

# **NORTH SNOHOMISH COUNTY**

## **EARLY HEAD START**

### **POLICY COUNCIL BYLAWS**

#### **ARTICLE 1 – NAME**

The name of this organization shall be the North Snohomish County Early Head Start Policy Council, hereafter referred to as “Policy Council”.

#### **ARTICLE 2 – PURPOSE AND FUNCTIONS**

##### Section 1. Purpose

The purpose of the Policy Council will be to provide guidance and direction to North Snohomish County Early Head Start Program (NSC EHS) in the areas of Program Planning, Administration, Evaluation, and to serve as a policy making body as provided for in the 45 Code of Federal Regulation (CFR), Part 1304.50. All program activities shall be conducted in conformance with the Head Start Act and 45 CFR Part 74 and Part 1300 and subject to all limitations as may be called for by the federal policy and regulations.

##### Section 2. Functions

By federal law, the Policy Council shall be responsible for the direction of the NSC EHS program, including program design and operation, and long and short term planning goals and objectives, taking into account the annual community-wide strategic planning and needs assessment and self-assessment.

The Policy Council shall approve decisions about each of the following activities:

- a. Activities to support the active involvement of parents in supporting program operations, including policies to ensure that NSC EHS is responsive to community and parent needs
- b. Program recruitment, selection and enrollment priorities
- c. Applications for funding and amendments to applications for funding, prior to the submission of any funding application
- d. Budget planning for program expenditures, including policies for reimbursement of participation in policy council activities

- e. Bylaws for the operation of the Policy Council
- f. Program personnel policies and decisions regarding the employment of program staff including standards of conduct for program staff, contractors, and volunteers and criteria for employment and dismissal of NSC EHS staff
- g. Developing procedures for how members of the Policy Council will be appointed
- h. Recommendations on the selection of delegate agencies and the service areas for such agencies.

### **ARTICLE 3 – POLICY COUNCIL MEMBERSHIP, COMPOSITION AND ACTIVITIES**

#### **Section 1. Policy Council Composition**

The Policy Council shall be comprised of at least 51% parents of children currently enrolled in the NSC EHS program. No more than 49% of the Policy Council shall be comprised of community representatives.

- a. All Policy Council parent representatives shall be the parent or guardian of children enrolled in NSC EHS, or an expectant parent receiving services from NSC EHS, at the time of the appointment to the Policy Council.
- b. Each NSC EHS service area shall be entitled to one or two elected parent representatives and one elected alternate from each program model in operation. Representation shall be constituted to ensure proportionate representation of each program option. There shall be a maximum of 14 parent representatives on the Policy Council.
- c. Community representatives should bring a knowledge of and interest in the local communities and the NSC EHS population. All community representatives shall live, work or regularly volunteer in Snohomish County. Community representatives do not have alternates. Community representatives may include, but are not limited to:
  - Individual citizens with an interest in NSC EHS
  - Service agency employees
  - Employees of profit and non-profit organizations
  - Public and private school personnel
  - Parents of formerly enrolled NSC EHS children
  - Business owners, or
  - Medical personnel.
- d. Community representatives may be recommended for a Policy Council position by NSC EHS staff or family members, current Policy Council members or through self-nomination. The Policy Council will vote to approve community representatives' membership.

## Section 2. Term of Office

The term of office for all Policy Council representatives, both parent and community, shall be 12 months. Representatives may serve consecutive terms. No representative shall serve on an Early Head Start Policy Council for more than five years in their lifetime. Policy Council members shall be informed of this lifetime limitation.

## Section 3. Voting Rights

Each Policy Council representative, or alternate if the regular representative is not present, shall be entitled to one vote on each decision that requires a vote of the Council.

## Section 4. Duties

All parent Policy Council members shall consider the needs and opinions of the parents in matters of business which affect their respective NSC EHS service area.

## Section 5. Resignation of Membership

A Policy Council member may resign his or her position on the Policy Council by providing the Chairperson with a written statement of resignation.

## Section 6. Conflict of Interest

In accordance with federal regulations, no person can serve as a member of the Policy Council while he/she or any member of his/her immediate family is a paid employee of the Early Head Start program. The term "immediate family" includes spouse, domestic partner, sibling, parent or child. No person can serve as a member of the Policy Council when he/she receives payment which is funded by EHS grant dollars for providing EHS program services.

## Section 7. Termination

A representative will be subject to termination, by two-thirds (2/3) vote of the Policy Council present at a duly called meeting at which a quorum is present, for the following reasons:

- a. Failure to attend for three consecutive meetings without a legitimate reason, such as illness or illness within the family, weather precluding attendance, or temporary work scheduling conflicts.
- b. Failure to perform the duties and responsibilities set forth in these bylaws.

