

**PROCEDURES FOR HEAD START / EARLY HEAD START
PROGRAM GOVERNANCE**

Pursuant to CFR Parts 1301

**HONORABLE WEBB COUNTY COMMISSIONERS' COURT AND
HEAD START POLICY COUNCIL MEMBERS:**

**TANO E. TIJERINA, COUNTY JUDGE
JESSE GONZALEZ, COMMISSIONER PRECINT I
ROSAURA TIJERINA, COMMISSIOER PRECINT II
JOHN GALO, COMMISSIONER PRECINT III
CINDY LIENDO, COMMISSIONER PRECINT IV**

**WEBB COUNTY, TEXAS
1000 HOUSTON
LAREDO, TEXAS 78040**

INTRODUCTION

Webb County, acting through its Commissioners' Court, which serves as the Governing Body for the Head Start / Early Head Start Program, has established, approved and implemented written procedures describing the roles and responsibilities of the Governing Body for governance and management and procedures describing how the Governing Body and the Policy Council will implement shared decision-making pursuant to the rules and regulations promulgated under 45 CFR 1301.1, as authorized by 42 U.S.C. 9801, *et seq.*, in order to continue to ensure that Head Start is a high quality program for children and families that are served.

The Webb County Commissioners' Court and the Head Start Policy Council are committed to working in partnership with key management staff to develop, review, and approve or disapprove the following procedures for the Head Start Program Governance.

**TANO E. TIJERINA
WEBB COUNTY JUDGE**

**DEBRA VASQUEZ
POLICY COUNCIL CHAIRPERSON**

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Program Planning	1
Head Start Philosophy, Goals, and Objectives	2
Recruitment, Selection, and Enrollment Priorities	6
Funding Applications	10
Policy Council and Parent Committee Reimbursement	11
Annual Local Self-Assessment	12
Composition of Policy Council	14
Shared Decision-Making	15
Internal Dispute Resolution	16
Resolving Community Complaints – Client Rights Committee Procedure	19
Internal Controls	20
Annual Independent Audit	21

PROCEDURES FOR PROGRAM PLANNING

OBJECTIVE: The Webb County Head Start / Early Head Start Program is a comprehensive child development program which serves children from birth to 5 years of age, and their families. The program is child-focused, and has the overall goal of increasing the social competence of young children in low-income families. “Social competence” means the child’s everyday effectiveness in dealing with either his or her present environment and later responsibilities in school and life. Social competence takes into account the interrelatedness of social, emotional, cognitive, and physical development.

The Webb County Head Start / Early Head Start services are family-centered, following the tenets that children develop in the context of their family and culture and that parents are respected as the primary educators and nurturers of their children. Head Start / Early Head Start offers family members with opportunities and support for growth and change, believing that people can identify their own strengths, needs, and interests and are capable of finding resolutions.

The Webb County Head Start / Early Head Start program has a long tradition of delivering comprehensive and high quality services designed to foster healthy development in low-income children. The program provides a range of individualized services in the areas of education and early childhood development, medical, dental, mental health, nutrition, and parent involvement (including disabilities). In addition, the entire range of services is responsive and appropriate to each child and family’s developmental, ethnic, cultural, and linguistic heritage and experience.

METHODOLOGY:

- The Head Start Policy Council actively participates in the development, approval, and implementation of program plans as outlined in the Federal Register, Volume 61, No. 215.
- The Policy Council represents the families served by the program by playing a key role in identifying the needs of Head Start families. Therefore, through their representation by the Policy Council, the underprivileged Head Start families become an integral part of the program decision-making process.
- The Policy Council has regularly scheduled meetings with formal agendas that are posted (as per the Open Meetings Act), and a set of by the By-Laws.
- The formal structure for parent participation in program planning includes center-based committees who elect Representatives to serve on the Policy Council.
- Members of the Webb County Commissioners’ Court consult with Head Start administrative staff regarding program issues that affect Head Start children and their families.
- The Head Start administrative staff consults and plans with the Webb County Commissioners Court, the Policy Council, and community representatives to review and assess the program operations, goals and objectives.
- The Head Start staff provides clerical, technical, and administrative support to the Policy Council and the Commissioners’ Court.

- Data collected from the annual Community Assessment is analyzed and serves as a tool in determining program needs and is the basis for program planning.
- Recommendations by reviewers based on the Annual Self-Assessment help determine program needs.
- The Commissioners Court and the Head Start Policy Council work in partnership for planning long-range and short-term goals.

PHILOSOPHY, GOALS & OBJECTIVES

Purpose:

Goals and objectives are the basic form of effective and systematic planning. They assist the program in adhering to the overall track of present performance with an outlook on the future. The purpose of the Webb County Head Start Program's Goals and Objectives is primarily to:

- A. Identify the issues that the organization needs to address so as to successfully carry out its mission in the community.
- B. Give the organization direction for charting its course for the future, and working together toward a common set of goals.
- C. Set criteria in terms of time, space, quantity, and quality.

