

Chicago Public Schools Policy Manual

Title: FORMAL GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE FOR THE CPS' HEAD START PROGRAM

Section: 602.4

Board Report: 08-0625-PO1

Date Adopted: June 25, 2008

Policy:

THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER RECOMMENDS THE FOLLOWING:

That the Chicago Board of Education amend the Policy Establishing the Formal Governance Structure for the Chicago Public Schools' Head Start Program.

Introduction

The Chicago Public Schools ("CPS") works with parents and community members to implement a high quality Head Start program ("the program"). The Chicago Department of Children and Youth Services ("CDCYS") receives Head Start and Early Head Start grant funds ("Head Start funds") from the United States Department of Health and Human Services. CDCYS, as a grantee agency, provides Head Start funds annually to the Chicago Board of Education ("Board") under a Delegate Agency Agreement. The governing structure for the program involves a sharing of responsibility between the Board (as a delegate agency), the management staff of the CPS Office of Early Childhood Education ("OECE") as defined in this policy to mean CPS Head Start Management staff and the CPS Early Childhood Education Officer, parents of Head Start students and concerned community members. By working in effective partnership, these parties can ensure that the program provides the effective early childhood education services that help prepare children for school. The purpose of this policy is to set forth the formal governing structures that are needed for the program to successfully provide early childhood education services to low-income children. The governing structures described herein represent those which previously have been used to ensure that the CPS Head Start program fulfills its mission of helping to prepare many of the city's children for school.

POLICY TEXT:

I. FORMAL GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE OF CHICAGO PUBLIC SCHOOLS' HEAD START PROGRAM

The federal regulations controlling the governance of the CPS Head Start program mandate that three parties work together to oversee the program. These parties are the delegate agency which is the Board; OECE Head Start Management staff; and the Head Start Policy Committee ("PC" or "committee"). The PC consists of parent representatives whose children are enrolled in Head Start, community representatives from the local community who are familiar with resources and services for low-income children and families, and a Board member representative.

A. The Board

The Board is the program's governing body and, as such, it has legal and fiscal responsibility for administering the program. In order to facilitate communication and effective partnership between the Board and the PC on matters pertaining to governance of the program, the Board shall select one of its members to serve concurrent membership on the PC as a Board member representative. If the named Board member cannot attend a monthly meeting, he/she shall choose a designee to participate in the Policy Committee.

B. CPS Head Start Management Staff

The CPS Head Start Management staff shall have responsibility for all aspects of the day-to-day operations of the Head Start program. In addition, Head Start Management staff shall serve as a liaison between the Board and the PC by providing both groups with regular and accurate information about the operation of the Head Start program which may be needed for the parties to make informed

governing decisions. Selected Head Start Management staff shall attend meetings of the PC as consultants, providing expert assistance to the committee as requested. Additionally, the Head Start Management staff shall provide members of the PC with training regarding such areas as budget and program planning and applying for program funding.

C. Policy Committee

The PC works in partnership with the Board and Head Start Management staff to effectively govern the program. PC parent and community representatives are elected annually to ensure wide parental and community participation in the program's governing process. The PC shall help to formulate the policies, goals and the philosophy for the Head Start program. The PC shall serve as a link between the Board, Head Start Management staff, public and private organizations, parents and the communities which the program serves.

II. PROCEDURES FOR SELECTING THE POLICY COMMITTEE

The following procedures shall govern the composition, selection and term of members to the Policy Committee:

A. Composition of the Policy Committee

The PC must include either parents, legal guardians, or foster parents of currently enrolled children and community members, with parents of currently enrolled students making up at least 51% of the representatives. The composition of the Head Start PC shall consist of the following:

1. Parents, legal guardians, or foster parents of students currently enrolled in the Head Start program who shall comprise at least two-thirds of the committee's membership;
2. Community representatives who shall comprise no more than one-seventh of the committee's membership and who shall be:
 - a. former Head Start parents, legal guardians, or foster parents who no longer have children in the program; or
 - b. members of the community who have a sincere interest in Head Start and can contribute to the work of the PC.
3. One Board member chosen by the Board to serve as a Board member representative to the PC. The Board member representative shall be a non-voting member of the PC.

No CPS or Board staff or members of their immediate families may serve on the PC except parents who occasionally substitute for regular program staff.

