

## **POLICY COUNCIL BY-LAWS**

### **ARTICLE I: NAME**

The name of this Council shall be the Pinal Gila Head Start Policy Council. Hereafter known as Policy Council (PC).

### **ARTICLE II: PURPOSE**

The purpose of the PC is to work with the Board of Directors, local Head Start sites, and parents to establish a well-functioning governing body that share responsibility for overseeing the delivery of high quality services to children and families in accordance with Head Start legislation, regulations, and policies.

### **ARTICLE III: RESPONSIBILITIES**

The PC and the Board of Directors share Head Start and Early Head Start (HS/EHS) program governance. The PC will approve the following:

1. Activities to support the dynamic involvement of parents in supporting program operations (Shared Decision Making Procedure), including policies to ensure that the Head Start is responsive to community and parent needs (Community & Parent Complaint Procedure);
2. Communitywide needs assessment of the Head Start agency and updates;
3. Criteria for defining recruitment, selection, and enrollment priorities;
4. Applications for Head Start or Early Head Start funding and amendments to such applications, prior to submission of applications;
5. Annual financial audit;
6. Budget planning for program expenditures;
7. Policies for reimbursement and participation in PC activities;
8. Bylaws for the operation of PC;
9. Decisions regarding the employment of Head Start and Early Head Start program staff;
10. Standards of Conduct for program staff, contractors, and volunteers;
11. Criteria for the employment and dismissal of program staff;
12. Procedure for how the PC members will be elected.
13. Review communitywide strategic planning (program philosophy, program plans, including long- and short-range program goals and objectives);
14. Annual agency self-assessment, including any findings and review of Outcome Plan Progress.
15. Program personnel policies and subsequent changes to those policies;
16. Procedures for internal dispute resolution;

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- 17. Review the following monthly reports: financial statements, credit card expenditures, CACFP meals and snacks; program enrollment and attendance; program information summaries;
- 18. Review program information reports (PIR); and
- 19. Review communication and guidance from Office of Head Start.

The PC directly performs the following program functions:

- 20. Serves as a link to the Local Parent Committees, the PGCCS Board of Directors, public and private organizations, and the communities they serve.
- 21. Assists Local Parent Committees in communicating with parents enrolled in Head Start to ensure they understand their rights, responsibilities, and opportunities in Head Start and Early Head Start, and to encourage their participation in the program.
- 22. Assists Local Parent Committees in planning, coordinating, and organizing program activities for parents, with the assistance of program staff, and ensures funds set aside from program budgets are used to support parent activities.
- 23. Assists in recruiting volunteer services from parents, community residents, and community organizations, and assists in the mobilization of community resources to meet identified needs.
- 24. Establishes and maintains procedures for working with Head Start to resolve community complaints about the program.

**ARTICLE IV: MEMBERSHIP**

**Section 1: Eligibility**

At least fifty-one percent (51%) of the membership of the PC shall consist of parents of children presently enrolled in the Head Start and Early Head Start Programs. Other membership categories shall be for Community Representatives, which include businesses, public or private community, civic, professional organizations, and parents from formerly enrolled children.

No one can serve on the PC while any member of their immediate family is employed by PGCCS Head Start or Early Head Start or has a member of their family who serves on a policy-making body of PGCCS that regularly nominates, recommends, screens, or selects employee candidates. Past PGCCS employees are not eligible to participate on the PC within twelve (12) months of their employment termination date.

A member of an immediate family includes: spouse, child parent, grandchildren, sibling, grandparent, aunt/uncle, niece/nephew, or relative by marriage of comparable degree (in-laws, foster, step). This may extend to other relationships if conflict of interest and confidentiality are in jeopardy.

**Section 2: Membership & Selection Process**

A. Current Parent Representative:

PGCCS Head Start sites will have 1 voting representatives for each program “option” they serve. In addition, sites with an Early Head Start program will have 1 additional voting representative.

During the Site Parent Orientation annually in August, PC job descriptions, by-laws, and responsibilities are reviewed.

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All parents will be encouraged to participate and complete a Letter of Introduction. At the September parent center meeting, one parent representatives and one alternate will be elected from the applications.

**B. Community Representative:**

Each Head Start Site will have the opportunity to nominate community representatives from their local community. These nominees may represent local community businesses; public or private community, civic and professional organizations; and others who are familiar with resources and services for low-income children and families, including the parents of formerly enrolled children.