A termination action by the Policy Council must be placed upon the regular agenda and the representative subject to the termination shall be provided with written notice of the

intent to terminate at least 10 days prior to the Policy Council meeting at which the agenda item will be discussed and acted upon. The representative subject to the termination shall be provided with the opportunity to speak on his or her own behalf at such Policy Council meeting.

#### Section 8. Filling Vacancies

Vacancies may occur through the resignation or termination of a member. When vacancies of Policy Council parent representatives occur, an alternate may fill the vacant position. In the event that no alternates remain after vacancies are filled, a new representative shall be voted on by currently enrolled parents of NSC-EHS at the service area to fill the vacancy. When vacancies occur with community representatives, new representatives may be selected by the NSC EHS Director and must be approved at the next regular meeting of the Policy Council.

### **ARTICLE 4 – POLICY COUNCIL OFFICERS AND ELECTIONS**

#### Section 1. Officers

The NSC EHS Policy Council shall elect a Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson. These officers shall be elected from the membership of the Council and must be current NSC EHS parents or expectant parents.

#### Section 2. Terms of Office

The officers shall be elected for a one-year term by a majority vote in January and shall take office at the close of the meeting. The officers of the past year may serve as advisors to the new officers for a period of 30 days. No officer shall be eligible for the same office for more than two (2) consecutive terms.

#### Section 3. Nominations

The procedure for nomination of officers shall be:

1. Nominations are requested from the floor. Nominations may be made by representatives themselves or by a sponsor from the members of the Policy Council.
2. Chairperson states the name of the representative nominated for office.
3. Nominations for specific office are then closed.
4. Each candidate delivers a short speech advocating his/her candidacy for office.

#### Section 4. Election

1. Election of officers is by secret ballot of the representative members of the Policy Council following nominations from the floor.
2. Officers will be elected by majority vote in January and will take office at the close of the meeting.

#### Section 5. Removal

Officers are expected to attend all monthly Policy Council meetings. After any officer misses two (2) consecutive unexcused absences from Policy Council meetings, that office shall be declared vacant.

#### Section 6. Vacancies

A vacancy in the office of Chairperson shall be filled by the Vice-Chairperson..

#### Section 7. Duties of the Officers

##### Duties of the Chairperson (Vice Chairperson in Absence of Chairperson)

The Chairperson shall have the following duties:

- a. Preside at all Policy Council and Executive Committee meetings.
- b. Conduct all meetings in accordance with Policy Council bylaws.
- c. Explain each motion before it is voted on.
- d. Sign all correspondence or documents initiated from and approved by the Policy Council.
- e. Serve on the Executive Committee.
- f. Perform other duties designated by the Council.

##### Duties of the Vice Chairperson

The Vice Chairperson shall have the following duties:

- a. Perform all duties of the Chairperson in his/her absence;
- b. In the case of resignation of the Chairperson or the termination of the Chairperson's membership on the Policy Council, shall assume the office of Chairperson to serve out the term of the previous Chairperson.

- c. Serve on the Executive Committee.
- d. Perform other duties designated by the Council.

## **ARTICLE 5 – MEETINGS**

### Section 1. Regular Meetings

The Policy Council shall conduct regular meetings once a month.

### Section 2. Location and Scheduling of Meetings

The date, time and location of regular meetings of the Policy Council shall be determined by the Policy Council.

### Section 3. Special Meetings

Special meetings may be called at the discretion of the Chairperson or NSC EHS Director when necessary and at such time and place as he/she may designate.

### Section 3. Notice of Meeting

Written notice, agenda, and minutes of the previous meeting shall be emailed either via US Mail or electronic mail to each member at least five (5) days prior to each regular meeting. Written notice and agenda shall be mailed to each member at least 24 hours prior to each special meeting.

### Section 4. Quorum and Authority to Conduct Business

A quorum of the Policy Council shall consist of a majority of the current Policy Council members. This quorum shall apply at all regular and emergency Policy Council meetings. If there is no quorum, a motion may be made to conduct regular business with those members present. Such business must be approved at the next regular meeting in which there is a quorum.

A quorum of the Policy Council has the authority to conduct business of the Policy Council. The Policy Council shall conduct business that is within its scope of authority and responsibility, as described in the Head Start Act, Performance Standards, the by-laws, and NSC EHS policies and procedures

#### Section 5. Non-Members at Meetings

Policy Council meetings are open to the public, except closed meetings as described below in Executive Session Meetings Closed to Deal with Sensitive Issues.