While some goals and objectives may present a longer range of focus for meeting the changing needs of the service area, the following concentrate more on the plans of the program for fiscal year 2019 - 2020. This plan is designed for mission accomplishment of the Head Start program.

Recommendation:

Program staff and parents met to discuss and formulate the program goals and objectives for fiscal year 2019 - 2020. The recommendations are as follow:

Overall Vision for Growth:

To improve the quality of services offered to enrolled children and families by using advanced technological resources, providing professional development designed to improve instruction and learning, and strengthening relationships with community partners.

Resources Available:

- Head Start funding
- Webb County support/services (Commissioners' Court, Attorney, Auditor, Treasurer, Purchasing Agent, Welfare Department, Community Action Agency, Human Resources, Information Technology, Economic Development, etc.)

- In-kind contributions from parents/community partners Laredo College, Texas A&M International University, United Independent School District, and Laredo Independent School District, and *et. al.*

Strengths:

- Degreed teachers (B.A., A.A. in Early Child Development)
- Experienced staff (20+ years with this program)
- Full-time Computer Specialist
- Numerous community partners
- Licensed Vocational Nurse to provide early intervention and prevention screenings.

Growth Areas to be addressed:

- Expand service sites based on community needs
- Increase enrollment of children with disabilities.
- Retain qualified teaching staff.
- Increase integration with LEAs for dual enrollment.

Ongoing Professional Development to be addressed:

- On-going education for obtaining advanced degrees.
- On-going training needs for use of advanced technology.
- On-going training needs for volunteer recruitment.

Pursuant to 45 CFR 1302.92 (b) (1-5),1302.100 and 1302.102 (a) (1-4)

ONE YEAR IMPLEMENTATION PLAN							
Content Area	Outcome	Strategies	Person (s) Responsible	Resources Needed	Estimated Cost	Timetable	Evaluation
Education	The program will ensure that all enrolled children possess the skills, knowledge, and attitudes necessary for success in school and later in life.	1. The program will utilize the Early Learning Outcomes Framework that outlines the essential areas of development and learning to establish and update school readiness goals for children, monitor children's progress, align curricula, and conduct program	Head Start Director Assistant Director Education Director Education Assistants Area Service Managers School Readiness Team	HS-CIRCLE Progress Monitoring System EHS/CCP-Teaching Strategies GOLD assessment kits Training Parent, Family, and Community Engagement Framework Early Head	\$5,000	On-going	Content Area Monitoring Report Outcome Reports CLASS Reports Practice-Based Coaching

		<p>planning.</p> <p>2. The Domains will be represented in the School Readiness Goals.</p> <p>3. The Head Start Parent and Family Engagement foundations will be used to support school readiness goals and child outcomes such as enhanced school readiness skills, sustained learning, and development into elementary.</p> <p>4. The program will link health and school readiness by identifying and treating children's health issues and helping families comprehend developmental screening and referral, providing engaging, empowering, and action-oriented health education programs that are designed for and with families to support child development in culturally and linguistically responsive and meaningful</p>		<p>Start Infant Toddler CLASS/ Head Start Pre School CLASS instrument</p>			
--	--	---	--	---	--	--	--

		<p>ways, as well as prevention when health issues affect children's learning.</p> <p>5. The Head Start Director and Education Director will present the school readiness goals to the governing body annually for input / approval.</p> <p>6. The School Readiness Team will ensure and monitor progress in aligning the goals with the Head Start Early Learning Outcomes Framework, Texas Pre-Kindergarten guidelines, and the requirements and expectations of the local education agencies.</p> <p>7. The HS/EHS Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS) instrument will be used to assess the quality of classroom interactional processes. The CLASS Reliable Education Director, Education Assistants and Area Service</p>					
--	--	---	--	--	--	--	--

		Managers will assess classrooms two times in the program year.					
Early Head Start – Child Care Partnerships	The program will have nine seamless, integrated classrooms with two private child care centers.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Enter into a Memorandum of Understanding with each partner and amend as necessary. 2. Provide staff training regarding rules / regulations of Child Care Services and Early Head Start to staff assigned to each site. 3. Recruit, enroll children. 4. Provide on-going support and training to address any issues that may arise. 	<p>Head Start Director</p> <p>Assistant Directors</p> <p>Education Director</p> <p>Teaching Staff</p>	T&TA Funds	\$18,750	On-going	<p>Content Area Monitoring Report</p> <p>Licensing Reports</p>
Early Head Start	The program will provide all services in compliance with Performance Standards.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The EHS program will be fully enrolled at all times. 2. All EHS/HS employees will be provided with staff development opportunities to comply with mandated qualifications. 3. Any opportunity to apply for funding to expand EHS service will be considered. 	<p>Head Start Director</p> <p>Assistant Director I</p> <p>EHS Area Service Manager</p> <p>EHS Staff</p>	<p>Trainings</p> <p>Various supplies and equipment</p>	\$50,000	On-going	<p>State Licensing Reports</p> <p>Local Assessment Report</p> <p>Federal Review Results</p>

