



Kids Central, Inc.

Policy

Establishing the Formal Governance Structure
for Kids Central, Inc.'s Head Start Program



The Bridge

A policy which will state the relationship between the Board of Directors, the Policy Council and the Management Staff of Kids Central, Inc. regarding to the issue of governance.

June 2008

Introduction:

Kids Central, Inc. (KCI) works with parents and community members to implement a high quality Head Start program ("the program"). Kids Central, Inc. receives Head Start and Early Head Start grant funds from the United States Department of Health and Human Services. KCI, as a grantee agency, provides Head Start and Early Head Start services as outlined in the annual grant application submitted to HHS. The governing structure for the program involves a sharing of input from three sources. The Board of Directors and the various committees that make up the Board, the Management Staff of KCI, and the Parent Policy Council. The ultimate authority and responsibility rests with the Board of Directors. The Board of Directors is the fiscal managers and the legal entity of Kids Central, Inc.

By working in effective partnership, The Board, Policy Council, and the Management Staff ensures 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 structure that is needed for the program to successfully provide early childhood education services to primarily low-income children and families. The governing structure described herein represents Kids Central, Inc. as a company with a mission and a vision which is to assist the children and families of enrolled participants achieve their goals and the get a head start in life.

POLICY TEXT:

I. Formal Governance Structure of Kids Central, Inc.'s Head Start Program

The federal regulations controlling the governance of the KCI Head Start program mandates that three parties work together to oversee the program. These parties are the grantee which is the Board of Directors; KCI Head Start Management staff; and the Head Start Policy Council (PC) which consists of parent delegates whose children are enrolled in Head Start and at-large delegates from the local community who are familiar with resources and services for low-income children and families. This Bridge Policy clearly denotes that the Board of Directors is the legal entity and the fiscal agents of Kids Central and that they do not abdicate their responsibility to any other group.

A. The Board of Directors

The Board of Directors is Kids Central, Inc.'s governing body and, as such, it has legal and fiscal responsibility for administering the program as outlined in the Head Start Grant. In order to facilitate communication and effective partnership between the Board and the Policy Council (PC) on matters pertaining to governance of the program, the Board annually shall select one of its members to serve as an at-large delegate to the PC. If the Board member cannot attend a monthly meeting, he/she shall choose a designee to participate in the Policy Council meetings in a non-voting capacity.

B. KCI Head Start Management Staff

The KCI 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 operations 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 Council

The PC works in partnership with the Board of Directors and Head Start Management staff to effectively govern the program. PC delegates 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 of Directors, Head Start Management staff, public and private organizations, parents and the communities which the program serves.

II. Procedures For Selecting The Policy Council

The following procedures shall govern the annual selection of members to the Policy Council.

A. Composition of the Policy Council

The PC must include both 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 children currently enrolled in the Head Start program who shall comprise at least two-thirds of the council's membership;
2. At-large delegates who shall comprise no more than one-third of the council'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.
 - c. a Board of Directors member chosen annually by the Board of directors to serve as an at-large delegate to the PC.

No KCI staff or Board member 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 Delegates

Individuals may serve on the PC as either a parent delegate or an at-large delegate. However, no one may serve more than three one-year terms on the PC.

1. Parent delegates may serve a total of three years on the PC based on the following guidelines:
 - a. terms shall start in September and end in August;
 - b. parent delegates may be elected for succeeding one-year terms totaling no more than three years, provided that they have a child currently enrolled in the KCI Head Start program at the time of each election;
2. At-large delegates may serve as PC members for no more than three years based on the following guidelines:
 - a. terms shall start in September and end in August;
 - b. three years of service as a PC at-large delegates may be served successively or intermittently.

3. Vacancies

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

C. Procedures for Selection of Policy Council Delegates

1. Parent Delegates

The structure of parental involvement in the governance of Head Start ensures that 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 serve on the Parent Council (PC). Finally, the PC enables parents, legal guardians, and foster parents to work in partnership with the Board of Directors and Head Start Management staff to govern the KCI Head Start Program.

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

- a. all parent delegates shall be elected from the centers, home based programs and Early Head Start programs.
- b. each of the centers will elect one (1) delegate and one (1) alternate delegate for a total of two (2) delegates. Only one vote will be cast for each center based program.
- c. each of the home-based programs will elect one (1) delegate and one (1) alternate delegate for a total of six (2) delegates. Only one vote will be cast for each home based program.
- d. each of the Early Head Start programs and the Early Head Start Home Base programs will elect one (1) delegate and one (1) alternate delegate for a total of six (2) delegates each program. Only one vote will be cast for each Early HS based program.

2. At-Large Delegates

The presence of at-large delegates on the PC assures that concerned community members and former 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 at-large delegates to the PC;

- a. up to ten (10) at-large delegates shall be selected by the PC with nominations and selections for the at-large positions occurring

- in September;
- b. nominees must provide to the PC relevant information regarding their back-ground and interests, unless the nominee is a former PC at-large delegate;
- c. present and former PC parent delegates who wish to be considered for positions as PC at-large delegates must present their qualifications to the PC; and
- d. a member of the Board of Directors who shall be appointed annually by other members of the Board of Directors to serve as an at large delegate to the PC.

III. Governing and Management Responsibilities

The Board of Directors, 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 of Directors, Head Start Management staff, and the PC shall work in partnership to develop, review, and implement 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 funding source(s).
2. procedures implementing shared decision-making between the governing groups;
3. procedures for shared program planning between the Board of Directors 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 delegates 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. personnel policies for the program that include:
 - a). descriptions of each staff position that include, as appropriate, roles and responsibilities, relevant qualification;
 - 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 developmental programs;
 - e). procedures for conducting staff performance evaluations;

- f). assurance 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 state employment laws, and 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 position;
- 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 that will be used in personnel evaluations; and
- 4. making recommendations accepting or not accepting of employment decisions made regarding HS positions.

B. The Board of Director's Responsibilities

As a Head Start grantee, the Board of Directors 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 in the program, 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 delegates; 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 elementary school grades in the area to ensure appropriate alignment of the KCI 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 of Directors 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 delegates in the conduct of their duties as a means to ensure that low-income delegates 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 of Directors and the general community regarding the operation of the KCI Head Start program.

C. Policy Council 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; 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 of Directors to resolve complaints about the program.