

1 **POLICY COUNCIL BY-LAWS**

2 **Approved by Policy Council**

3 **July 22, 2013**

4 **Policy Council Chair:**

5 **ARTICLE I**

6 **Name**

7 The name of this organization will be the North Texas Parent & Child  
8 Development, Inc. Policy Council. Here after known as Policy Council.

9 **ARTICLE II**

10 **Purpose**

11 The purpose of the Policy Council shall be to provide a formal means of  
12 involving parents, agency and community persons in the decision making  
13 process of the program within the framework of Health and Human Services  
14 policy. (See Attached-Program Governance 1304.50)

15 **ARTICLE III**

16 **Membership**

17 **Section A: Eligibility**

- 18 • Membership of the Policy Council will be made up of:
  - 19 (a) Parent Representatives, (b) and not more than three (3)
  - 20 Community Representatives (c) one (1) Director from the North
  - 21 Texas Parent & Child Development, Inc. Board of Directors,
  - 22 hereafter known as Grantee. At least 51% of the Policy Council
  - 23 will be parents of children currently enrolled in Early Head
  - 24 Start. Parent representative will include four from Wakeman
  - 25 Center, three from Fuller Center, one from Burkburnett Center,
  - 26 and three from Home Base Parents. One parent representative
  - 27 from each class and one parent alternate from each class.
- 28 • Members shall be limited to a combined total of three, one year terms as
- 29 stated in Performance Standards 1304.50(b)(5).
- 30 • All members shall be informed of confidentiality guidelines by the Early
- 31 Head Start Director and asked to sign confidentiality forms upon
- 32 becoming a member of the Policy Council.

33 Section B: Selection

- 34 • Each classroom and home-based teacher's group shall elect one (1)  
35 Parent Representative and one (1) Parent Alternate as determined  
36 by the Grantee to serve for a period of one (1) year.
- 37 • Election of the aforementioned Representatives for the Policy Council  
38 will be conducted at the September parent meetings.
- 39 • Until new representatives are elected at the Parent Center Committee  
40 meetings, the prior-year representatives shall remain as members and  
41 may comprise the membership of an Advisory Committee.

42 Section C: Election of Community Representatives

- 43 • The Grantee will make selections for Community/Past Parent  
44 Community Representatives as stated in 1304.50 (b)(3).
- 45 • Nominees for Community Representatives must be approved by a  
46 majority of the Policy Council members present at the meeting, and the  
47 Board of Directors must also approve nominees.

48 Section D: Length of Membership

49 The Early Head Start Policy Council annual membership shall be from  
50 September through August. A member of the Policy Council may not  
51 serve more than a total of three (3) years.

52 Section E: Voting

- 53 • All regularly elected parent and community representative shall serve  
54 in a voting capacity. Each regular member shall have one vote.  
55 Alternate members shall receive all rights and privileges as a  
56 representative, except for voting rights. If the alternate is in attendance  
57 representing the regular members, the alternate has voting privileges.
- 58 • Votes are cast by a ballot, unless otherwise changed by the majority of  
59 those present at the Policy Council meeting.
- 60 • The Policy Council Secretary tabulates the votes, showing the number  
61 count in the minutes of those votes, including abstentions. A secret  
62 ballot vote will require Policy Council Secretary and a predetermined  
63 member to tabulate votes.

64

- 65 • If, in the event a meeting lacks a quorum, and a vote is required, the  
66 Policy Council President will call members, advise them of the issues  
67 and ask for a vote.
- 68 • No staff member or former staff member of the Grantee shall serve on  
69 the Policy Council.
- 70 • When a conflict of interest occurs, Policy Council members must  
71 remove themselves from the vote and/or from the room during the  
72 voting.
- 73 • A Policy Council member must resign from the Policy Council before  
74 accepting a position with Early Head Start.
- 75 • Policy Council meetings are open to the public and guests are subject  
76 to Head Start policies on confidentiality. Non-Policy Council members  
77 not directly connected to the issue may be asked to leave when  
78 confidential matters are being discussed at the discretion of the  
79 Council.
- 80 • One member chosen by the Grantee will serve on Policy Council; as will  
81 one member chosen by the Policy Council serve on the Grantee Board  
82 of Directors. Both will have full voting rights and act as liaison between  
83 the two organizations.

