

ARROWHEAD ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY AGENCY  
ARROWHEAD HEAD START SERVICES  
702 THIRD AVENUE SOUTH  
VIRGINIA, MINNESOTA

**ARROWHEAD HEAD START POLICY COUNCIL BY-LAWS**  
**ADOPTED OCTOBER 16, 2019**

The Head Start Policy Council is a forum for parent and community involvement in which they are significantly involved and committed to the process of making decisions in planning, implementation, and overall program direction of Head Start services, consistent with responsibilities described in the Head Start Performance Standards.

**ARTICLE I            NAME**

- 1.1     The name of this organization shall be the Arrowhead Head Start Policy Council.

**ARTICLE II           PURPOSE**

- 2.1     The purpose of the Policy Council is to achieve the following objectives:
- a. Provide an opportunity for parents and the community to voice an opinion and take part in Head Start program planning and decision making.
  - b. Represent all parents whose children participate in the Arrowhead Head Start program.
  - c. Serve as a link between parents and the Agency Board of Directors, its program staff, and those public/private resource organizations within the community.
  - d. Exchange Head Start ideas between sites and the community.
  - e. Initiate suggestions and ideas for program improvement and to receive appropriate information on action taken by the Agency in response to its recommendations.
  - f. Promote parent involvement in the classroom and program, Parent Committees, Policy Council, and with state, regional, and national advocacy and program direction.
  - g. Afford Head Start parents an opportunity to work with their children in cooperation with the staff of each site.
  - h. Be involved in the planning and evaluation of the Head Start program, assuring that all staff assist in the development of parent roles.

**ARTICLE III            PROGRAM GOVERNANCE**

**3.1     Board of Directors Responsibilities**

The Board of Directors will follow written Agency policies that define their role and responsibilities as governing body members. They will be responsible for working with the Executive Director to ensure management procedures and functions are implemented to offer high quality services. The Board of Director's shall:

- a. Have legal and fiscal responsibility for administering and overseeing programs including the safeguarding of Federal funds;
- b. Adopt practices that assure active, independent, and informed governance of the Head Start agency and fully participate in the development, planning and evaluation of the Early Head Start/Head Start program;
- c. Be responsible for ensuring compliance with Federal laws (including regulations) and applicable State, Tribal and local laws (including regulations);
- d. Be responsible for other activities, including:
  1. Selecting delegate agencies and service area for such agencies;
  2. Establishing procedures and criteria for recruitment, selection, and enrollment of children;
  3. Reviewing all applications for funding and amendments to applications for funding;
  4. Establish procedures and guidelines for accessing and collecting information;
  5. Reviewing and approving all major policies of the agency, including:
    - A. The annual self-assessment and financial audit;
    - B. The agency's progress in carrying out the programmatic and fiscal provisions in the grant application, including implementation of corrective actions; and
    - C. Personnel policies regarding the hiring, evaluation, termination, and compensation of agency employees.
  6. Developing procedures for how members of the Policy Council are selected.

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7. Approving financial management, accounting and reporting policies, and compliance with laws and regulations related to financial statements, including:
  - A. Approval of all major expenditures of the agency;
  - B. Annual approval of the operating budget of the agency;
  - C. Selection of independent financial auditors who shall report all critical accounting policies and practices to the Board;
  - D. Monitoring the agency's actions to correct any audit findings and of other action necessary to comply with applicable laws (and regulations) governing financial statement and accounting practices;
8. Reviewing results from monitoring including appropriate follow-up activities;
9. Approving personnel policies and procedures, including policies and procedures regarding the hiring, evaluation, compensation, and termination of the Executive Director, Head Start Director, Director of Human Resources, Chief Fiscal Officer, and any other person with an equivalent position with the agency;
10. Establishing, adopting and periodically updating written standards of conduct that establish standards and formal procedures for disclosing, addressing, and resolving:
  - A. Any conflict of interest, and any appearance of a conflict of interest, by members of the Board, officers and employees of the Head Start agency, and consultants and agents who provide services or furnish goods to the Head Start agency;
  - B. Complaints, including investigations, when appropriate.
11. Establishing any advisory committees to oversee responsibilities related to program governance and improvement of the Early Head Start/Head Start program.