B. Term of Policy Committee Members

Individuals may serve on the PC as either a parent a community representative for no more than three one-year terms on the PC. For example, an individual who has served two years as a parent representative may serve as a community representative for only one term.

1. Parent representatives may serve a total of three years on the PC based on the following guidelines:
 - a. terms shall start and end in October;
 - b. parent representatives may be elected for succeeding one-year terms totaling no more than three years, provided that they have a child currently enrolled in the CPS Head Start program at the time of each election.

2. Community representatives may serve as PC members for no more than three years based on the following guidelines:
 - a. terms shall start and end in October;
 - b. three years of service as a PC community representative may be served successively or intermittently.
3. The Board member representative shall serve as a PC member until such time as the Board appoints a new Board member representative to serve on the PC. If the Board member representative is not able to continue participation on the PC, the Board shall appoint a new Board member to serve on the PC.
4. Parent and Community Representative Vacancies

If a parent or community representative is not able to continue participation on the PC or a representative misses three consecutive PC meetings without providing notification, then the representative's position shall be considered vacant and the position shall be filled pursuant to the procedures described in (I)(C) below.

C. Procedures for Selection of Policy Committee Members

1. Parent Representatives

The structure of parental involvement in the governance of Head Start ensures the participation of parents with children in the program. A Parent Committee assists in the governance of each Head Start center. Every Parent Committee elects a representative to one of the two Head Start areas (North and South). Finally, the PC enables parents, legal guardians and foster parents to work in partnership with the Board and Head Start Management staff to govern the CPS Head Start program.

The following procedures shall apply to the election of parent representatives to the PC:

- a. all parent representatives shall be elected from the representatives to the two Head Start areas;
- b. each of the areas shall elect fifteen (15) representatives to the PC;
- c. representatives selected to the PC by each Head Start area should be representative of the cultural and ethnic groups served by the Head Start centers within the area.

2. Community Representatives

The presence of community representatives on the PC assures that concerned community members and former Head Start parents, legal guardians and foster parents have the opportunity to participate in the governance of the program.

The following procedures shall apply to the selection of community representatives to the PC:

- a. five (5) community representatives shall be selected by the outgoing PC with nominations and selections for the new community representatives occurring during the last regular meeting of the outgoing PC which normally occurs in September.
- b. nominees must provide to the PC relevant information regarding their background and interests, unless the nominee is a former PC community representative; present and former PC parent representatives who wish to be considered for positions as a PC community representative must present their qualifications to the PC.

3. Board Member Representative

The presence of a Board member representative on the PC facilitates open communication between the PC and the Board. A member of the Chicago Board of Education shall be appointed by other members of the Board to serve as the Board member representative to the PC. The Board member representative will serve until such time as the Board designates a new Board member representative to serve on the PC.

III. GOVERNING AND MANAGEMENT RESPONSIBILITIES

The Board, Head Start Management staff, and the PC are responsible for working in partnership to govern the program effectively. Each of the parties also has specific governing responsibilities that it must fulfill. The areas of joint and individual group responsibility are set forth below.

A. Areas of Joint Responsibility

The Board, Head Start Management staff, and the PC shall work in partnership to develop, review, and approve or disapprove the following:

1. all funding applications and amendments to funding applications for Head Start, including administrative services, prior to the submission of such applications to the Chicago Department of Children and Youth Services, the program's grantee agency;
2. procedures implementing shared decision-making between the governing groups;
3. procedures for shared program planning between the Board and the PC in accordance with applicable federal regulations;
4. the philosophy and long and short-term goals and objectives of the program;
5. the composition of the PC and the procedures by which PC representatives are chosen;
6. criteria for defining recruitment, selection, and enrollment priorities of children for the program in accordance with applicable federal regulations;
7. an annual self-assessment of the effectiveness and the progress of the program in meeting its goals and objectives and in implementing the governing federal regulations;
8. a written dispute resolution process for resolving internal disputes between the governing groups;
9. personnel policies for the program that include:
 - a) descriptions of each staff position that include, as appropriate, roles and responsibilities, relevant qualifications;
 - b) descriptions of recruitment, selection, and termination procedures for program staff;
 - c) standards of conduct for program staff and volunteers;
 - d) recommendations for training and development programs;
 - e) procedures for conducting staff performance evaluations;
 - f) assurances that the program is an equal opportunity employer and does not discriminate on the basis of gender, race, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, or disability; and
 - g) employee-management relation procedures, including employee grievances and adverse actions that are consistent with collective bargaining agreements, state employment laws, and teacher certification requirements.