#### 84 Section F: Termination of Membership

- 85 • Membership on the Policy Council may be voluntarily terminated at  
86 any time by written notice to the Policy Council.
- 87 • The resigning member shall write, sign and date a letter of resignation  
88 and submit it to the Policy Council.
- 89 • The resigning member is responsible for notifying an alternate, who will  
90 attend the meeting in the resigning member's place until a new  
91 member is elected.
- 92 • Election of replacement shall take place at the next Parent Committee  
93 meeting or within a month of the time the vacancy occurs.
- 94 • The Policy Council with a majority vote can terminate any member who  
95 misses three (3) consecutive meetings of the Policy Council without  
96 securing the attendance of an alternate.
- 97 • In the event of the resignation of a community representative, Policy  
98 Council shall advise the Grantee. The Grantee shall recruit a  
99 replacement community representative for Policy Council approval.
- 100 • Member/Officers may be terminated by means of written notice and  
101 by a 60% vote from those members attending a meeting of Policy  
102 Council any time for:
  - 103 • Failure to uphold the standards of Early Head Start
  - 104 • Displays of inappropriate behavior while representing Policy  
105 Council
  - 106 • Gross conduct
  - 107

- 108 •Acting on the behalf of Policy Council without prior approval
- 109 •Blatant disrespect of Head Start philosophies, goals and
- 110 objectives
- 111 •Neglect of duty
- 112 • The Policy Councils vote of 60% to terminate a membership is
- 113 final.

114 Section G: Alternates

- 115 • Each parent representative of the Policy Council must have an
- 116 alternate. If a Policy Council member is unable to attend a meeting, he or
- 117 she shall secure the services of the elected alternate.
  
- 118 • Alternates for Policy Council must be parents/guardians of children
- 119 currently enrolled in Early Head Start, elected by the Parent Committees.
- 120 • There shall be no alternates for Community Representatives unless
- 121 recommended by the Grantee.
- 122 • All privileges of membership are granted to the alternates. Alternates
- 123 vote only in the absence of the Policy Council representative.
- 124 • Alternates shall notify the Secretary, upon arrival at the
- 125 meeting, the member for whom they are representing.
- 126 • Alternates may be elected to Chair, voting only in the event of a tie,
- 127 but shall not hold any other office.
- 128 • Complete and up-to-date rosters will be available to all Policy Council
- 129 members.

130 Section H: Nepotism

- 131 • No one can serve on the Policy Council while he or she or any member
- 132 of his or her immediate family is employed by North Texas Parent & Child
- 133 Development, Inc. due to a conflict of interest and confidentiality.
- 134 • The definition of immediate family will be the following: wife, husband,
- 135 son, daughter, mother, father, brother, sister, grandparents,
- 136 grandchildren, partner sharing a home, or relative by marriage (in-laws).
- 137 This may extend to other relationships if conflict of interest and
- 138 confidentiality are in jeopardy.

139 Section I: Duties

- 140 • The duties of all members of this Policy Council are as follows:
  
- 141 • Attend meetings regularly and if unable to attend, notify Policy
- 142 Council prior to meeting times.
- 143 • Arrive on time for all Policy Council meetings.
- 144 • Arrive on time for all Committee meetings.

- 145 • Actively participate in meeting by reading the Agenda and being aware of
- 146 the matters at hand.
- 147 • Read and keep copies of Policy Council and Committee minutes.
- 148 • Stay aware of the Council's purpose, goal and progress. Make and
- 149 present monthly reports back to the Parent Committee meetings, as well
- 150 as report information and concerns from the Parent Committees to the
- 151 Policy Council.
- 152 • Consider all sides of a matter before voting.
- 153 • Debate the issues, not the people.
- 154 • Accept and support all decisions made by the majority of Policy Council.

