

**Concerted Services, Inc.
Head Start Program
Policy Council By-Laws**

Article I – Name of Policy Council

The name of this organization shall be Concerted Services, Inc. Head Start Program Policy Council. Representation shall reflect both Head Start and Early Head Start programs.

Article II – Purpose and Functions of Policy Council

Section I – Purpose

The purpose shall be to implement Head Start Program Performance Standards, Federal Register 45 CFR, 1304.50 Program Governance. The Head Start Program Policy Council is created to implement program planning and coordination; to serve as a link between public and private organizations, the Grantee Board of Directors, the community served, and the parents of children enrolled in the program. The service delivery area includes the counties of Appling, Atkinson, Bacon, Brantley, Candler, Charlton, Clinch, Coffee, Jeff Davis, Pierce, Toombs and Ware in the state of Georgia.

Section II – Function

The functions of Concerted Services, Inc. Head Start Program Policy Council, as outlined in 1304.50 Program Governance shall be to:

- A. Serve as a link to the Parent Committees, Grantee Agency Governing Body, public and private organization and the communities served.
- B. Assist Parent Committees in communicating with parents of children enrolled in all program options to ensure that they understand their rights, responsibilities, and opportunities in the Head Start Program and encourage their participation.
- C. Assist Parent Committees in planning, coordinating and organizing program activities for parents with the assistance of staff and ensuring that funds set aside from program budgets are used to support parent activities.
- D. Assist in recruiting volunteer services from working with the grantee to resolving community complaints about the program.
- E. Establish and maintain procedures for working with the grantee to resolve community complaints about the program.
- F. The Concerted Services, Inc. Head Start Program Policy Council shall work in partnership with key management staff and the governing body to develop, review and submit, approve or disapprove the following:
 - 1. All funding applications and amendments to funding applications for Concerted Services, Inc. Head Start Program, including administrative services, prior to the submission of such applications;

2. Procedures describing how the governing body and the appropriate policy group will implement shared decision-making;
3. Procedures for program planning that are in accordance with the requirements of the Performance Standards Section 45 CFR 1302 Subpart J;
4. The program's philosophy and long and short range program goals and objectives;
5. The selection of contract services agencies and their service delivery areas;
6. The composition of the Policy Council and the procedures by which members are elected;
7. Criteria for defining recruitment, selection, and enrollment priorities in accordance with the requirements of 45 CFR 1302 Subpart A;
8. Program personnel policies and decisions regarding the employment of program staff consistent with the Governing Body's responsibilities in this area, including standards of conduct for program staff, contractors, and volunteers, and criteria for the employment or dismissal of program staff.
9. Activities to support the active involvement of parents in supporting program operations including policies to ensure that the Head Start agency is responsive to the community and parent needs.
10. Approve parent activity funds.
11. By-laws for operation of the Policy Council.
12. Budget planning for program expenditures, including policies for reimbursement and participation in Policy Council activities.
13. Information shared by the Head Start agency including:
 - Monthly financial statements, including credit card expenditures
 - Monthly program information summaries
 - Program enrollment reports, including attendance reports for children whose care is partially subsidized by another public agency
 - Monthly reports of meals and snacks provided through the Dept. of Agriculture
 - Financial audits
 - Annual self-assessments, including any findings related to such assessment
 - Communitywide strategic planning and needs assessment of the agency
 - Program information reports

Article III – Membership

Section I – Membership

The Policy Council membership shall be composed of representation from current parents/legal guardians of children enrolled in the program options and community representatives. At least 51% of the membership shall be comprised of the parent representatives in accordance with guidelines.

Section II – Membership Categories

Membership on the Policy Council shall consist of two (2) categories: Parent and Community representatives.

