.

**Selection of Past Parent Representatives:** Past parents who want to serve on Policy Council must inform the designated ESD 113 employee no later than October 1 of each year. Representatives who are former enrolled parents are preferred to have been past Policy Council parent representatives or attending parent alternates within the last three program years. They cannot serve more than five terms in Policy Council. Past parent representatives must be approved by Policy Council before they have full voting and membership rights and responsibilities on Policy Council.

**Selection of Community Representatives:** Community representatives will be chosen from public, private agencies, businesses, or will be individuals with a desire to meet the needs of low-income people. The Assistant Superintendent of Early Learning (Director) and/or designee will

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develop a list of qualified people with input from parents, staff and community. Policy Council must approve community representatives before they have full voting and membership rights and responsibilities on Policy Council.

It is desirous, but not required, that the ECEAP representative chosen by the ESD 113 ECEAP Policy Council to represent the program at the Washington State Head Start and ECEAP Association also serve as a community representative on the ESD 113 Head Start Policy Council.

SECTION 3: Vacancies

When vacancies in membership on Policy Council occur during course of operating year, the respective parent committee where the vacancy occurred will select a new parent representative unless the vacating representative already has a same-funded parent alternate. That parent alternate will be offered the position. If the alternate declines the position, the parent committee will select a new parent representative.

**ARTICLE IV - ELECTION OF OFFICERS**

SECTION 1: Officers

A member may serve three consecutive terms in the same office.

Elections: Elections of officers shall be held in first Policy Council meeting, which is typically a training and orientation meeting.

Officers: Officers of Policy Council are Chairperson, Vice-chairperson, and Treasurer. These officers compose the Executive Committee.

- Chairperson can be either a parent representative or past parent representative. It is preferred, but not required, that the Chairperson have at least one year of experience on the Policy Council.
- At least two of the officers must be current parent representatives.
- If the Chairperson is not a past parent representative, the Vice-chairperson or the Treasurer can be a past parent representative.
- Parent alternates are not permitted to run for executive office.

SECTION 2: Officers Vacating

After an Executive officer vacates a position, the vacant position will be filled as follows:

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- The Policy Council members will elect officer(s) to fill vacant positions(s).
- Any Executive Committee officer membership must follow Article IV, Section 1.
- The Executive Committee officers are encouraged to run for election to fill the vacant officer position to provide continuity.
- Subsequent open vacancies will be available for electing from the greater Council membership.

**ARTICLE V - ROLE OF OFFICERS**

Chairperson: The Chairperson shall preside at Policy Council meetings. He/she shall be responsible for and fulfill all duties provided by these By-laws. He/she shall execute in the name of Policy Council all documents and letters, and shall perform all duties as may be required in the course of operations. He/she shall attend planning sessions and/or Executive Committee Meetings with the Director and other officers prior to scheduled regular Policy Council meetings. He/she shall appoint committee members and committee Chairperson as needed.

Vice-chairperson: He/she shall attend Executive Committee Meetings with the Director and other officers prior to scheduled regular Policy Council meetings. The Vice-chairperson will assist Chairperson with all meeting activities. In the event of the absence, or disability of the Chairperson, the Vice-chairperson shall perform duties and exercise powers of Chairperson. He/she shall perform duties as directed unless such powers are specifically vested in other officers by these by-laws.

Treasurer: He/she shall attend Executive Committee Meetings with the Director and other officers prior to scheduled regular Policy Council meetings. The Treasurer will report to Policy Council the monthly financial reports of Head Start and ECEAP within the treasurer's report for Policy Council expenditures. When the Chair and Vice-chairperson are absent, the Treasurer will chair the regular Policy Council meeting, and perform other duties and exercise powers of Chairperson, as needed.

**ARTICLE VI - MEMBER RESPONSIBILITIES**

Member responsibilities are articulated in the Head Start Act, Section 642 (c)(2)(D)

(D) RESPONSIBILITIES- The policy council shall approve and submit to the governing body decisions about each of the following activities:

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- (i) 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.
- (ii) Program recruitment, selection, and enrollment priorities.
- (iii) Applications for funding and amendments to applications for funding for programs under this subchapter, prior to submission of applications described in this clause.
- (iv) Budget planning for program expenditures, including policies for reimbursement and participation in policy council activities.
- (v) Bylaws for the operation of the policy council.
- (vi) Program personnel policies and decisions regarding the employment of program staff, consistent with paragraph (1)(E)(iv)(IX), including standards of conduct for program staff, contractors, and volunteers and criteria for the employment and dismissal of program staff.
- (vii) Developing procedures for how members of the policy council of the Head Start agency will be elected.
- (viii) Recommendations on the selection of delegate agencies and the service areas for such agencies.