155 Section J: Quorum

156 All quorum for conducting of business will consist of no less than one-third  
157 (1/3) of total number of regular members. This quorum shall apply to all  
158 regular or any specially called Policy Council meetings.

159 **Article IV**

160 Officers

161 Section A: Offices

- 162 • The Policy Council shall elect from the regular parent members a
- 163 Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson and Secretary. The Chairperson shall
- 164 appoint a Parliamentarian.
- 165 • Past parents serving as Community Representatives may hold any office.

166 Section B: Election and Term of Office

- 167 • Officers shall be elected by a majority vote at the September Policy
- 168 Council meeting.
- 169 • Officers shall serve from September to the following August unless
- 170 unusual circumstances arise.
- 171 • Any officer can run for office the following year, provided they have not
- 172 already served three (3) years on Policy Council.
- 173 • If an officer resigns or is removed from his or her office, an election will be
- 174 held at the Policy Council meeting after the official resignation
- 175 announcement or removal process is approved by a majority vote.

176

177

178 Section C: Common Duties of Officers

- 179 • Attend all Policy Council meetings  
180 • Attend all Executive Meetings with the council and assigned  
181 committee meetings.  
182 • Study and follow Policy Council By-laws.

183 Section D: Description of Offices

Chairperson

- Shall preside at all Policy Council meetings.
- Refrain from entering into debates during the Policy Council meetings.
- Shall extend every courtesy possible.
- Shall call Special Meetings, whenever necessary.
- Open and close all meetings.
- Explain each motion before the vote.
- May vote only to break a tie, except in cases where he or she made a nomination for an election, in which case the Vice-Chairperson becomes the tie breaker.
- Shall sit on the Executive Committee.
- Shall be available to Policy Council members for questions pertaining to the Early Head Start Program.
- Shall form AD-HOC and all other committees, as needed, and may be a non-voting member on those committees if necessary.
- Shall be a member of the Policy Council at least one (1) year prior to election, if possible.
- Shall be responsible for calling together, attending and presiding over the Executive Committee meetings.

185 Vice-Chairperson

- 186 • Shall preside in the absence of the Chairperson or whenever the  
187 Chairperson temporarily vacates the chair.  
188 • Other duties as assigned by the Chairperson.

189 Secretary

- Records and maintains the official minutes for the Policy Council.
- Reviews and signs all Policy Council minutes prior to the distribution to Policy Council members.
- Shall notify designated staff when written or verbal notification is given to member following second absence or other breach of duties.

195 Parliamentarian

- Shall be informed of matters being discussed at meetings.
- Shall be able to define the By-Laws of the Policy Council and advise

- 198 the Council on them as necessary.  
199 • Shall be aware of the format for the meetings and assist in keeping  
200 that format.  
201 • Shall be the Chairperson of the By-Laws Committee.

202 ARTICLE V

203 Meetings

- 204 • Regular meetings shall be held as decided yearly by the Policy Council.  
205 • A Policy Council meeting may be held as normal if a quorum is  
206 established by the attendance of members or by telephone  
207 participation, when deemed necessary, by the Secretary.  
208 • Business may be transacted at any meeting with less than a quorum  
209 present, but must be ratified at the next meeting with a quorum.  
210 • A quorum of the Policy Council shall be declared when representatives  
211 of one-third of the membership is present.  
212 • The Chairperson may call an Emergency or Special meeting when  
213 program business requires such action.  
214 • Emergency or Special meetings may be held if one-third (1/3) of Policy  
215 Council members petition, in writing, to call a meeting. The  
216 Chairperson will be obligated to schedule and hold the meeting within  
217 seven (7) days of the receipt of the petition. The purpose of the meeting  
218 shall be stated in the petition.  
219 • All members of the Policy Council must be advised of the date, time  
220 and, location of any Emergency or Special meeting in writing.  
221 • Policy Council meetings will be held at a place determined yearly by  
222 the Council. Announcements of the time and place of regular meetings  
223 shall be given to members in writing at least three (3) days prior to  
224 such meetings.  
225 • Records and maintains the official minutes for the Policy Council.  
226 • Reviews and signs all Policy Council minutes prior to the distribution to  
227 Policy Council members.  
228 • Shall notify designated staff when written or verbal notification is  
229 given to member following second absence or other breach of duties.  
230 • Policy Council meetings must be conducted in accordance with these  
231 By-Laws and Performance Standards 1304.50.  
232 • The Chairperson or the Vice-Chairperson in the absence of the  
233 Chairperson will conduct meetings.