<p>Career and Professional Development</p>	<p>All Head Start, Early Head Start, and Child Care Partnership employees will comply with local, State, and Federal mandated trainings and will be provided with information and support to access career advancement opportunities.</p>	<p>1. The program will provide opportunities for employees to comply with mandated trainings / certifications / credentials. 2. The program will ensure that all employees participate in mandated trainings. 3. The Education Content Area will reformat the Professional Development Plan. 3. The Education Assistants will assist full-time employees who offer direct educational services to children with creating a professional development plan and shall ensure that such plans are regularly evaluated for their impact on teacher and staff effectiveness. The agency and the employee shall implement the plan to the extent feasible and practicable. 4. The Education Content Area will</p>	<p>Head Start Director Education Director Education Assistants Records Manager Mentor Teachers /Coaches All Staff</p>	<p>Training and Technical Assistance Funds</p>	<p>\$80,000</p>	<p>On-going</p>	<p>Personnel Records Staff Training Logs Professional Development Plans/Teaching Practice Action Plan State Licensing Reports Federal Review Results</p>
---	---	--	--	--	-----------------	-----------------	--

		<p>implement a Practice Based Coaching (PBC) in order to help teachers use high-quality teaching practices with confidence and competence in helping children make gains toward school readiness goals. All teachers and staff will use an effective curricula and research-based teaching practices. The Teaching Learning & Collaborating (TLC), the TLC method will pair a small group of teachers with a trained coach who will help them use evidence-based teaching practices to improve children's learning and development.</p>					
--	--	---	--	--	--	--	--

RECRUITMENT, SELECTION, AND ENROLLMENT

RECRUITMENT:

Purpose:

The recruitment process is designed to systematically seek children from the most disadvantaged homes. The grantee will conduct a Community Assessment within the service area to determine the community's strengths, needs, and resources. The grantee's recruitment area is all of Webb County, Texas. The Community Assessment will include demographic make-up of Head Start eligible children and families. In regarding child care programs, estimated number of children with disabilities, data on social service and needs of eligible

families will also be included in the Community Assessment. The grantee will utilize the Community Assessment results to develop the program's goals and objectives and will be the basis for program planning. The grantee will determine the recruitment area within the service area to be served based on the results of the Community Assessment. Children with the greatest needs are recruited and will be considered for selection and enrollment once they meet the program's Criteria selection policy.

The program serves eligible children who meet age requirement by September 1st of the enrollment year. The program will enroll at least 90 percent of the funded enrollment from low-income families. The program has developed a policy to enroll children whose families exceed the income guidelines. The program can enroll up to ten percent of the funded enrollment from above income families. The grantee will verify the child's eligibility prior to enrolling the child. Results of the Community Assessment and parent surveys will be used to designate priorities in setting the selection criteria. In each of the two years following the development of a complete Community Assessment an update will be conducted.

The program will ensure that a signed statement is on file reflecting the child is income eligible to participate in the program. The grantee will solicit applications from eligible families year round, and assist families in filling out the application. The grantee will develop a waiting list that ranks children according to the program's selection criteria. This process will ensure eligible children enter the program as soon as a vacancy occurs. The grantee will ensure that each Head Start child is allowed to remain in the program until kindergarten is available for the child.

Groups Involved:

Head Start Family and Community Partnership staff, education and disability staff, Head Start parents, local community agencies, and public schools participate in recruitment efforts.

Process:

Recruitment begins in April of each year. The Family Service Worker is responsible for recruitment, which is done using a variety of methods.

1. Advertise Head Start services by placing posters in grocery stores, public agencies, and other strategic areas in the community.
2. Sending flyers to community partners and the two local education agencies.
3. Participating in media announcements (radio, newspaper and television).
4. Participating in targeted house-to-house recruitment based on the needs indentified in the Community Assessment:
 - a. To locate the most needy and eligible children and families.
 - b. To maintain a healthy waiting list.

During recruitment, the partnership and coordination with other agencies serving Head Start eligible children is essential. A Head Start Family Service Worker and a representative of a community agency will meet to schedule appointments for recruiting clients to screen for eligibility of Head Start services. The Family Service Worker will conduct presentations at various non-profit and social service organizations to provide an overview of Head Start

services. Additionally, this program will encourage community partners to refer clients for Head Start services.

Recruitment of Disabled Children:

Recruitment is very closely coordinated with community partners such as Early Childhood Intervention services, rehabilitation centers and the school districts. These agencies work closely with Early Head Start and Head Start to provide services to all disabled children within the community.

The Family Service Workers are responsible for ensuring that the program is always fully enrolled. Typically, applications are taken at the center or at the School Districts (UISD & LISD); however, exceptions are made for individuals who are not able to come to the center. Enrollment also takes place at public health fairs, community agencies, and the applicant's home. The Specialized Services Coordinator coordinates efforts with the Family and Community Partnership staff by assisting with home visits, requesting information from specialized providers, and providing information to parents regarding the Head Start disability program.

