



**Head Start Policy Council
Bylaws**

Article I: Authority

Section One. Establishment. Under provisions of Part 1301 of the Code of Federal Regulations, the Head Start Policy Council (HSPC) is established by the AISD Board of Trustees (the Board). The Board delegates to the Superintendent to designate an appropriate staff member to serve as the HSPC Coordinator (the Coordinator).

Section Two. Limitations. The HSPC reports to the Board, but any HSPC communications to the Board of Trustees must go through the Superintendent, via the Coordinator. The HSPC shall have no power to expend public funds, enter into contracts, or otherwise place obligation or liability upon the district.

Section Three. Bylaws. It shall be the responsibility of the Coordinator of District Advisory Bodies, in consultation with the Coordinator, to establish and amend the bylaws. The HSPC shall approve and observe the bylaws.

Section Four. Sunset. Under provisions of district policy BDF(Local), the HSPC shall be subject to a biennial sunset review process.

Article II: Charge and Responsibilities

Section One. Charge. The HSPC shall provide direction to the district's Head Start program, including program design and operation, and long- and short-term planning goals and objectives, taking into account community needs.

Section Two. Responsibilities. The HSPC shall approve and submit to the Board decisions about each of the following, as outlined in the Head Start Act:

- 1) Activities to support the active involvement of parents in supporting program operations, including policies to ensure that the Head Start agency is responsive to community and parent needs.
- 2) Program recruitment, selection, and enrollment priorities.
- 3) Applications for funding and amendments to applications for funding for programs under this subchapter, prior to submission of applications described in this clause.
- 4) Budget planning for program expenditures, including policies for reimbursement and participation in policy council activities.
- 5) Bylaws for the operation of the policy council.
- 6) Program personnel policies and decisions regarding the employment of program staff, consistent with Board policy, including standards of conduct for program staff, contractors, and volunteers and criteria for the employment and dismissal of program staff.
- 7) Developing procedures for how members of the policy council of the Head Start agency will be elected.
- 8) Recommendations on the selection of delegate agencies and the service areas for such agencies.

Article III: Meetings

Section One. Regular Meetings. Shortly after the members of the HSPC have been elected, the Coordinator and Co-Chairs shall determine the regular meeting schedule for each school year. The regular meeting schedule shall be placed on the HSPC website. The regular meeting schedule may be revised as necessary by the Coordinator and Co-Chairs. If necessary, the Coordinator and Co-Chairs may cancel a regular meeting with good cause (i.e., inclement weather or other adverse conditions), and determine if the meeting should be rescheduled. Members shall be given the reason for meeting cancellations, and be given sufficient notice of cancelled or rescheduled meetings.

Section Two. Subcommittees. The Coordinator and Co-Chairs may establish subcommittees of the HSPC from time to time on any matter as deemed necessary or appropriate. Subcommittees may not constitute a quorum of the HSPC. The Coordinator and Co-Chairs shall determine whether subcommittee meetings are open to the public (if they are open to the public, meetings must be posted under provisions of Section Eight of this Article). The Coordinator and Co-Chairs may select a HSPC member to serve as the chair of a subcommittee. Unless otherwise directed by the Coordinator and Co-Chairs, subcommittees shall meet at the discretion of the subcommittees. Subcommittees are not required to have a regular meeting schedule. Subcommittees shall report findings or recommendations to the HSPC through the Coordinator. Unless otherwise directed by the Coordinator and Co-Chairs, subcommittees are not required to take minutes of meetings.

Section Three. Open Meetings. All regular meetings and other plenary meetings of the HSPC shall be open to the public, and the public shall have a reasonable opportunity to provide comment. The time given to speakers may be limited (see the district's Communications and Visitor Requirements).

Section Four. Quorum. For regular meetings of the HSPC, a quorum shall be a simple majority of the current membership (vacancies do not count toward a quorum). Meetings may still be held without a quorum for purposes of presentations or discussion. However, no actions or voting may take place without a quorum.