234  
235 Parliamentarian

- 236 • Shall be informed of matters being discussed at meetings.  
237 • Shall be able to define the By-Laws of the Policy Council and advise the

238 Council on them as necessary.  
239 Shall be aware of the format for the meetings., and assist in keeping that  
240 format.

- 241 • Shall be the Chairperson of the By-Laws Committee.

## 242 ARTICLE VI

### 243 A. Committees

244 All committee members shall be trained in regards to legal and  
245 confidentiality matters.

- 246 • The Chairperson establishes committees to perform special functions  
247 as needed for the Council.

248 Members of the committees shall be comprised of Policy Council  
249 regular and alternate members.

- 250 • Committees shall meet prior to regularly scheduled Policy Council  
251 meetings at a time and date determined by each committee.
- 252 • Staff will provide training, support and technical assistance to each  
253 committee as needed.
- 254 • AD-HOC committees are established to fulfill a specific need and are  
255 disbanded when their purpose is accomplished.

### 256 B. Committees

#### 257 A. Committees

- 258 • Finance Committee shall work with staff on budgets and  
259 financial reports.

260 Shall be a vital part of budget preparation within the program.

261 Shall be not more than three (3) members.

262 Shall present the budget to the Policy Council for approval.

263

- 264 • Personnel Committee shall work with staff in changes for  
265 personnel policies as well as:

266 Shall be appraised for actions regarding the hiring and/or  
267 termination of employees.

268 Shall act in an advisory role regarding disciplinary action  
269 and/or improvement of employee performance through a plan  
270 of assistance. Shall attend interviews of prospective  
271 employees, if possible. Shall review applications prior to  
272 Policy Council meeting, and make recommendations  
273 regarding employment.

274 Secretary will act as chairperson with a vote in tie situations.

275

- 276 • By-Laws Committee shall be chaired by the Parliamentarian.
- 277     Shall review and recommend changes to the By-Laws annually.
- 278     Shall interpret the By-Laws when questions arise.
- 279     Shall be responsible for any Amendments to the By-Laws.
  
- 280 • Policy Council Advisory Committee
- 281     Shall aid in the transaction of the new Policy Council.
- 282     Shall participate, offer recommendations, and act as advisors to Policy
- 283     Council members during Policy Council and Committee meetings.
- 284     Shall not have voting privileges nor hold office or chair any Policy Council
- 285     committee.
- 286     Shall be made of past Policy Council members.
  
- 287 • Other Committees as needed
  
- 288 ARTICLE VII
  
- 289 Supplemental Reimbursement of Expenses
  
- 290 Parent Policy. Council members with children in the program shall be
- 291 entitled to supplemental reimbursement for child care/transportation
- 292 expenses, rate to be determined by current Policy Council members. Out of
- 293 town travel expenses incurred will be reimbursed including transportation,
- 294 lodging, meals and childcare expenses. Current Policy Council based on
- 295 local childcare costs shall determine childcare rates.
  
- 296 ARTICLE VIII
  
- 297 Articles of these By-Laws may be amended by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the
- 298 total membership of the Council with a fifteen (15) day written notice to all
- 299 members.
  
- 300 • The By-Laws Committee will present all proposed changes to Policy
- 301     Council for approval or disapproval.
- 302 • Proposed amendments shall be presented in writing at a Policy Council
- 303     meeting. The proposed amendments) will then be placed on the agenda
- 304     for a vote at the next meeting.
- 305 • A majority vote by members present in favor of an amendment will result
- 306     in a change of the By-Laws.