SELECTION OF HEAD START CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

Purpose and Procedures:

The selection of children and families to be served by the Head Start program will be done according to all applicable Federal regulations. Families with the lowest income and most need are given priority for enrollment. Enrollment takes place throughout the year. Families in crisis are considered for placement as soon as possible. If a slot is available, all efforts are made for the child to be enrolled in the Head Start program as soon as possible. Head Start Family Service Workers, Assistant Head Start Director II and the Program Director are responsible for this process.

Waiting List:

The Family and Community Partnership staff is responsible for keeping a waiting list of eligible applicants for each center. Below are procedures on prioritizing the enrollment from the waiting list:

1. Families that are "most in need" are given priority for enrollment.
 - a. Referral from Child Protective Service
 - b. Family Crisis (Domestic violence, displaced families, etc.)
 - c. The family is eligible for or, in the absence of child care, would be potentially eligible for public assistance, including TANF child-only payments
 - d. Disabled Child
 - e. Foster Children
 - f. Homeless Families, as defined in part 1305
2. Four year old children are given priority over three year old children.

ENROLLMENT:

Enrollment in the Head Start / Early Head Start program is done according to the following Enrollment Policies, which are based on Federal regulations 45 CFR Part 1302.15, and all other applicable Federal regulations.

1. It is the policy of Head Start Program to provide services to the children of families who are in the greatest need and meet income guidelines established by the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). No less than 90 % of all children enrolled must be of low income families.
2. For Head Start, applicants must be three (3) years of age as of September 1st of the enrollment year.
3. Not less than 10 % of all enrolled children will be children with disabilities, as defined in Head Start regulations.
4. Families that exceed the poverty guidelines will be considered for placement not to exceed 10% of the funded enrollment. Priority will be given to the following:
 - a. Referral from Child Protective Services;
 - b. Family crisis; and
 - c. Child with a disability.

Enrollment Procedures

Enrollment is conducted year-round. Family and Community Partnership staff assists families with the application process. Typically, enrollment takes place at Head Start / Early Head Start centers or at the School District campus (UISD and LISD). Applications can be taken in the following manner:

- By appointment
- Walk-ins
- At health fairs and other community events
- Applicant's home

The following information is provided to the family:

- a. Program information
- b. Required documentation:
 - Income verification
 - Birth certificate
 - Immunization Record
 - Proof of residence (utility bill)
 - Proof that family receives any other type of assistance
- c. List of center locations
- d. Referral to Laredo Health Department (if child's immunizations are not current) and other community agencies if the family has an emergency or any special needs.
- e. Date of first class day.

Waiting List:

Applications are taken year-round in order to maintain a waiting list. Upon qualification for the program a child is placed on a waiting list if there is not a vacancy in the program.

Enrollment Procedure (for the beginning of the program year)

- a. Family Service Workers are responsible for enrollment.
- b. Steps followed by Family Service Workers during the month of August:
 - Applications are taken by Family Service worker.
 - Family Service Worker will interview family to complete the enrollment documents.
 - Families will be notified of appointments to meet their child's teacher at their respective centers.
 - After completion of all documents by education staff, the child's folder is returned to Family Service Worker for final verification.
- c. Prior to first day of class, teachers receive a list of enrollees with their respective folders.
- d. The Family Service Workers continue intake of applications so as to develop a waiting list according to the program's selection criteria.

Re-enrollment:

Each child enrolled in a Head Start program, except those enrolled in a migrant program, must be allowed to remain in Head Start until kindergarten or first grade is available for the child in the child's community. The Head Start program may choose not to enroll a child when there are compelling reasons for the child not to remain in Head Start, such as when there is a dramatic increase in the child's family income and/or there is a child with a greater need for Head Start services. If a child has been found to be income eligible and is participating in a Head Start program, he or she will remain income eligible throughout the enrollment year and the immediately succeeding enrollment year.

Vacancies:

The program has developed a form to monitor attendance. The analysis includes reason for child's absences, number of days absent, and will identify absenteeism trends per child. In the case of children's absences that are not medically necessary, staff will offer family support. The grantee will ensure chronic absenteeism is investigated prior to a child's slot being declared vacant.

The Webb County Head Start program must maintain funded enrollment. When a vacancy exists, no more than 30 calendar days may elapse before the vacancy is filled. The program may elect not to fill a vacancy when 60 calendar days or less remain in the program's enrollment year.

Pursuant to 45 CFR 1302.12 (a-m) 1302.13, 1302.14 and 1302.15

FUNDING APPLICATIONS/FINANCIAL REPORTS

PURPOSE:

To describe the procedures that need to take place in the review of financial reports, budget revisions, refunding and new applications.