The PC shall be involved in program employment practices to the extent appropriate given its non-management function. The PC shall participate directly in the employment process for Head Start personnel by: (1) helping to establish job descriptions used in hiring for HS positions; (2) participating as members of the team that interviews candidates for HS positions; (3) helping establish the job performance criteria and standards for HS positions used in personnel evaluations; and (4) making recommendations approving or disapproving of employment decisions made regarding HS positions.

B. The Board's Responsibilities

As a Head Start delegate agency, the Board shall be responsible for the following aspects of the program:

1. ensuring the establishment of appropriate internal controls and procedures to safeguard federal funds in accordance with governing federal regulations;
2. formulating written policies defining the roles and responsibilities for the program's governing groups;
3. ensuring that effective communications between Head Start management staff and parents, legal guardians or foster parents takes place on a regular basis and that communications with parents, legal guardians or foster parents shall be carried out in the parents', legal guardians' or foster parents' primary or preferred language, or through an interpreter, to the extent feasible; and
4. ensuring the establishment and maintenance of effective reporting systems for the program in accordance with governing federal regulations.

C. Head Start Management Staff Responsibilities

The Head Start Management staff shall be responsible for the following aspects of the program:

1. managing the program budget;
2. providing the resources needed for program implementation by:
 - a. securing needed social services and medical, dental and mental health services;
 - b. providing appropriate program facilities;
 - c. evaluating the appropriateness of early childhood curriculum, instructional and classroom materials, and recommending and facilitating the purchase of those materials deemed appropriate for children, and the delivery of the materials to program facilities and classrooms;
 - d. providing professional development services to program staff;
 - e. training parents involved in the program as volunteers and as PC representatives; and
 - f. developing models for delivery of program services to meet the needs of varying communities which include half-day, full-day and year-round early childhood education programs.
3. coordinating the program with other pre-school programs and with the primary elementary school grades in the city to ensure appropriate alignment of the CPS Head Start program with these other pre-school and elementary school programs;
4. monitoring the professional certification of program staff;
5. collecting data for studies evaluating program effectiveness;
6. assessing the progress of children in the program relative to local, state and federal benchmarks of progress in early childhood education;
7. assisting in the development of legislation regarding Head Start and early childhood education;
8. evaluating the effectiveness of program staff;
9. providing recommendations regarding the hiring and termination of program staff;
10. providing expertise as consultants to the PC upon request;

11. reporting to the Board and the Chicago Department of Children and Youth Services on a regular basis regarding all aspects of the program's operations as well as the effectiveness and progress of the program in meeting its goals and objectives;
12. reporting to the Board annually regarding long and short-term program planning, community assessments of the program and the results of the program's self-assessment;
13. monitoring the program to ensure that it operates in compliance with all applicable Board policies and rules, and state and federal laws and regulations;
14. providing reimbursements for reasonable expenses incurred by PC representatives in the conduct of their duties as a means to ensure that low-income representatives are able to participate fully in the governance process; and
15. implementing procedures that ensure the provision of timely and accurate information to parents, staff, the PC, the Board and the general community regarding the operation of the CPS Head Start program.

D. Policy Committee Responsibilities

The PC shall be responsible for the following aspects of the program:

1. serving as a liaison between parents, legal guardians, and foster parents; the Board; the Chicago Department of Children and Youth Services; public and private organizations; and the communities served by the program;
2. working to ensure that parents, legal guardians, and foster parents participating in Head Start understand their rights; responsibilities; and opportunities with regard to the program;
3. assisting in planning, coordinating, and organizing activities for parents with the assistance of management staff, and ensuring that funds set aside from program budgets are used to support parent activities;
4. assisting with recruiting volunteer services from parents, community residents, and community organizations, and in mobilizing community resources to meet identified needs related to the program.
5. establishing and maintaining procedures for working with the Board to resolve complaints about the program.

Amends/Rescinds: Amends 07-0124-PO1
Cross References: 04-0922-PO1; 03-0225-PO01; 02-1023-PO02
Legal References: 45 CFR 1304.50; 45 CFR 1304.51; 45 CFR 1301.31; 45 CFR 1305.3.