### **3.2 Policy Council Responsibilities**

The Policy Council will perform the following duties:

- a. Serve as a link to the Parent Committees, grantee, Board of Directors and communities they serve.

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- b. Assist with Parent Committees in communicating with parents enrolled in all program options to ensure they understand their rights, responsibilities and opportunities of the Head Start Program and to encourage their participation.
- c. Assist with Parent Committees in planning, coordinating and organizing activities for parents with the assistance of staff. Also ensure funds are set aside from program budgets to be used to support parent activities.
- d. Assist in recruiting volunteer services from parents, community residents and organizations.
- e. Assist in mobilizing community resources to meet identified needs.
- f. Establish and maintain procedures for working with the Agency to resolve community complaints about the Head Start Program.

The Policy Council shall approve and submit to the Board, decision about each of the following:

- a. 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;
- b. Program recruitment, selection, and enrollment priorities;
- c. Applications for funding and amendments to applications for funding, prior to submission of applications;
- d. Budget planning for program expenditures, including policies for reimbursement and participation in Policy Council activities;
- e. Bylaws 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 are elected;
- h. Recommendations on the selection of delegate agencies and service areas for such agencies.

### **3.3 Board of Directors and Policy Council Shared Responsibilities**

The Policy Council will work in partnership with the Head Start Director, Agency Executive Director and Board of Directors to ensure shared planning and decision making in aspects of program management as required by the Performance Standards.

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The Board and Policy Council will meet in their respective groups to develop, review, approve or disapprove the following policies and procedures:

- a. Funding applications and amendments for the Head Start Program including administrative services.
- b. Procedures for program planning including the Community Assessment and Program Self-Assessment.
- c. Program planning process including development of a comprehensive program plan which outlines philosophy, long and short range program goals, objectives, fiscal objectives, and service implementation plans for each program area.
- d. Composition and selection procedures for Policy Council members per the approved Policy Council By-Laws.
- e. Criteria for defining recruitment, selection, and enrollment priorities in accordance with 45 CFR parts 1302.13, 1302.14, and 1302.15.
- f. Annual self-assessment of the grantees progress in carrying out the programmatic and fiscal intent of the grant application, including planning or other actions that may result from the review of the annual audit and findings from the Federal monitoring review.
- g. The annual independent audit with follow-up and monitoring of any corrective actions
- h. Program personnel policies and subsequent changes in policies in accordance with 45 CFR 1302.90 including standards of conduct.
- i. Establishment and monitoring of program goals and objectives, and using data for continuous program improvement.
- j. The Board of Directors and Policy Council shall adhere to the Head Start Code of Conduct for Governing Bodies Policy.

## **ARTICLE IV MEMBERSHIP**

### **4.1 Composition**

- a. Head Start parent means a Head Start child's mother or father, other family member who is a primary caregiver, foster parent, guardian, or the person with whom the child has been placed for purposes of adoption pending a final adoption decree.
- b. Each of the preschool classrooms shall have parents annually elect one (1) parent representative to the Policy Council. For locations where there may be two (2) or more

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classrooms, one (1) representative may represent up to two (2) classrooms if determined by those classrooms or if one (1) classroom cannot get a parent to serve.