STAFF RESPONSIBILITY TO THE BOARDS:

Head Start staff is responsible for providing the Governing Board and the Policy Council with sufficient information and supporting documentation that will contribute to the decision-making process. Training on how to read budgets and expenditure reports will be scheduled as needed or as new members are seated. It is the responsibility of Head Start staff to ensure that technical support is offered and conducted in a manner that promotes self-confidence and self-respect. Trainings should be designed to provide motivation, appropriate decision-making skills, and not overwhelm, or intimidate.

POLICY COUNCIL BOARD:

During the month of October the Policy Council Chairperson will appoint a Budget Committee to review and recommend major budget changes and approval or disapproval for new or refunding applications. Monthly financial reports are provided to Policy Council members for review and discussion.

REFUNDING APPLICATION AND TIME-TABLE:

Prior to the refunding budget, the Head Start Director has the responsibility to train Policy Council members on the application process. Input from Head Start staff and parents in preparing the refunding package is obtained from March to April. The Head Start Director will also solicit input from the County Auditor's department. The following goals and objectives are kept in mind:

1. A child can benefit most from a comprehensive, inter-disciplinary program that fosters development and remedies problems. The child's entire family, as well as the community, must be involved. The program should maximize the strengths and unique experiences of each child. The family, which is perceived as the principal influence on the child's development, must be a direct participant in the program. Local communities are allowed latitude in developing creative program designs so long as the basic goals, objectives and standards of a comprehensive program are adhered to.
2. Results indicating needs from the Community Assessment play a major role in the planning process.

The following is the time-table and procedure for the planning and development of the refunding grant: *The same procedure in the development of a new grant is followed with the change in months depending upon the submission date of the application.*

January & February

Financial objectives are taken based on the community assessment, the program's Strategic Plan (long-range program goals and short-term objectives) derived from the results of the

Community Assessment. Both the program option and its goals and objectives need Policy Council approval.

March

Head Start Staff and parents are notified to submit their input/needs to be taken into consideration. This is done during staff meeting and parent committee and policy council meetings.

April

Head Start administrative staff works on the budget with the recommendation of the Budget Committee from the Policy Council and input from each member of the Commissioner's Court. Input is also solicited from the County Auditor, Human Resource Manager and Governing Body.

April / May

The Head Start Director presents the budget to Policy Council for approval or disapproval.

May

The Head Start Director presents the budget to the Governing Board.

June 1st

Deadline for submission of the Refunding application.

Based on guidance and information received from the Regional Office, this schedule adheres to the funding cycle of the Webb County Head Start program.

Pursuant to 45 CFR 1303.2 and 1303.3

**POLICY COUNCIL, POLICY COMMITTEE, AND PARENT
COMMITTEE REIMBURSEMENT**

PURPOSE:

To develop procedures to enable low-income members (Policy Council and/or parent committee members) to participate fully in their committee responsibilities by providing, if necessary, reimbursements for reasonable expenses incurred by the members.

PROCEDURE:

The Policy or Parent Committee members will follow the following procedures.

- a. Member will submit request in writing to Parent Involvement Coordinator.
- b. Member will submit appropriate invoices.
- c. Head Start Director must approve reimbursement request.
- d. Payment dispersed to members.

REIMBURSEMENT INCIDENTALS:

- a. Gasoline/Bus or taxi fare
- b. Baby Sitter
- c. Meals (if applicable)
- d. Other incidentals

Pursuant to 45 CFR 1301.3 (e)

ANNUAL SELF-ASSESSMENT

PURPOSE:

To determine the process the Webb County Head Start Program will take in order to conduct the annual self-assessment. The Annual Self-Assessment provides the program with the means to regularly assess its management systems and program operations in order to continually strengthen the program and the services delivered to children and families. The Self Assessment process provides an opportunity for involving program leaders, such as parents, Policy Council members, governing body members, and Community stakeholders, and for making staff more aware of how the program operates and is viewed by its consumers. Through Self-Assessment, the program reinforces how program leaders engage in shared decision-making.

GOALS:

- Continuous quality improvement to strengthen services provided to and for children and their families.
- Comply with Federal mandates (meet *Head Start Program Performance Standards – Head Start Act*).
- Move toward program excellence

RESPONSIBLE PARTIES:

- a. The Webb County Commissioners' Court has the general responsibility to guide and oversee the function.
- b. The Head Start Director has the operating responsibility to carry out the function and train the participants.
- c. The Policy Council must approve the process of the function prior to conducting the self-assessment. Member of the Policy Council should participate in Self Assessment.

PROCESS:

The FIRST stage is Preparing for Self-Assessment

The Head Start Director will take steps to prepare for Self-Assessment by convening a team to lead the process, informing the Policy Council and Webb County Commissioners' Court, selecting and recruiting qualified participants to serve on various teams, and informing others who will be affected. Team members need to receive training on the regulations as well as the process they will use to complete the Self-Assessment booklets assigned to their team.

The SECOND stage is Collecting and Synthesizing the Information

The analysis information is further analyzed by establishing patterns of identified needs; uncovering underlying causes and systemic issues; and determining priorities for change and improvement. At this stage, the program will ask for clarifications on regulations or policy from the Federal Program Manager, if needed.