#### Section 6. Executive Session Meetings Closed to Deal with Sensitive Issues

Executive session meetings may be held by the Policy Council for matters of confidentiality, including during the course of regularly scheduled meetings. Separate minutes for executive session meetings shall be maintained by the NSC EHS Director.

Executive session meetings shall be limited to:

- Personnel issues
- Other confidential issues as determined by the Policy Council, including issues involving negotiations, non-public or pending contracts, proposed program design issues that involve personnel or contract issues, or preliminary financial issues.

#### Section 7. Conduct of the Meeting

The revised edition of *Robert's Rules of Order* shall govern the proceedings of all meetings of this organization, except as provided by the By-laws of this organization and at the discretion of its Chairperson.

### **ARTICLE 8 – COMMITTEES**

#### Section 1. Committees

The Policy Council shall establish committees as needed to conduct business. Except for the Executive Committee, committees shall be established by appointment by the Chairperson with approval of a majority of the Policy Council. Any currently enrolled NSC EHS parent or current Policy Council member may serve on a committee or taskforce, other than the Executive Committee which will be comprised of only NSC EHS parents. Each committee, with the exception of the Executive Committee, will elect a Chairperson who must be a member of the committee.

#### Section 2. Standing Committees.

Standing Committees shall serve, January to January or as needed, with the term ending prior to the next program year. Standing committees of the Policy Council shall include:

- a. Executive Committee (consisting of the Chairperson and Vice Chairperson.)

b. Policy and Bylaws Committee

Section 3. Special Committees

The Policy Council may establish special committees, as needed, to conduct the business of the Policy Council. The Policy Council Chairperson shall appoint special committees. Eligibility to serve on a special committee shall be the same as eligibility to serve on a standing committee.

Section 4. Committee Meetings

Committee meetings shall occur as needed and as called by the committee chair. Committees may meet by conference call or other electronic technology, if appropriate in the discretion of the committee chair.

Section 5. Committee Functions

Committees of the Policy Council shall receive direction from the Policy Council as to the activities that they are to undertake.

Committees shall receive information and input, consult with NSC EHS staff and provide recommendations to the Policy Council about actions to be taken by the Policy Council.

Section 6. Executive Committee

The Executive Committee shall have the following responsibilities:

- a. Review and make recommendations to the Policy Council about procedures for program planning in accordance with 1304.50 and the federal regulations found in 45 Code of Federal Regulations 1305.3.
- b. Review and make recommendations to the Policy Council about the program's philosophy and long range and short range goals and objectives.
- c. Shall participate in the hiring process of NSC EHS staff and shall make recommendations to the Policy Council about hiring NSC EHS staff.
- d. Make recommendation to the Policy Council about the suspension or termination of NSC EHS staff.
- e. Has authority to conduct and act on any necessary official business during months in which the Policy Council does not meet.
- f. Non-officer Policy Council reps/alternates are welcome to attend Executive Committee meetings.



- f. Other activities as determined by the Policy Council.

#### Section 7. Policy and Bylaws Committee.

The Policy and Bylaws Committee shall meet as needed to review the current bylaws and to make recommendations to the Policy Council as to any amendments, changes or modifications that may be advisable. This Committee shall also review and make recommendations to the Policy Council about:

- a. Criteria for defining recruitment, selection and enrollment priorities
- b. Program Policies
- c. Other activities as determined by the Policy Council.

#### **ARTICLE 9 – DELEGATES**

The Policy Council shall have the authority to select delegates, as needed, to regional and state organizations and to determine and approve reasonable reimbursement of expenses for such delegates.

#### **ARTICLE 10 – CONFLICT RESOLUTION PROCESS – POLICY COUNCIL AND GOVERNING BOARD**

The Policy Council shall resolve any conflict between it and the NSC EHS Advisory Board by using the Conflict Resolution Process that has been adopted (or as amended) by the Policy Council and the Advisory Board.

#### **ARTICLE 11 – AMENDMENTS**

The Policy Council at any duly called meeting of the Policy Council may amend these Bylaws. Amendments of the by-laws may be presented at any meeting of the Council. An affirmative vote of two-thirds (2/3) of the Policy Council members is needed for approval, providing that a copy of each proposed amendment has been sent to the membership 30 days prior to the meeting date.

Date approved by the Policy Council: 04/10/2010

Date revisions approved by Policy Council: 12/12/2013

Date approved by Policy Council: 01/04/2018