Early Head Start will have equitable representation on the Policy Council. One (1) parent representative shall represent two (2) sites that could include a combination of Early Head Start home base, preschool home base, and/or infant/toddler center(s). If there is an odd number of sites, then one (1) site may be combined with two (2) sites where the parent shall represent three (3) sites or it may be a stand-alone site with its own parent representation.

d. At least 51% of the Policy Council membership must include parents of children currently enrolled in Head Start.

e. Parents of currently enrolled children who exceed Head Start income eligibility guidelines and/or parents of special needs children may serve on the Policy Council.

f. Parent and community members serving on the Policy Council must be approved by the Policy Council as a whole.

g. Policy Council membership may include up to eight (8) community representatives, to gain a greater community perspective as to the early intervention and developmental learning needs of families. Community representatives must be drawn from the local community; businesses; public or private community, civic, and professional organizations; and others who are familiar with resources and services for low-income children and families, including, for example, the parents of formerly enrolled children. All community representatives must be selected annually.

1. Four (4) community representatives may be Head Start carry-over parents who have previously served on the Policy Council.

2. Agency board of directors must appoint a board representative to serve on the Policy Council.

3. The remaining three (3) community representatives to the Policy Council will be selected and approved by the Policy Council. No AEOA grantee agency staff (or members of their immediate families) may serve on the Policy Council.

h. Membership Terms:

- a. A member shall serve for one year;

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

- c. A member may serve up to five (5) one-year terms on the Policy Council.

- d. Membership on the Policy Council shall begin in November and end in December of the following year.

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### 4.2 Conflict of Interest

Members of the Policy Council shall:

- a. Not have a conflict of interest with the Head Start agency; and
- b. Not receive compensation for serving on the Policy Council or for providing services to the Head Start agency.

### 4.3 Responsibilities

- a. Regularly attend Policy Council meetings and training sessions.
- b. Participate in a manner conducive to all public meetings.
- c. Equitably represent all parents and children who participate in the program.
- d. Report to the Policy Council any pertinent information or concerns from the respective parent groups.
- e. Effectively communicate Policy Council actions and decisions to the parent groups.
- f. Encourage all parents to actively participate in Head Start.
- g. Serve as an informal link between parents, staff, and community.
- h. Abide by the Policy Council By-Laws and membership obligation.

### 4.4 Representation

- a. Each Policy Council member shall have no more or less than one vote.
- b. Membership shall be terminated provided:
  1. A representative submits a letter of resignation to the Policy Council.
  2. A representative leaves the community or program without submitting notice of resignation.
  3. A representative incurs three (3) or more absences within the current program year.
  4. A representative is unable, for any reason, to fulfill their obligation to serve on the Policy Council.
- c. Policy Council membership vacancies shall be filled as soon as possible.

**4.5 Responsibilities of a Community Representative**

- a. A Community Representative should attend all Policy Council meetings.
- b. A Community Representative should participate in Head Start Policy Council Orientation.
- c. A Community Representative will serve in a voting capacity.
- d. The Community Representative cannot hold office.

**4.6 Responsibilities of the Parent Advisor**

- a. A maximum of two (2) Parent Advisor(s) shall be elected at the Policy Council Orientation using the following guidelines:
  - 1. The Parent Advisor candidate must have experience as a member of the Policy Council.
  - 2. Must have a working knowledge of Policy Council.
  - 3. Will assist staff in the orientation of new Policy Council officers after election of new Policy Council.
  - 4. Serves in an ex-officio (non-voting) capacity.
  - 5. The term of this position is one (1) year and can only be held once.
- b. Shall be eligible for Policy Council reimbursements.

**4.7 Meetings**

- a. Policy Council meetings shall be held as determined by the newly elected Policy Council at the Policy Council Orientation.
- b. Meeting notices, location, time, tentative agenda, and the last meeting's minutes shall be delivered to each member 5 to 7 days in advance.
- c. Policy Council members may attend meetings by audio or video conferencing.
- d. Special meetings of the Policy Council may be called by the Chairperson to address specific issues which should not be held over to the next regular Policy Council meeting, as determined by the Chairperson. Notice of meetings must be sent to members 5 to 7 days prior to the meeting. Special meeting agendas and discussion shall be limited to that topic of discussion for which the meeting was necessitated, and shall become a matter of official Policy Council records.