- A. **Parent Representatives:** All Parent Representatives must be a parent or legal guardian of a child currently enrolled in CSI Head Start Program. Parents may be elected or volunteer to serve, but must be approved to serve by the Parent Committee of their respective center. One Parent Representative and an Alternate shall be elected from each county. Two at-large Early Head Start parents and alternates will also be elected. Alternate Parent Representatives may attend the Policy Council Meetings. Alternate Parent Representatives can not vote unless the Parent Representative for that center is absent.
- B. **Community Representatives:** All community representatives must be elected by parents of children currently enrolled prior to being seated. Community representative shall represent major agencies, businesses, or organizations of the community served by the center and county representing. Seven at-large Community Representatives will be elected. Community representatives may be former Head Start/EHS parents.
- C. The number of Representatives on the Policy Council is 21 members. The breakout is as follows: 12 Parent Representatives and alternates, 2 at-large Early Head Start Parent Representatives and alternates, and 7 at-large Community Representatives.

Section III – Term of Office

Policy Council members shall serve for a term of one (1) year and must be a Parent Representative or a Community Representative. Members can be re-elected but serve no more than five years either consecutive or lifetime.

Section IV – Voting Rights

Each member of the Policy Council shall have one (1) vote. There shall be no proxy voting by or for any member. The chairman shall only vote to break a tie.

Section V – Termination of Membership

A member of the Policy Council can be terminated if a member is consistently absent from 3 consecutive meetings without having submitted a legitimate excuse to the Policy Council Chairperson or designee prior to the meeting. Violation of the Policy Council Code of Conduct terms may also result in termination.

Section VI – Resignation

A member shall give a statement of reason for resigning to the Policy Council Chairperson or Parent, Family, Community Engagement Specialist.

Section VII – Vacancies

In the case of a vacancy attempts shall be made to elect a replacement member within 30 days from notification of termination or resignation. Documentation of attempts will be on file. In cases where a vacancy occurs from a community representative slot, the parent members must approve such replacement.

Section VIII – Nepotism

In accordance with the agency policies and procedures, no person can serve as a Policy Council member while any member of his/her family is employed in the Concerted Services, Inc. Head Start Program. (Please refer to the Agency Personnel Policies and Procedures for the definition of family member.)

Section IX – Conflict of Interest

A Policy Council member is prohibited from having a conflict of interest with the Head Start agency. They are not allowed to receive compensation for serving on the agency's Policy Council or for providing any services to the Head Start agency (i.e. substitutes).

X – Regulations on Affairs

- A. Policy Council members shall abide by rules of Parliamentary Procedures as outlined in The Modern Rules of Order.
- B. Policy Council members shall regularly attend meetings; arrive on time for all meetings (both Policy Council and committee meetings); actively participate in meetings by reading the agenda and material prior to the meetings; discuss matters to be considered with other parents in the center as applicable; keep informed of the Policy Council's purpose, plans and progress; report back to the center parents of non-confidential action taken by the Policy Council; remember the rights of other members to express their opinions; consider all information and discussion prior to voting; represent the interests of the children and parents at the center level; and accept and support any final decisions of the majority of the Policy Council.
- C. Policy Council members shall regulate and conduct all business in compliance with ACF and Concerted Services, Inc. guidelines. If, in carrying out these responsibilities, the Policy Council and the Governing Board are unable to arrive at a decision that is mutually acceptable, a third party arbitrator will be utilized. The decision of the arbitrator shall be final. (Refer to Impasse procedure.)

Article IV – Officers of the Policy Council

Section I – Officers

The Policy Council shall elect a Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson, Secretary, and other officers deemed necessary.

Section II – Election and Terms of Office

Each officer shall be elected by the Policy Council members once the new Policy Council has been seated and shall serve the term of one (1) year. Re-election to offices can occur up to the five-year limitation of Policy Council membership.

Section III – Removal from Office

Any officer or member of this Policy Council who fails to perform his/her duties as outlined can be removed by a quorum vote.

Section IV – Chairperson

The Chairperson shall preside at all meetings; have an understanding of the Policy Council By-Laws; refrain from entering into debates or questions before assembling; shall extend every courtesy to the discussion of the motions; call to order and formally close the meetings; note whether a quorum is present and declaration of same; follow an agenda for each regular meeting; ask for additions to the agenda; shall call special meetings and ensure notices of special meetings and explanations of same for members; ensure committees are formed; appoint chairperson of committees; explain motions prior to calling for a vote; and may vote to break a tie. The Chairperson also serves as a liaison to the Governing Board,

Section V – Vice Chairperson

The Vice Chairperson shall preside in the absence of the Chairperson. In case of resignation or termination of the Chairperson, the Vice Chairperson shall assume the office of Chairperson.