The 2016 Head Start Performance Standards, in 1301 identify additional Policy Council responsibilities:

1301.3(b)

(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.

1304.1 Parent Committees

(b) *Requirements of parent committees.* Within the parent committee structure, a program may determine the best methods to engage families using strategies that are most effective in their community, as long as the program ensures the parent committee carries out the following minimum responsibilities:

- (1) Advise staff in developing and implementing local program policies, activities, and services to ensure they meet the needs of children and families;
- (2) Have a process for communication with the policy council and policy committee; and

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(3) Within the guidelines established by the governing body, policy council or policy committee, participate in the recruitment and screening of Early Head Start and Head Start employees.

Attendance: Monthly attendance at policy council meeting is very important.

Parent representatives are expected to notify the parent alternate and the center director as soon as possible to enable the alternate to attend the meeting.

All members are expected to notify the ESD policy council liaison within three days of missing the meeting, providing the reason for their absence.

A valid reason can be an excused absence or an exempt absence. An excused absence may include, but is not limited to illness, family emergency, work conflict, etc. An exempt absence would include accidents, hospitalization, hazardous travel, natural disasters, and death in the family.

The Executive Committee officers must submit valid reasons to the program's designated policy council liaison on the same day as the missed Council meeting.

Terms: A member will serve for a one-year term, which ends the same day as the next council's new term begins. If the member intends to serve for another year, the member must stand for re-election. Parent representatives must seek re-election at the center level. Community representatives must seek re-election at the Policy Council level. A person may not serve more than five terms in any Policy Council.

## **ARTICLE VII - QUORUM**

Quorum: At least five centers must be represented by at least one elected parent representative or the center's alternate when their representative is absent. Any past parent representative can be counted in the quorum when needed.

## **ARTICLE VIII - MEETINGS AND VOTING**

### SECTION 1: Meetings:

Meetings will be held regularly as designated by the Council. In order to conduct business that requires board of director approval, meetings will be scheduled prior to ESD board meetings. Meetings will be considered official if conducted face-to-face, by teleconference, by videoconference,



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or by executive committee. Although the ESD Board of Directors meet monthly, the Policy Council is not required to meet monthly.

The Director, Center Directors, and parent, family, community engagement coordinator are expected to attend Policy Council meetings to provide support to the members.

**SECTION 2: Voting Members:**

The officers of Policy Council will be clearly designated through use of nameplates. The Chairperson will vote for the purpose of breaking a tie.

**SECTION 3: Notice of Meetings:**

Meeting notices will be mailed ten days prior to scheduled meeting dates. Meetings shall be open to the public and staff.

**SECTION 4: Taking Action between Scheduled Meetings:**

Occasionally approval of an action is needed during a time in which Policy Council is not holding a meeting such as the summer, or within a period that makes it difficult to hold an emergency or special meeting. A telephone or email vote may be taken, as long as the quorum is met. Documents may be emailed for consideration. A majority of the quorum must vote to approve the action before it can be taken. The telephone vote will be documented, indicating the vote of each member contacted, and reported at the next Policy Council meeting.

**SECTION 5: Emergency or Special Meetings:**

An emergency or special meeting may be called by the Chairperson of Policy Council, or three members of the Council. Members must be given at least 24-hour notice. Emergency meetings are for single purposes only, and this is the only business that will be conducted at that meeting. Special meetings may include more than one-time sensitive topic.

- (a) In emergency or special situations, every attempt will be made to call a meeting of the Policy Council.
- (b) Such meetings will be announced to all members of Policy Council to provide input from membership. If a Policy Council quorum is not gathered, officers are empowered to act on behalf of the full membership.

**SECTION 6: Special Meetings:**

Special meetings include two different types:

- a) Policy Council members may vote to declare a regular meeting as a special meeting in the event of a lack of a quorum. All business will be conducted as usual. Special meetings may only be approved when at least one-third of centers have representation.

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- b) As per Article VII, Section 5, the chairperson or three members of the council may call a special meeting.

**ARTICLE IX - REMOVAL OF MEMBERS**

SECTION 1: Removal of Members:

- (a) A representative can be removed for missing two meetings in a row without giving a valid reason, even if the absence would have been exempt. Chairperson or designee shall notify in writing of their dismissal from the council.
- (b) A representative can be removed for missing a total of four meetings regardless of providing excused absences. Exempt absences do not count against total allowed absences. Chairperson or designee shall notify in writing of their dismissal from the council.
- (c) If one of the members participating in the group is continuously disruptive and interferes with functions of the Council, he/she will be removed from the Council after a two-thirds majority vote of members. Prior to removal, the Chairperson or designee shall notify member of pending action.
- (d) The center will elect a person, or persons, who will fill vacant position(s) on Policy Council at their next regularly scheduled meeting. Refer to Article III, Section 3 Vacancies.