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e. An annual training and orientation session for new members shall be held in November. New members shall assume membership at this meeting. Officers to the Policy Council shall be elected at the following meeting in December. Newly elected officers will officially take office at the February Policy Council meeting.

f. An official quorum of the membership necessary to conduct the business of the Policy Council shall consist of seven (7) members present, provided sufficient notice, as per the By-Laws, is given each member.

g. When a quorum is not established for a scheduled meeting, a Policy Council member may make a motion to conduct an official meeting with those members present so important business can be done. The motion must receive a second and passed unanimously by those in attendance. If approved, the meeting shall be deemed official. Decisions and rulings shall stand. If the motion lacks a second or is not passed unanimously, then an official meeting will not take place and no decisions will be made.

h. Decisions and rulings of the Policy Council shall be accomplished by a simple majority of those present, prior to the adjournment of any official meeting.

i. Voting may be done by mail, email and/or texting when necessary to conduct business in a timely manner. A minimum notice of 24 hours will be given to Policy Council members read, process and ask for clarification prior to the vote. Decisions and rulings shall be by a simple majority of votes received. Votes will be recorded and maintained by the program. Prior to asking for a vote by mail, email and/or texting, every effort will be made to hold an special Policy Council meeting or an Executive Committee meeting to vote on any business.

j. Robert's Rules of Order shall govern the conduct of all meetings when not in conflict with these By-Laws.

k. The following Order of Business shall be observed: Call to Order; Roll Call; Correction and Approval of the Minutes; Correspondence; Staff and Director Reports; Old Business; New Business; Parent/Community Representative Reports; Other; Adjournment. The agenda may be altered or suspended at any meeting by majority vote of the membership.

l. The Head Start Director and/or designee should be present at all scheduled Policy Council meetings. Staff members may attend Policy Council meetings in a consultative, non-voting capacity only upon recognition by the Chair.

m. All meetings of the Policy Council and or committees shall be official, and shall be open meetings, excepting those meetings or parts of meetings which deal with individual personnel issues, which may be held in closed session.

n. Persons interested in participating or addressing the Policy Council are encouraged to attend, however, they should indicate their intent and request to be

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placed on the meeting agenda prior to the meeting, may only speak when acknowledged by the Chairperson, and cannot, under any circumstances, vote.

### **ARTICLE V            OFFICERS**

- 5.1**
- a. Officers shall include the Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson/ Parliamentarian, Secretary, State Parent Affiliate Representative, State Parent Affiliate Alternate, and the Policy Council Representative to the Agency Board of Directors.
  - b. The election of officers shall occur at the December meeting, using nominations from the floor and written ballots. In the event where an office(s) cannot be filled, every attempt will be made to fill vacancies at the next full Policy Council meeting.
  - c. Officers of the Policy Council are elected annually, by a simple majority vote, and shall hold office for one year, with the exception of the POLICY COUNCIL Representative to the Agency Board of Directors, the State Parent Affiliate (SPA) Representative and the State Parent Affiliate (SPA) Alternate. No person may hold more than one official Policy Council office.
  - d. Elected Policy Council officers and Policy Council representatives to the Agency and State organizations shall constitute the Executive Committee of the Policy Council.
    - 1. The Head Start Director or his/her Designee shall serve as an advisory member to this committee.
    - 2. Removal of an officer shall be by majority vote or by resignation.

**5.2    Responsibilities of the Chairperson**

- a. To conduct orderly meetings.
- b. To prepare the agenda with the Director/Designee.
- c. To acquire a working knowledge of parliamentary procedure, of Policy Council By-Laws, Head Start Performance Standards and Head Start operations.
- d. To sign official documents in behalf of the Policy Council.
- e. To appoint special committees.
- f. To serve as an ex-officio member of all committees.
- g. To call special meetings when necessary.
- h. In the event of a tie vote, the vote of the Chairperson shall break the tie vote.

