

**CAPITAL REGION ESD 113**  
**SOUND TO HARBOR EARLY LEARNING PROGRAMS**

**POLICY COUNCIL**  
**BY-LAWS**

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**ARTICLE I - NAME**

The Sound to Harbor Early Learning Programs Policy Council is established under the authority of Federal Head Start regulations 45CFR1301 and state ECEAP regulations RCW 28A.215 and Performance Standard A-6. The grantee, which is Capital Region Educational Service District 113 (ESD), is charged with the legal and fiscal responsibility for the overall administration of the Head Start and ECEAP grants.

**ARTICLE II - PURPOSE**

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

**ARTICLE III - MEMBERSHIP**

SECTION 1: Definition of Members

There shall be two categories of members: parents and community members. Parent members are the parents or guardians of children currently enrolled in the ESD 113 Sound to Harbor Early Learning Programs (ELP). Current parent members must comprise at least 51% of the membership. Past parent representatives cannot be enrolled parents. It is preferred that they have been Policy Council parent representatives or alternates. Community Representatives are interested professionals who work in programs that serve low-income families with young children.

All Policy Council members must not be related by blood or marriage to program staff or a regular substitute, and must not be employed by the program. A regular substitute is defined as working 10 hours or more a week.

SECTION 2: Election of Representatives

Parent representatives will be elected from each center in the program representing Head Start funding, ECEAP funding, private pay/DSHS child care slots, and ECEAP Partnership Sub-Contractor slots. The numbers of parent representatives will be limited by the Policy Council Representation Chart.

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

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number of parent representatives will increase proportionately as described above.

Parent Representatives from ECEAP Partnership Sub-Contractor Sites: Each ECEAP sub-contractor with 50 or fewer funded slots will have one parent representative. When a sub-contractor has more than one site, the funded slots will be the total of all its sites and count as one center. Refer to paragraph above.

Parent Representatives from ELP private pay or DSHS child care slots: All slots within one site will count as one center regardless of the age group the enrolled child attends.

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

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

Selection of Past Parent Representatives: Representatives who are former enrolled parents are preferred to have been past Policy Council parent representatives or parent alternates within the last three program years. They cannot serve more than five terms in Policy Council. Past parent representatives must be approved by Policy Council before they have full voting and membership rights and responsibilities on Policy Council.

Selection of Community Representatives: Community representatives will be chosen from public, private agencies, businesses, or will be individuals with a desire to meet the needs of low-income people. The Assistant Superintendent of Early Learning (Director) and/or designee will develop a list of qualified people with input from parents, staff and community. Community representatives must be approved by Policy Council before they have full voting and membership rights and responsibilities on Policy Council.

SECTION 3: Vacancies

When vacancies in membership on Policy Council occur during course of operating year, the respective parent committee where the vacancy occurred will select a new parent representative unless the vacating

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representative already has a same-funded parent alternate. That parent alternate will automatically fill the same-funded representative position after that representative vacates his/her position.

**ARTICLE IV - ELECTION OF OFFICERS**

SECTION 1: Officers

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

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

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

- Chairperson can be either a parent representative or past parent representative. It is preferred, but not required, that the Chairperson have at least one year of experience on the Policy Council.
- At least two of the officers must be current parent representatives.
- If the Chairperson is not a past parent representative, the Vice-chairperson or the Treasurer can be a past parent representative.
- All efforts will be made to have at least one officer as a current ECEAP parent representative.
- Parent representatives from an ELP private pay or DSHS child care slot are not permitted to run for executive office.
- Parent alternates are not permitted to run for executive office.

SECTION 2: Officers Vacating

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

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

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**ARTICLE V - ROLE OF OFFICERS**

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

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

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

**ARTICLE VI - MEMBER RESPONSIBILITIES**

Role of Members: Policy Council parent representatives will report to their center CPAC (Center Parent Advisory Committee) about Policy Council activities and actions. Parent representatives will get input from their center committees around issues affecting operations of the overall program and bring that information back to Policy Council.

Attendance: Parent representatives, parent alternates, past parent representatives, and community representatives should refer to Article IX, Section 1 concerning removal of members due to absences.

Parent representatives who will be absent are responsible to request their parent alternate attend the Council meeting on their behalf. Parent representatives are required to give valid reasons for missing a Council meeting.

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Parent alternates are expected to attend in place of their center's absent parent representative. Alternates are not required to give valid reasons for missing a meeting.

Past parent representatives and community representatives are required to give valid reasons for missing a Council meeting.