Section VI – Secretary

The secretary or designee shall ensure the accurate recording of the minutes of the Policy Council meetings, keep a copy of the By-Laws, list of members, a list of unfinished business, and the meeting agenda. The Secretary or designee shall ensure that minutes are e-mailed/mailed to each Policy Council member in advance of the next meeting; ensure that a copy of the record is on file in the Head Start central office; and receive and handle all mail addressed to the Policy Council.

Article V – Policy Council Committees

Section I – Committees

The Policy Council shall appoint such committees as are necessary to ensure the proper performance of business. Committees can include the following: Executive Committee,

Grievance Committee, Human Resources Committee, Budget Committee, and Special Committee. These Committees shall function as stipulated by the Policy Council.

Section II – Executive Committee

The Executive Committee shall be composed of the officers of the Policy Council. The Executive Committee may serve as Ad Hoc Committees for special projects.

Section III – Grievance Committee

This committee shall hear grievance from the parents or community. All grievances must follow the proper procedures outlined in the PFCE Procedures. The Chairperson shall make recommendations to the Policy Council on resolutions to these complaints.

Section IV – Human Resources Committee

The Human Resources committee shall consist of the Policy Council Chairperson and six Policy Council members. This committee shall be empowered in emergency situations to review and approve/disapprove new hires, transfers, and terminations so that these matters can be addressed in a timely manner. This committee may conduct business via e-mail or telephone conference. All committee action will be taken to the next scheduled Policy Council meeting for ratification.

Section V – Budget Committee

This committee will participate in the Program’s budget development process, and present for approval of the Policy Council prior to submission to ACF. Members shall have input in the preparation of Parent Activity Funds and make recommendations for the administration of these funds.

Section VI – Special Committees

Special committees may be appointed by the Chairperson or selected by the Policy Council as the need arises.

Article VI – Meetings

Section I – Regular Meetings

Regular meetings of the Policy Council shall be held bi-monthly (unless otherwise stated), normally on the second Wednesday, in Baxley, Georgia, starting at 10:30 a.m. Occasional Policy Council meetings may be conducted via the internet where staff and representatives conduct business from their home county through internet/phone connection.

Section II – Special Meetings

There shall be special called or telephone conferences of the Policy Council only when the Chairperson sees a need. All special meetings shall be called by the Chairperson or designee with advance notification.

Section III – Notice of Meetings

Notices shall be sent to each member of the Policy Council at least one week prior to the date of the regular scheduled meeting. Notices and minutes may be e-mailed to Policy Council members that have an e-mail address. Members without e-mail addresses will receive this information via mail services. Notices of special called meetings shall be made by telephone/e-mail contacts or mail. Members will be given an explanation for any special meetings. Members will also receive a reminder phone call/e-mail the working day before the Policy Council meeting.

Section IV – Reimbursement

Members shall be reimbursed for travel expenses incurred for travel to Policy Council meetings or training at the approved agency rate. Other expenses will be reviewed and discussed with the parent member on an individual basis and reasonable expenses (i.e. babysitting fees) will be reimbursed. Any extended travel on behalf of the agency and expected reimbursements will be discussed in advance of the travel date. All reimbursement shall be processed by the Parent, Family, Community Engagement Specialist or designee.

Section V – Quorum

Seven (7) members or one-third (1/3) of the membership must be present to constitute a quorum for a regular or special called meeting to transact business. The Chairperson votes only in a tie breaking situation.

If a quorum is not present at the meeting, the Chairperson may conduct business if enough members to constitute a quorum can be contacted by phone for their vote during the current meeting.

Article VII – Amendments

These Policy Council By-Laws may be amended by sending a copy of the proposed amendment to each Policy Council member at least one week prior to the meeting. The Policy Council may debate an amendment by a majority vote of the members present.

Date of Policy Council By-Law Revision

Chairperson, Policy Council

Secretary, Policy Council