Each nominee must be notified and have already agreed to participate if elected. A Letter of Introduction must be completed, voted by the local parent center committee and forwarded to the Family Services Coordinator prior to the September PC meeting.

At the September meeting, the PC will review all applications and select no more than five (5) Community Representatives.

**Section 3: Alternates**

**A** Council member representative may use an alternate to substitute for him/her in any capacity, provided the alternates name has been approved at the Local Parent Committee and submitted in writing to the Human Resource Manager prior to the meeting.

**Section 4: Voting Rights**

**A.** All member representatives shall have the power to vote. There will be one vote per representative.

**B.** An alternate has the power to vote in the absence of the Council member he/she is representing.

**Section 5: Term of Membership**

**A.** The term of membership for each Council member is one year from September through August. All parent and community members must stand for election or re-election annually. No parent or community representative may serve more than three (3) one year terms as a member or an alternate regardless of the category of membership and whether such terms are served consecutively. Any member serving six (6) or more months on the Council will be considered to have served one full year. Alternates who vote six (6) or more times in a program year will be considered to have served one full year.

**B.** If any member of the Council incurs a total of two (2) consecutive absences, such members will automatically be removed from the Council and the Site affected will be notified. The LPC will elect a new representative for the next PC meeting.

**Section 6: Compensation**

All persons shall serve without compensation. Travel and babysitting will be reimbursed for members per current agency budget rates. Activities such as Self-Assessment, Committee Meetings, Council Meetings, and special training events will qualify for child care/travel reimbursement.

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### **A. Child Care Reimbursement**

Child care for PC activities will be reimbursed per current agency budget rates. Whenever possible, members are encouraged to utilize free childcare, volunteers/family members and sign for in-kind donations.

### **B. Travel Expense (Local)**

Members are encouraged and requested to ride with their local Site Manager or their designee in order to save cost. Council members driving their own car will be reimbursed at current agency budget rate based on map mileage from Site to Central Office. Members driving their own cars are encouraged to carpool when possible.

### **C. Travel Policy (Out of Area)**

1. The annual budget will designate how many parents may be sponsored for each conference.
2. All eligible parents in attendance at the PC meeting where future travel is planned are chosen by a show of hands or; if too many parents are eligible and wishing to attend, their names are put into a drawing. As their names are pulled out they are listed in 1-2-3 order; to include sponsored slots and alternates.
3. Members selected to attend any conference must be able to be away from family and work obligations and assume financial responsibility for expenses not covered by the agency. Qualified expenses are travel costs (air, shuttle, taxi, etc.), hotel (no phone calls, movies, room service, etc.) and conference registration fees. Parents selected to attend a conference will receive advance per diem.
4. After travel accommodations (air fare) are made, Members withdrawing will be responsible for reimbursing the cost of the ticket (reservations are made far in advance in order to obtain the best price) to the agency.
5. Should the Member wish for a family member to travel with them, the agency will not make reservations nor be responsible in anyway for their cost. Member will only be reimbursed single occupancy cost.
6. Upon return from travel, a completed travel report and all required receipts and money due the agency must be submitted to the fiscal department within 5 days.
7. Any Member not complying with all rules and regulations will not be eligible for future travel.
8. Eligibility is defined as a Member that has been officially elected by their LPC, provided orientation into the PC, and meets all attendance requirements. Alternates may only been chosen if regular members are not interested.

## **ARTICLE V: MEETINGS**

### **Section 7. Quorum**

A quorum shall consist of ten (10) voting members of the PC. The PC shall not take any official action at any meeting unless a quorum is present. When there is no quorum, members shall have the right to vote by phone or e-mail. PC members participating in a telephone, email, and/or conference call will be counted as present to establish a quorum. However, if a matter on the agenda at any regularly scheduled meeting is deemed by the Chairperson to be urgent, the Chairperson may contact absent PC members by telephone or facsimile transmission to achieve a quorum for the purposes of conducting urgent business. Matters that may be deemed by the Chairperson to be urgent may include, but are not limited to, budgetary and personnel matters.

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### Section 8. Voting

Voting may be done via conference call, speaker phone or email system. A vote of the quorum of the membership shall decide any matter. The PC will vote on Head Start and Early Head Start employee hires using the PC approved hiring form. No proxy voting shall be permitted by any member.

It is the intent of the PC to hold all Regular, Special Committee meetings in an open forum. However, the PC reserves the right to hold an executive session for items that may be sensitive in terms of human relations, labor relations, real estate holdings, certain work sessions, and hiring or terminations. The PC will take no official action in executive session.