The THIRD stage is Interpreting the Information

Team members observe activities, review documents, interview people, and record and summarize their findings according to the instructions provided in their packet. Using this information, team members begin the *analysis process* by synthesizing the data from multiple sources and consolidating this information into an analysis that identifies program strengths, specific weaknesses and areas to strengthen.

The FOURTH stage is Strengthening the Program

The Self-Assessment has little value unless the program uses the information to drive program improvements. In this final stage, leaders use Self-Assessment results as a driving force to develop program improvement goals, desired outcomes, and action plans. Both the results of the Self-Assessment and the plan for program improvement will be communicated to the Policy Council, Webb County Commissioners' Court, parents, and community partners.

PARTICIPATING MEMBERS:

Members of Annual Self Assessment Team are the Webb County Commissioners' Court, Head Start Policy Council, Consultants, Management Staff, Coordinators, Center Staff, and Parents.

SELF-ASSESSMENT SCHEDULE:

Day	1	Training on Self Assessment Process
Day	2-6	Staff interviews Interview with community partnership, Policy Council, Family groups and childcare partnership. Center Visitations
Day	7	Report Writing Report to Staff

PROGRAM IMPROVEMENT PLAN:

- Prepared by Head Start Director and Management staff based on results.
- Approved by Webb County Commissioners' Court and Policy Council.

Pursuant to 45 CFR 1302.102 (b)(2)(i-iii)

SELECTION/COMPOSITION OF POLICY COUNCIL AND POLICY GROUP

PURPOSE:

To determine the composition of the members serving on the Head Start Policy Council.

TYPE OF REPRESENTATIVES:

- At least 51% of the Policy Council members must be parents of currently enrolled children.
- Community representatives are selected from the local community.
- Former Head Start Parents
- Major public and private community, civic or professional organizations.

METHOD OF SELECTION:

In September, at the monthly parent meeting, parents from each Head Start center elect a Policy Council Representative and an Alternate. Head Start staff members and their relatives are not eligible to serve on the Parent Committee or the Policy Council in a voting capacity.

Community Representatives are solicited from the community. Community Representatives must be familiar with community resources, and/or have the expertise in serving low-income children and families. A perspective representative is required to submit a letter to the Policy Council stating their intent to participate. The letter is then submitted to the Policy Council, who then votes to accept or reject the applicant request.

TERM OF OFFICE:

Both parent and community representative must stand for election or re-election annually. Membership is limited to a combined total of five years.

MEETING:

A monthly meeting is held the third or fourth Thursday of the month. A Special Meeting and Committee Meetings can be called on an "as needed" basis.

FUNCTIONS AND RESPONSIBILITIES - AT A MINIMUM:

- Work in partnership with key management staff and the Commissioners' Court to develop procedures and policies.
- Approve or disapprove all funding applications.
- Plan and coordinate the program's goals and objectives
- Procedures for defining recruitment, selection and enrollment priorities.
- Approve procedures for the program's Self Assessment and Independent audit.
- Assist parent committees in planning, coordinating and organizing program activities.
- Hire and terminate the Head Start Director and Head Start Staff.

PARENT REPRESENTATIVES RESPONSIBILITY:

Each Policy Council member is responsible for giving a report to the parents at the center(s) that they represent. The report must include all the activities that took place during Policy Council meetings. This procedure will keep all Head Start parents informed of all program activities and Commissioners' Court approvals.

STAFF RESPONSIBILITIES:

During the first Policy Council meeting in September, the Head Start Director is responsible for providing training to the members on their responsibilities and functions. During the month of October, Parliamentary Procedure training is provided to ensure that the members are aware of the mechanics of conducting meetings. Trainings are on-going throughout the year to both the Policy Council and the Governing Board. Head Start staff, at the request of the Policy Council Chairperson, attends Policy Council meetings to provide guidance, not to conduct the entire meeting.

Pursuant to 45 CFR 1301.3(a)(b)(1-2) (c) (1-2) (d) (1-4)

GOVERNING BODY AND POLICY COUNCIL SHARED DECISION MAKING MANAGEMENT/RESPONSIBILITIES COMMITTEE

PURPOSE:

To determine procedures on how the Governing Body and the Policy Council will implement shared decision-making.

SHARED DECISION-MAKING:

Strategies for shared decision-making between the Webb County Commissioners' Court and the Policy Council will be as follows:

The Head Start Director will ensure that both Boards receive regular and accurate information about the program. This will include proposed policies, funding, program changes and/or concerns. This will be accomplished through meetings or conferences, forums for open discussions between the groups, joint meetings on specific issues or concerns, and/or open channels of communications. This procedure will enable both Boards to make appropriate shared decision-making during their meeting.

