

Williamsburg Y Head Start

Policy Council Orientation 2024-2025



Agenda

- History of Head Start
- Foundations of Head Start
- Program Structure
- Federal Guidelines for Policy Council
- Classroom Officers
- Policy Council Positions
- Duties and Responsibilities
- Nomination/Election Process



The History of Head Start

In January of 1964, President Lyndon B. Johnson declared The War on Poverty in his State of the Union speech. As part of President Lyndon B. Johnson's 'War on Poverty,' Head Start was conceived based on the recommendations of a panel of childhood development experts who created the Cooke Report as a "blueprint" for what would soon become Head Start. What started as a Summer program by the Office of Economic Opportunity, with the goal of breaking the cycle of poverty through the care and education of 561,000 children, Head Start has since served more than 37 million children and their families.



The Foundation of Head Start



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The History of the Williamsburg Y

For over 40 years the YM & YWHA of Williamsburg, Inc. has believed in providing an excellent and engaging early childhood education experience. Our curriculum is built on the belief that children will excel when given the opportunity to explore and create within their classroom environment. Our program is child-centered and helps provide the foundation on which all later learning will be built. We strongly believe that the family and teachers must form a close alliance for the benefit of each child in the school.



Program Structure

Office of Head Start



Board of Directors

- To oversee legal and fiscal operations



Parent Policy Council

- To help plan, approve decisions, participate in hiring, and a variety of decisions that affect our enrolled children and families



Director (Elzbieta Szura)

- To oversee program operations

Our program also collaborates with the New York City Department of Education to provide 3K/4K services



Federal Guidelines for Policy Council

- Each Head Start agency shall have a policy council responsible for the direction of the Head Start program, including program design and operation, and long- and short-term planning goals and objectives, taking into account the annual communitywide strategic planning and needs assessment and self-assessment.
- The policy council shall be composed of--
 - (I) parents of children who are currently enrolled in the Head Start program of the Head Start agency (including any delegate agency), who shall constitute a majority of the members of the policy council; and
 - (II) members at large of the community served by the Head Start agency who may include parents of children who were formerly enrolled in the Head Start program of the agency.



Classroom Officers

- A classroom officer serves as a liaison between the teachers and the parents.
- Once elected to be a classroom officer the parent is invited to attend the policy council election
- At this election the parent may nominate themselves or be nominated by another parent to hold a Policy Council position. These positions are:
 1. Chairperson
 2. Vice – Chairperson
 3. Secretary
 4. Treasurer
 5. Personnel Chairperson
 6. Grievance Chairperson
 7. Chairperson of By-Laws



Policy Council Positions

- Chairperson: Calls meeting to order, prepares agenda with the Head Start Director and any other pertinent persons. Serves on committees. Works closely with the Head Start Director as necessary and acts as the official representative of the Council (unless delegated)
- Vice Chairperson: Substitutes for Chairperson in his/her absence or as requested when he/she temporarily vacates the chair.
- Secretary: Takes minutes of the last meeting and prepares them for presentation. Reads correspondence as needed.



Policy Council Positions

- Treasurer: Works closely with the Fiscal Officer and reports to the policy council on the Parent Activity Fund.
- Personnel Chairperson: Sits in on the hiring process.
- Grievance Chairperson: Addresses issues that may arise in the agency and works towards a resolution.
- Chairperson of By-laws: Reviews the By-laws
- Community Representative: Former parent who is an active member of the community who is familiar with resources and services for low income children



Policy Council Duties and Responsibilities

- The Policy Council is composed of members elected by classroom officers. Members serve a one-year term and must stand for re-election if they wish to continue for another year, with a maximum service limit of five years.
- Policy Council members must not have any conflict of interest with the Head Start agency.
- Their responsibilities include planning agendas and activities for monthly meetings, as well as encouraging all parents to actively participate in their children's education.



Policy Council Duties and Responsibilities

RESPONSIBILITIES- The Policy Council is involved in the fiscal and programmatic decision making of the program including:

- Activities to support the active involvement of parents in supporting program operations
- Program recruitment, selection, and enrollment priorities.
- Applications for funding
- Budget planning for program expenditures
- Bylaws for the operation of the policy council.
- Program personnel policies
- Planning and participation of special events for children.



Election Process

- All classroom officers participate in the Policy Council election. You may nominate yourself or another parent. If nominated, you have the option to decline the nomination if you do not wish to serve.
- If you accept the nomination, you will be asked to introduce yourself and explain why you believe you're a good fit for the role. Each parent or guardian in the group will then vote for their preferred candidate, with the majority vote determining the winner.
- Please note, we will only elect one representative per position—no alternates or shared memberships are allowed.



Members of the Policy Council

- Are respected as vital members of the program's decision-making team.
- Receive the Policy Council Code of Conduct, bylaws, and governance training to enhance leadership effectiveness within the program.
- Have opportunities to travel to trainings and events as representatives of Williamsburg Y Head Start parents.



**YOU WILL LEARN MORE THAN
YOU COULD EVER IMAGINE
AND WILL MAKE A
DIFFERENCE!!**



**Thank you for
joining us!**

Questions/Comments?