### Section 9: Regular Meetings

Regular meetings of the Council shall be scheduled monthly on the Fourth Tuesday at 6:30 p.m. at the Agency Conference Center.

All Council members are expected to attend monthly PC meetings. If a Parent Representative cannot attend, they must contact their SM/SS at least forty-eight (48) hours prior to the meeting. If neither a member nor the member's alternate can attend, the SM/SS is expected to call the Human Resource Manager before the meeting is held.

### Section 10: Special Meetings

Special meetings of the Council may be called at the discretion of the Chairperson, upon request of the CEO/DCEO or at the request of one-third of the membership

## ARTICLE VI: OFFICERS

### Section 11: Council Officers

The officers of the Council shall be Chairperson, Vice Chairperson, Secretary, and Treasurer.

### Section 12: Powers and Duties

- A. **Chair:** shall be responsible for presiding over meetings, calling special and standing committee meetings, appointing special committees, officially representing the Council at all functions, working closely with the CEO/DCEO, serve on the PGCCS Board of Directors, and performing such other duties as the Council may request.
- B. **Vice Chair:** shall serve in the absence of the Chairperson, serves on the Family/Community committee, and serves on the PGCCS Board of Directors, and other duties as needed.
- C. **Secretary:** shall work closely with the Human Resource Manager to ensure certification of membership by monthly roll call and collection of agency sign in sheets. Secretary will also ensure minutes of all meetings are accurately recorded and signed, and confirm all members are receiving meeting notifications.
- D. **Treasurer:** shall serve as a member of the agency Finance committee.
- E. PGCCS Board of Director seats. If the PC Chair or Vice Chair can not fulfill the PGCCS Board of Director seats another PC member at large will be selected by the PC to serve the one year term.

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**Section 13: Election of Officers**

- A. The election of Council officers shall take place each year at the regularly scheduled October meeting.
- B. Term of office shall be from October through August of the following year.
- C. In the event a vacancy between elections exists, the office shall be appointed by the Chair. Should the vacancy be that of Chair, all officers shall move up and a new Treasurer appointed by the Chair.
- D. No two relatives may hold executive level offices (PC or Board) simultaneously.
- E. All elections shall be by secret ballot.

ARTICLE VII: COMMITTEES

**Section 14: Executive Committee**

The Executive Committee shall consist of the Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary, and Treasurer. The committee may:

- 1. Act as the Personnel Committee for purposes of hiring and firing staff, reviewing agency personnel policies for updates and corrections, and other personnel issues the CEO/DCEO may present.
- 2. Review and recommend revision of by-laws for PC approval as needed.
- 3. Meet at the request of the CEO/DCEO to review other program problems before presentation to the Council for action.
- 4. Make decisions for PC when meeting is not feasible/possible. The PC will ratify all actions at their next regularly scheduled meeting.

**Section 15: Agency Finance Committee**

The Finance committee shall consist of the PC Treasurer and 2 members at large. Responsibilities of the Agency Finance committee are to serve on the Agency Finance Committee for preparation of the Head Start and Early Head Start grants in conjunction with the Board of Directors and staff.

**Section 16: Planning Committee (Agency)**

The agency Planning Committee is agency wide and is composed of the PC Vice Chair, 2 members of the PC, Board members, community representatives, Coordinators, CEO and DCEO. Responsibilities include the Community Assessment, strategic planning, establishing goals and objectives of the agency as well as review, and establishing a facilities policy.

**Section 17: Special Committees**

From time to time, special issues may arise. The Chair may appoint committees to address these issues as needed.

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### **ARTICLE VIII: STANDARDS OF CONDUCT**

1. All members of the PC shall abide by all current Federal and State regulations and laws regarding financial conflict of interest, nepotism in employment, acceptance of gifts and gratuities and the prohibition against political party activities. Members will also comply with all Agency Confidentiality requirements.
2. Any member who knowingly participates in and does not abide by the above will be automatically barred from the Council.

### **ARTICLE IX: AMENDMENT**

These by-laws may be amended at any regular or special meeting of the Council by the majority vote of the members present, provided that written notice of the proposed amendments shall have been mailed to each member at least ten (10) days prior to the meeting at which time the amendment is to be considered.

Lucas Sheehan  
PC CHAIR SIGNATURE

August 19, 2008  
Date