Pursuant to 45 CFR 642 (d) (2) (A-I) of the Head Start Act

INTERNAL DISPUTE RESOLUTION BETWEEN GOVERNING BODY AND POLICY COUNCIL PROCEDURES FOR RESOLVING IMPASSE SITUATIONS

Webb County Commissioners Head Start Program Procedures for Resolving Impasse Situations

Background:

Each Grantee and Policy Council jointly must establish written procedures for resolving internal disputes, including impasse procedures, between the governing body and policy group.

Introduction:

In cases of non-concurrence between the Governing Board and the Policy Council on significant issues and the absence of an established arbitration procedure, the Policy Council

could be circumvented. This would violate the Head Start Performance Standards and could prompt lawsuit against the Grantee. Additionally, an excessive amount of time is spent attempting to settle issues without a standardized procedure where impasse situations occur. A disruption of Head Start services to families and children could take place in some instances, and parent/staff morale suffer as a result of impasse situations.

Purposes:

- To resolve impasse situations without outside bidding and impartial arbitration.
- To preserve respect and exemplify the partnership principle in Head Start, despite differences between the parties involved.
- To uphold the partnership principle in Head Start.
- To uphold the interest of the children served by the program.

Definition of Impasse:

Impasse occurs when the Governing Board proposes final action in the fourteen function areas of concurrence, as described in the Governance and Management Responsibilities, and the Policy Council does not concur within 15 working days or by the time of the next regular scheduled Policy Council meeting, whichever occurs later.

Impasse Committee Composition & Powers:

Impasse Committee is composed of six (6) persons. Three (3) are selected by the Governing Board, and three (3) by the Policy Council

The Head Start Director shall act as a resource person to the Impasse Committee.

The Impasse Committee shall convene on an informal basis for the purpose of concurrence and the subsequent assurance of mutually agreed recommendation to the Governing Board and the Policy Council.

Preliminary Procedures:

1. After informal discussions, if the Commissioners' Court believes the Policy Council will not approve a decision and the Commissioners' Court wishes to formalize the approval process, they should notify the Policy Council in writing. The notice shall contain statement of the reason for supporting the proposed decision or action.
2. Within ten (10) days after receipt of the notice, the Policy Council shall hold a special meeting for consideration of the proposed action.
3. Immediately after the special meeting, the Policy Council shall notify the Commissioners' Court in writing of its approval or disapproval of the proposed action. The notice shall contain a statement of the reason for approval or disapproval.
4. In the event of a disapproval, and if the Commissioners' Court desires further consideration of the matter, they shall initiate a meeting with the Policy Council for the purpose of attempting to resolve their differences.

5. If, after these efforts, the Commissioners' Court and the Policy Council are unable to reach agreement, the proposed action shall not be taken. The Commissioners' Court must invoke the arbitration procedures if it is unable to abide by the decision on the Policy Council.

Arbitration Committee Composition and Powers:

The Arbitration Committee is composed of six (6) arbitrators (3 representing each Board). However, three (3) members must be disinterested parties; One selected by the Governing Board, one (1) selected by the Policy Council, and one (1) mutually selected.

A list of the Arbitrators, with their addresses and phone numbers, and ranked in the order in which they were called to serve on the Arbitration Committee, shall be forwarded to Regional Head Start office.

Arbitration Committee members will send written notice of the resolution of the impasse to the Policy Council, the Commissioners' Court and the Head Start Regional Office.

Notice of Impasse:

The Webb County Judge and the Policy Council Chairperson must send written notice of impasse within five (5) working days following preliminary decisions of non-concurrence.

The Impasse Committee shall be called to convene by the Head Start Director with fifteen (15) working days (or the scheduled meeting date of the Policy Council or the Board; whichever is the later) following non-concurrence.

The Arbitration Committee shall be called to convene within fifteen (15) working day of the scheduled meeting date of the Policy Council or the Commissioners Court (whichever is the later), following the Impasse Committee's final attempt to resolve issues of non-concurrence.

Notice or Arbitration Decision:

The Arbitration Committee shall notify the Policy Council, the Commissioners' Court, and the Regional Head Start office within five (5) working days of its decision on issues of non-concurrence.

The Regional Office shall notify the Policy Council and the Commissioners' Court of the Arbitration Committee's (as convened by the Regional Office) decision on issues of impasse or non-concurrence.

Scope of Arbitration:

Biding arbitration shall prevail in the event of impasse between the Policy Council and the Commissioners' Court on the following issues on Appendix A- Governance & Management Responsibilities.

1. Part III, Human Resources Management Section (b) and (d)
2. Part I, Planning, Section (e)

Breakdown of Arbitration Procedure:

Should the Arbitration Committee not convene within 15 working days of impasse, the Regional Office of Project Head Start shall request to convene the Arbitration Committee.

Cost Incurred:

Cost incurred in Arbitration procedures will be absorbed by the Head Start Program and the Webb County Commissioners' Court.

Interested Parties:

Interested parties shall include any parent/family member of children currently enrolled in the Head Start Program, any Head Start staff, and any member of the Policy Council and Commissioners' Court.