The Executive Committee officers must submit valid reasons to the program's Administrative Coordinator on the same day as the missed Council meeting. Refer to Article IX, Section 2, item c for when absences require removal from the Executive Committee.

All representatives should submit a valid reason prior to the Council meeting, if possible. All valid reasons must be submitted within three work days of the missed Council meeting to the program's Administrative Coordinator. Parent representatives should also submit valid reasons to their Center Director or Area Coordinator.

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

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

## **ARTICLE VII - QUORUM**

Quorum: At least eight centers must be represented by at least one elected parent representative or the center's alternate when their representative is absent. Any past parent representative can be counted in the quorum when needed. At least five of the members present must be current parent representatives and/or parent alternates voting in the absence of their center parent representative.

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

### SECTION 1: Meetings:

Meetings will be held regularly as designated by the Council. Meetings will be considered official if conducted face-to-face, by teleconference, by videoconference, or by executive committee.

The Director, Center Directors, Area Coordinators and parent involvement staff are requested to attend Policy Council meetings.

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SECTION 2: Voting Members:

The officers of Policy Council will be clearly designated through use of nameplates. The Chairperson will vote in case of making or breaking a tie.

Review Article III, Section 2 for when parent alternates may vote.

SECTION 3: Notice of Meetings:

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

SECTION 4: Taking Action between Scheduled Meetings:

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

SECTION 5: Emergency Meetings:

An emergency meeting may be called by the Chairperson of Policy Council, or three members of the Council. Each parent representative must be given 24 hour notice. Emergency meetings are for single purposes only, and this is the only business that will be conducted at that meeting.

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

SECTION 6: Special Meetings:

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



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**ARTICLE IX - REMOVAL OF MEMBERS**

SECTION 1: Removal of Members:

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

SECTION 2: Removal of Officers:

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

**ARTICLE X - AMENDMENTS**

Amendments: These by-laws may be amended by a two-thirds majority vote of members present at any regular meeting, or at a special meeting called for that purpose, prior to submission for consideration by the Superintendent. Contents of proposed amendments shall be presented at regular Policy Council meeting to be voted on at the same meeting.

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**ARTICLE XI - COMMITTEES**

- A. Health Services Advisory Committee: Community volunteers, staff and parents meet to discuss health, dental, nutrition and mental health concerns, issues and resources.
- Facilitator: Health Services Specialist
  - Membership: Four Policy Council parent representatives (2 from Thurston County, 1 from Mason County, and 1 from Grays Harbor County), health services staff, Mental Health Specialists, Education Leader who is the lead for disabilities, and community health representatives.
  - Meetings: Meets as needed, but at least once yearly.
  - One Policy Council member shall be designated to give a verbal report to Policy Council about the committee's activities and actions.
- B. Emergent Task Committees: Committees may be created during the year to address emerging issues, respond to new directives from funding sources, or to look at new opportunities. Representatives from Policy Council will be invited to join these single focus committees.

**ARTICLE XII - PERSONNEL ACTIONS**

Personnel Actions: A quorum of Policy Council members will approve/disapprove hiring of new employees, current employees hired into new positions, temporary employees; and the termination of all employees.

- (a) In establishing a quorum, the following membership is a goal, but not a requirement:
- Policy Council Executive Committee: Chairperson, Vice-chairperson, and Treasurer
  - One representative from each county
  - Past Parent Representative
- (b) Responsibilities:
- Serve on interview committees as available
  - Approve or disapprove the hiring and terminations of employees for ESD 113 Sound to Harbor Early Learning Programs prior to the employee beginning work as per Head Start regulations.

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- (c) Valid Vote: A quorum of eight Policy Council representatives must participate in the vote in order for the decision to be valid. The decision is based on the majority of those voting.
- (d) Business shall typically be conducted via telephone between regular Policy Council meetings, so that new staff can begin work as soon as possible. Business can be conducted in person or via teleconferencing, and/or videoconferencing equipment when it is the same day of a Policy Council meeting.

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

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

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

The Policy Council will elect two parent delegates to WSA annually.

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

One delegate will be elected from Head Start parent representatives; and one delegate will be elected from ECEAP parent representatives.

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

The newly elected delegate will begin attending state meetings in January and continue through the October meeting. The delegate can be removed by the Executive Committee at any time during his/her term of office for non-performance of duties.

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

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

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

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

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

**A. Role of Members:**

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

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

**ARTICLE XIV - REIMBURSEMENT**

**SECTION 1: Reimbursement:**

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

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

Approved by Policy Council 7/12/18.

Approved by Board of Directors 8/8/18.