SECTION 2: Removal of Officers:

- (a) The Policy Council may remove an officer by a vote of two-thirds of the membership present, for non-performance of specified duties, unless the officer has resigned.
- (b) Prior notification of such action will be made by the Chairperson or designee.
- (c) If an officer misses three regular Policy Council meetings, or misses three Executive Committee meetings, regardless of excused absences, the officer will be removed from the executive committee. Exempt absences will not count against total allowed absences. Chairperson or designee shall notify the member in writing of their dismissal from the Executive Committee.

**ARTICLE X - AMENDMENTS**

Amendments: These by-laws may be amended by a two-thirds majority vote of members present at any regular meeting, or at a special meeting called for that purpose, prior to submission for consideration by the

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Superintendent. Contents of proposed amendments shall be presented at regular Policy Council meeting to be voted on at the same meeting.

**ARTICLE XI - COMMITTEES**

- A. Health Services Advisory Committee: Community volunteers, staff and parents meet to discuss health, dental, nutrition and mental health concerns, issues and resources.
- Facilitator: Health Services Specialist
  - Membership: Two Policy Council parent representatives (1 from Thurston County and 1 from Grays Harbor County), Health Services Specialist, Mental Health Specialists, Education Leader who is the lead for disabilities, and community health representatives.
  - Meetings: Meets as needed, but at least once yearly.
  - One Policy Council member shall be designated to give a verbal report to Policy Council about the committee's activities and actions.
- B. Emergent Task Committees: Committees may be created during the year to address emerging issues, respond to new directives from funding sources, or to look at new opportunities. Representatives from Policy Council will be invited to join these single focus committees.

**ARTICLE XII - POLICY COUNCIL REPRESENTATION IN LOCAL, REGIONAL, AND STATE COMMITTEES AND ORGANIZATIONS**

SECTION 1: Washington State Association of Head Start and ECEAP:

The Washington State Association of Head Start and ECEAP (WSA) by-laws establish the type and number of members that each program may send. The following section is aligned to those by-laws and are automatically amended to remain aligned in situations in which the WSA by-laws are changed.

The Policy Council will elect one parent delegate to WSA annually.

The delegate must have a child currently enrolled in program and be a Policy Council parent representative.

If a delegate vacates the position, the Policy Council will elect another representative to the Association.

The newly elected delegate will begin attending state meetings in January and continue through the October meeting. The Executive Committee can

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remove the delegate at any time during his/her term of office for non-performance of duties.

Opportunities are available in WSA for parents to be elected into leadership positions of the Board. Only the voting parent representatives who have at least one more year (after the current year) of eligibility on Policy Council will be approved to run for election to a WSA Board position. If the terms of position on the WSA Board run longer than the parent representative's eligibility for Policy Council, the parent must agree to attend Policy Council meetings regularly as a guest to represent parent concerns back to WSA.

Responsibilities: (Washington State Association of Head Start and ECEAP Association Delegates)

1. The parent representative will present a brief report following the meetings. The report should include recommendations and follow-up activities from the WSA actions.
2. When appropriate, participate in the development of training for the local level, based upon the training received at the state level.
3. Represent the Head Start Program in a positive manner.

SECTION 2: Representation on Local, Regional, or State Committees and Boards:

When requested, Policy Council parent representatives may be selected to represent Policy Council or their local center on community-based boards and/or advisory committees.

A. Role of Members:

1. Regularly attend the meeting of the board/committee.
2. Serve as a liaison between the Head Start/ECEAP program and the board/committee.
3. Report back to Policy Council on a regular basis.

B. Removal: A Policy Council member elected to a local, regional or state board/committee can be removed by the Executive Committee for failure to attend meetings on a regular basis, or for disruptive or unprofessional behavior that reflects poorly on the program and on Policy Council.

**ARTICLE XIII - REIMBURSEMENT**

SECTION 1: Reimbursement:

Mileage: State delegates, parent representatives, parent alternates, and low-income past parent representatives, and center committee parent

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representatives to Policy Council meetings and committees who drive to meetings outside of their own local center will be paid at the ESD 113 approved rate per mile on established miles from the parent's local center and back, according to the 146-P Policy Council Reimbursement Policy.

Child care: Child care will be reimbursed to State delegates, parent representatives, parent alternates, and low-income past parent representatives, according to the 146-P Policy Council Reimbursement Policy.

Approved by Policy Council 10/2/19

Approved by Board of Directors 11/13/19.