Statement of Commitment:

To make every good faith effort to resolve differences between the Commissioners' Court and the Policy Council on an amicable basis, so as to avoid impasse and having to enter with the arbitration procedure. If in the event of impasse or arbitration, the parties involved are committed to cooperate fully in all respects with the Impasse Committee and/or Arbitration Committee in their efforts to resolve impasse issues. This procedure is committed to resolving issues of impasse and non-concurrence. The process represents the true spirit of Head Start and thus, both reflect and respect the tenets of the legislation.

Pursuant to 45 CFR 1301.6(a)(1-3)(b)(c)

**RESOLVING COMMUNITY COMPLAINTS
CLIENT RIGHTS COMMITTEE PROCEDURES**

Purpose

The purpose of the Client Right Committee is to provide due process recourse to the clients of this program regarding allegations brought against them by program staff and volunteers, or other program participants when such allegations result in actions by the program to suspend or terminate services. The Clients Right Committee shall also review all complaints to the committee by a client (s) concerning client abuse, discrimination, denial of services or other actions allegedly caused by the program, its employees or volunteers which infringe on the client(s) rights to be served.

Selection of Committee Members

The committee members are appointed to serve a period of one year. The membership is composed of a total of six (6) persons appointed by the Head Start Director from three categories: two (2) county staff representing county departments; two (2) Head Start Policy Council members; and two (2) citizens who are not employed by the county.

Client Complaints Procedures:

1. The Clients(s) shall present all grievances in writing to the Head Start Director using the appropriate form made available from staff.

2. The Head Start Director shall exhaust all means to resolve the grievance within three (3) working days. If the Director deems that he/she is unable to resolve the grievance, he/she will submit all pertinent documentation to the Clients Rights Committee.
3. The committee shall hold a hearing within twelve (12) working days of receipt of client's written grievance, giving duly written notice to clients within three (3) days of the hearing.
4. The client may seek legal counsel at no expense to the program. Claimant has the right to present testimony and bring forth witnesses.
5. The program, as respondent, reserves the right to seek legal counsel from the County's legal department, produce records to substantiate and support its hearing presentation, including the testimony of staff/volunteers and participants.
6. The committee chairperson shall present the findings of the hearing, along with recommendations to the Head Starts Director, within five (5) working days.
7. The Head Start Director shall issue the decision within three (3) working days of receipt of Committee recommendations. The claimant and the Chairman of the committee shall receive written notice of this action.
8. If the clients(s) is/are not satisfied with the decision, a period not to exceed five (5) working days is given to allow client to present written complaint to the Commissioners' Court.
9. The Commissioners' Court shall review the committee's recommendations and the decision of the Head Start Director under executive session at the next regular board meeting and make a final decision for the program.
10. All decisions made by the Commissioners' Court are final for internal purposes of the program. The client(s) shall seek outside legal recourse if the board's decision is not deemed as fair or satisfactory to the client(s).

Hearing Format:

Parliamentary procedures shall be adhered to in the hearing process. A quorum of five (5) members will be required to initiate the hearing. The claimant legal representative and witnesses shall be given an opportunity to present their testimony and/or records, documents and other written evidence. The respondent(s) shall be given an opportunity to present their testimony from staff, volunteers, participants, including program records and files relevant to the case.

After both parties have made their presentations, the committee shall privately review all of the information, testimony and evidence to render a decision by majority of vote for its recommendation.

The Committee Chairperson shall give oral notice to both parties of its recommendations, which shall be forwarded in a written form to the Head Start Director for his/her decision. The Chairperson shall advise both parties of other resources as set out in the procedures.

A tape recorder shall be used for the entire hearing and minutes shall be maintained as written record of hearing.

Local Policy

INTERNAL CONTROLS

Webb County, the grantee agency, has an Audit Department, headed by the County Auditor, and a Treasury Department, headed by the County Treasurer. These departments ensure that all funds are safeguarded with the appropriate fiscal procedures and accounting principles.

Pursuant to 45 CFR 1303.2 and 1303.3

ANNUAL INDEPENDENT AUDIT

Head Start will adhere to the following procedures for conducting the annual audit of the Head Start Program.

1. An annual independent audit is performed by an independent accounting firm.
2. The auditor(s)/accounting firm is procured by request for proposal, negotiations pursuant to proposals, and extensions of the original contract as recommended by the County Auditors and approved by the Commissioners' Court. This is based on the Texas Government Code Section 262.024(a)(4) "Exemptions".
3. All firms are subject to a quality review as per standards of the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants and the Texas Society of Certified Public Accountants.
4. Funding is budgeted and provided on a proportionate basis by all funds audited.
5. All audit reports are prepared as per the fund requirements, i.e., the Single Audit Act of 1984 and the provisions of the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Circular a-128, Audits of State and Local Governments.

Pursuant to 45 CFR 647 [42 U.S.C. 9842] (a-c) of the Head Start Act