Section Five. Attendance. Member attendance shall be monitored by the Coordinator, who shall work with members to try and resolve any attendance problems. More than three unexcused absences within a one-year period may result in dismissal by the Coordinator. Excused absences include, but are not limited to, personal or family illness, emergency situations, jury or military duty, or mandatory employment duty. It shall be the responsibility of members to report excused absences to the Coordinator, and the Coordinator shall record excused absences. In cases of numerous excused absences or long-term absence, the Coordinator shall consider the factors in each individual case and determine whether continued service on the HSPC is practicable.

Section Six. Virtual Attendance. Members may virtually participate, including voting, in meetings through various means, to the extent they are readily available to the Coordinator.

Section Seven. Decision-Making. Members shall attempt to reach decisions by consensus. However, if a clear consensus cannot be obtained, decisions shall be reached by a majority vote. Proxy voting shall not be permitted.

Section Eight. Agendas. Agendas shall be prepared for all regular meetings and posted on the HSPC website and at the AISD central office at least 72 hours in advance of meetings. Agenda items shall

normally be determined by the Coordinator and Co-chairs. However, a majority of the HSPC may place an item on a future agenda.

Section Nine. Minutes. Minutes shall be kept for all regular meetings and other plenary meetings of the HSPC. Minutes may be kept for subcommittees at the direction of the Coordinator and Co-Chairs. Minutes are records of meeting highlights, and are not intended to provide a high level of detail. At a minimum, minutes shall include: attendance of members, staff, and visitors; the time the meeting was called to order and adjourned; the outcome of any votes or other actions; and a brief synopsis of the meeting proceedings. Minutes for regular meetings and other plenary meetings shall be approved by the HSPC and posted on the HSPC website.

Article IV: Membership

Section One. Restrictions. The following restrictions apply to the HSPC membership:

- *Parent* means a Head Start child's mother or father, other family member who is a primary caregiver, foster parent or authorized caregiver, guardian or the person with whom the child has been placed for purposes of adoption pending a final adoption decree.
- Community members may not be parents or employees of the district, and must be at least 18 years of age.
- Close relatives may not serve on the HSPC at the same time.

Section Two. Membership Selection. Parents of currently enrolled students in each Head Start classroom shall elect one parent delegate and one alternate to the HSPC. If there is not a parent from a given class elected to Policy Council, a representative at-large can be elected from another class at that campus. As close to the beginning of the school year as practicable, the Coordinator shall ensure that elections are held at each participating school. The Coordinator may consult with the Coordinator of District Advisory Bodies in establishing election criteria.

In addition to parent representatives, there shall be a minimum of one (1) representative from the community, and additional community representatives up to a maximum of 49 percent of the HSPC. A Community Representative is a member-at-large elected to the HSPC to represent the whole membership of the body rather than an individual classroom or campus and may be a past Head Start parent or other member of the community who supports the Head Start Program and has skills useful to the HSPC. A Community Representative must be approved by the HSPC before they can be seated.

Section Three. Term of Service. The term of service for a member shall be for one given school year. Members may serve as many as five total terms.

Section Four. Mid-Term Vacancies. If a member resigns or is dismissed, the Coordinator and Co-Chairs shall fill the position for the remainder of the term (an election is not required). If less than one-half of a school year remains in the term, the position may be left vacant at the discretion of the Coordinator and Co-Chairs.

Section Five. Continued Operation. Any vacated terms shall not cause the HSPC to discontinue its operations.

Section Six. Conflict of Interest. Conflicts of interest shall include, but are not necessarily limited to, the following:

- Having a pecuniary interest in any discussions or recommendations of the committee.
- Involvement in any litigation or procedural challenges against the district.

Any cases or possible cases of conflict of interest shall be referred to the Coordinator of District Advisory Bodies, who may consult with the General Counsel as necessary, for appropriate action. If a member is determined to have a conflict of interest, appropriate action may include:

- Required recusal from a particular agenda item or items.
- Required recusal from a particular meeting or meetings.
- Removal from the committee.