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- i. To preside over special elections in the instance of vacancies of the membership and officers.
- j. To state each motion before it is voted upon by the membership.
- k. To serve as an active member of the Executive Committee of the Policy Council.

### **5.3 Responsibilities of the Vice Chairperson/Parliamentarian**

- a. To act in the absence of the elected Chairperson, fulfilling all obligations of the Chair until such time as the Chairperson re-assumes his/her responsibilities.
- b. To develop a working knowledge of parliamentary procedure, Robert's Rules of Order, Head Start Performance Standards, and Policy Council By-Laws.
- c. To assist the Chairperson in maintaining an orderly meeting.
- d. To provide Policy Council orientation and education in the conduct and procedure of meetings.
- e. To serve as an active member of the Executive Committee of the Policy Council.

### **5.4 Responsibilities of the Secretary**

- a. To facilitate the recording of minutes (transcript) of all regular, special, and executive meetings of the Policy Council, assuring that each member receives a copy of the minutes.
- b. To call roll for attendance, keep accurate records of absences and report any member with three (3) absences to the Policy Council.
- c. To sign official documents of the Policy Council as required.
- d. To help determine, monitor, and report on the parent activity funds.
- e. To serve as an active member of the Executive Committee of the Policy Council.

### **5.5 Responsibilities of the Elected Representative to the Agency Board**

- a. To represent the Policy Council and parent interests on the AEOA Board of Directors, effecting communication between the Policy Council and the Board of Directors by submitting an oral or written report to the Policy Council.
- b. To serve as a bona fide, voting member of the Board of Directors for two years, elected in odd numbered years.

1. Expenses of the Policy Council Representative to the Board shall be assumed by the Agency.

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- c. There shall be no alternate representative to the AEOA Board.
- d. To serve as an active member of the Executive Committee of the Policy Council.

### **5.6 Responsibilities of the State Parent Affiliate (SPA) Representative**

- a. One representative shall be elected by the Policy Council using the following guideline:
  - 1. The SPA Representative shall be at least a second year parent with a child in Head Start having served the first year as the SPA Alternate, whenever possible. The SPA Representative may be re-elected to serve two (2) consecutive terms, if they have a child in Head Start in the consecutive years. If there is no second year parent available or willing to serve as a SPA Representative, the SPA Alternate may be elected to the position. If there is no SPA Alternate available, then the Policy Council may elect a current parent as the SPA Representative.
- b. The SPA Representative must report pertinent information from the State Association to the Policy Council in a timely manner.
- c. The Representative is expected to attend State Association meetings.
- d. To serve as an active member of the Executive Committee of the Policy Council.

### **5.7 Responsibilities of the State Parent Affiliate (SPA) Alternate**

- a. SPA Alternate shall be elected by the Policy Council using the following guideline:
  - 1. The SPA Alternate shall be a parent of a child currently enrolled and shall agree to serve the following year as the SPA Representative if they plan to have a child in Head Start the following year.
- b. In the event that the SPA Representative cannot attend the Policy Council meeting, the SPA Alternate must report pertinent information from the State Association to the Policy Council in a timely manner.
- c. The SPA Alternate is encouraged to attend State Association meetings and is expected to attend in the absence of the Representative.
- d. To serve as an active member of the Executive Committee of the Policy Council.