Section Seven. Code of Conduct. The district welcomes freedom of expression and debate. However, HSPC members shall conduct themselves, in meetings and at all other times, with courtesy and respect to fellow members, district parents and students, district staff and Trustees, and members of other district advisory committees. In meetings, members must be recognized by the Co-Chairs before speaking, and otherwise respect the order maintained by the Co-Chairs. Unless otherwise authorized by the HSPC, members shall not speak for the HSPC; and, unless otherwise authorized by the administration, members shall not speak for the district. Members, by their comments and/or actions, shall not reflect badly on the HSPC. Violation of this code of conduct may result in reprimand or dismissal by the Coordinator of District Advisory Bodies.

Section Eight. Undue Advantage. HSPC members shall not use their position to gain or attempt to gain an undue advantage for themselves or anyone else. Violation of this requirement may result in dismissal by the Coordinator of District Advisory Bodies. (As examples, it would be considered an undue advantage if a person included his or her membership in the HSPC in the reasoning for allowing a student transfer or for allowing a student entry into a particular program; however it would not be considered an undue advantage for a person to include HSPC membership on his or her resume.)

Article V: Co-Chairs and Secretary

Section One. Selection of Co-Chairs. Shortly after the members of the HSPC have been elected, the members shall select two members to serve as Co-Chairs of the HSPC. At least one of the Co-Chairs must be a parent.

Section Two. Term of Service. The term of service for a Co-Chair shall be for one given school year. Co-Chairs may serve a total of two school years in that capacity.

Section Three. Mid-Term Vacancies. If a vacancy occurs after a Co-Chair's term has commenced, the members shall promptly select a new Co-Chair to serve out any remainder of the term.

Section Four. Responsibilities. The responsibilities of the Co-Chairs shall include:

- Consulting with the Coordinator in the development of HSPC agendas.
- Presiding at meetings of the HSPC (refer to the district's Information for Chairs of Committees). The Co-chairs shall ensure basic parliamentary procedure, and apply the district's Citizens Communications and Visitor Requirements.

- Representing the HSPC as necessary or appropriate.

Section Five. Secretary. For a given school year, the Coordinator and Co-Chairs shall select a member to serve as Secretary. The Secretary shall take notes during meetings and preparing formal meeting minutes, and provide them to the Coordinator in a timely manner.

Article VI: Additional Administrative Support

Section One. Additional Support. In addition to the responsibilities of the Coordinator described under other Articles of these bylaws, the Coordinator shall ensure an appropriate level of support for the HSPC, which shall include, but is not limited to:

- Securing adequate facility arrangements and support staff for meetings.
- Providing members with agendas and review materials as may be appropriate in advance of meetings.
- Serving as custodian of HSPC records, including the status of member terms.
- Ensuring that orientation and training information is provided to new HSPC members.
- Maintaining the HSPC website.
- Communicating as needed with the Coordinator of District Advisory Bodies.

Article VII: Shared Governance Procedures

Section One. Mutual Communication. Any formal action of the HSPC shall be communicated in a timely manner to the Board, through the Superintendent. Likewise, any formal action of the Board related to the district's Head Start program shall be communicated in a timely manner to the HSPC, through the Superintendent.

Section Two. Impasse Procedures. Any disagreement or dispute between the formal actions of the HSPC and those of the Board must also be part of mutual communication. If a disagreement or dispute cannot be resolved within a reasonable timeframe through mutual communication, the Coordinator of District Advisory Bodies shall be informed, who will in a timely manner convene an impasse resolution committee to consist of the HSPC Co-Chairs and Board President and Vice-President.

Section Three. Arbitration. If the impasse resolution committee cannot reach a mutually acceptable resolution, the involved parties must select a mutually agreeable third-party arbitrator, who shall reach a decision in a timely manner which shall be final.