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### 6.1 Responsibilities

- a. To provide leadership to the Policy Council
- b. To act in behalf of the Policy Council between meetings when a full Policy Council meeting is not feasible.
- c. Executive Committee actions must be ratified by the Policy Council at its next regular meeting.
- d. Review executive and personnel matters as they affect Head Start prior to their presentation to the Policy Council as a whole.
- e. Planning Area Recommendations for Review and Policy Council Approval:
  1. Child development needs identification.
  2. Head Start goals and objectives.
  3. Location of Head Start services.
  4. Plans to utilize community resources.
  5. Criteria for the selection of children.
- f. General Administration Review and Recommendations for Policy Council approval:
  1. Composition of the Policy Council and the method of setting it up.
  2. Responsible for establishing a method of hearing and resolving community complaints relevant to Head Start.
- g. Personnel Executive Review and Recommendations for Policy Council approval:
  1. Review Agency personnel policy decisions.
  2. Review and make recommendation as to the hiring and firing of all Head Start personnel.
- h. Grant Application and Fiscal Review and Recommendations:
  1. Review and make recommendation regarding requests for funding prior to submission to the funding source.
  2. Review and make recommendation regarding major changes in the budget while the program is in operation.

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3. Provide written documentation of Policy Council involvement and input to funding, grants, and policy matters.

### **6.2 Vacancies**

1. In the absence of the Chairperson, the next succeeding officer shall preside over the Policy Council Executive Committee (Vice Chair/ Parliamentarian, Secretary, SPA Representative, SPA Alternate, Board Representative).
2. Executive Committee vacancies shall be filled through special election at the first meeting of the Policy Council after the vacancy occurs.

## **ARTICLE VII IMPASSE**

### **7.1 Definition - Impasse**

An impasse exists when there is an internal dispute between the Board and the Policy Council. The impasse procedures are:

- a. The governing body considers proposed decisions from the Policy Council and the policy considers proposals from the Board;
- b. If there is a disagreement, the Board and Policy Council must notify the other in writing why it does not accept a decision; and
- c. A decision-making process and timeline to resolve disputes and reach decisions that are not arbitrary, capricious, or illegal must be described.
- d. If the agency's decision-making process does not result in a resolution and an impasse continues, the Board and Policy Council must select a mutually agreeable third party mediator and participate in a formal process of mediation that leads to resolution of the dispute.
- e. If no resolution is reached with a mediator, the Board and the Policy Council must select a mutually agreeable arbitrator whose decision is final.

## **ARTICLE VIII MISCELLANEOUS**

### **8.1 National Head Start Parent Training and Training Conference Representation**

- a. Parent attendance at the National Head Start Conference and the National Head Start Parent Training Conference may be available to Policy Council members, subject to funding. The Policy Council will annually select one or two and two alternate parent candidates, interested and able to attend. Policy Council parents and current carry-over parents are eligible.

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b. Policy Council members interested in attending the National Head Start Conference and the National Head Start Parent Training Conference must submit a resume' stating their reasons why they should be considered as a possible representative. Any written comments by the site staff, Family Advocates, Home Base Educators, and Parent Committees will be submitted to the Policy Council for screening and selection.

1. Selection Committee should be made up of Policy Council members.
2. Past participation may be a factor considered in selection.
3. Candidates will be selected by numerical rating.

c. Office personnel will make all arrangements for the representatives and/or alternates.

### **ARTICLE IX            AMENDMENT**

**9.1**    These Head Start Policy Council By-Laws may be amended, repealed or altered in whole or in part, and new By-Laws adopted at any regular meeting of the Policy Council by a majority vote of members present, provided:

- a. Written notice of intention to amend, repeal, alter, or adopt new By-Laws and a clear statement of proposed amendment is provided each voting member five (5) to seven (7) days in advance of the meeting. Notice shall state time, place, and date of meeting.
- b. All recommended changes to the Policy Council By-Laws must be approved by the AEOA Board of Directors.
- c. This set of By-Laws supersedes all previous By-Laws, as dated.

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Arrowhead Head Start Policy Council By-Laws

**WE HEREBY CERTIFY** that the above By-Laws were duly adopted by the Arrowhead Head Start Policy Council and approved by the AEOA Board of Directors as dated and under signature below:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Doris Wehrenberg Policy Council Chairperson

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Norman E. Ferris, III Director, Arrowhead Head Start

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Paul Carlson, Executive Director, AEOA

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Jeff Kletscher, Chairperson, AEOA Board of Directors

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date