



# **REDDING RANCHERIA HEAD START PROGRAM POLICY COUNCIL HANDBOOK**

## **HEAD START POLICY COUNCIL**

The role of the Head Start Policy Council is to share the responsibility, along with the Tribal Council and Head Start Staff, for overseeing the delivery of high quality service to children and families in accordance with Head Start legislation, regulations and policies.

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## **Introduction**

One of the first things you will need to understand is that every Head Start program is organized and operated differently. You may find yourself at a Head Start conference talking to a Policy Council member from another program and they may tell you that you are not doing something in the right way, because their program does it differently. Rest assured, your program is not wrong just because you conduct business differently. However, there are laws, rules, and regulations that all Head Start programs must follow. The primary rules Policy Council Members must follow are the Head Start Performance Standards and your program's Policy Council By-laws. As long as these rules are being followed, your program can operate in the way that is best for the program.

### **Why is there a Policy Council?**

The federal government awards money to run a Head Start program to a local agency such as a YMCA, a school district or an Indian Tribe. This agency is called the "Grantee." In return the Grantee Board of Directors (Tribal Council) agrees to abide by the Head Start Performance Standards. The Head Start Performance Standards require that every Head Start Grantee have a Policy Council. The Policy Council is made up of parents/ guardians of currently enrolled Head Start children, and representatives of the community. In order for the Head Start program to continue to receive money from the federal government, there must be a Policy Council.

### **Interacting with Head Start Staff**

The Policy Council and Tribal Council are policy making groups who makes decisions that guide and direct the program. The Head Start staff is responsible for implementing the policies that are made by the Policy Council and the Tribal Council. In other words, Policy Council sets policy for the program but does not interfere with the day-to-day management of the program. The Head Start staff makes decision about the day to day operations, but does not make policy.

The Head Start staff should provide facts, information and support to Policy Council and Tribal Council so that the Policy Council and Tribal Council can make good decisions.

Policy Council members will often spend a great deal of time at the Head Start program and are often approached by staff to discuss issues of concern to them. Policy Council members must not interfere in the day-to-day operations of the program, nor should they listen to "personnel" issues. While a staff member may have a real concern, as a Policy Council member you must instruct the staff member to follow the established program policies and procedures to deal with his/ her concerns.

### **In Closing...**

The Policy Council is an integral part of Head Start. The idea of having a group composed of parents and community members that share governance of an organization along with a Board of Directors (Tribal Council) is unique to Head Start. The opportunities you will have as a member of Policy Council are countless. You should take advantage of opportunities and participate in the Policy Council and the Head Start program as much as you can.

This packet will help you understand your job and how you can accomplish the work you will need to do.

# REDDING RANCHERIA TRIBAL GOVERNMENT POLICIES

## Chapter TP 8-219

### Head Start Policy Council By-Laws



April 14, 2015

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SECTION 1: PURPOSE

This policy defines the composition, formation and rules of operation of the Head Start Policy Council. The Redding Rancheria Tribal Council establishes the Head Start Policy Council under authority of Part V of the Redding Rancheria Governing

Policies, to assist the Tribal Council and the Head Start Staff regarding the development and operation of the Head Start program. The Head Start Policy Council will act on behalf of the Tribal Council as the primary community oversight body for the Head Start program, serving as a liaison between the program and the community, providing community input to the program and advising the community about the program services and responsibilities. The Head Start Policy Council will work in partnership with the tribal Chief Executive Officer and the Head Start Director, to create long and short term program plans, provide recommendations on policies and procedures for the ongoing operation and success of the program, and advise and recommend program priorities to the Tribal Council.

## SECTION 2: BACKGROUND AND INTENT

The Redding Rancheria Tribal Council is committed to the development of its people and is determined to make every effort to provide continuous learning opportunities for members, beginning at the earliest ages, and lasting throughout an individual's lifetime. The Tribal Council recognizes the benefits early childhood development services can have on the lifelong growth of its members. In 1995, the Tribal Council established the Redding Rancheria Head Start program to provide the highest quality early childhood development opportunities for tribal children, and to place the Tribe in a position to direct the early development of its children.

The Tribal Council supports the goals of the Head Start program defined by the Advisory Committee on Services for Families, and is committed to quality services to children, prevention, proactive child health development, promoting positive relationships, building parent involvement, respect for languages and cultures, responsiveness to the strengths of children, families and communities, and collaboration with programs to support the development of children.

Consistent with these goals, the Tribe has developed operating policies to encourage the involvement of the community, and particularly, the involvement of Head Start parents to act as an arm of the Tribal Council in an advisory and oversight role to the program. To provide coordination with CFR, Title 45, Subpart D, Section 1304.50 (a) (1) (i), and Part V of the Redding Rancheria Governmental Management Policies, these Operating Policies are designed to provide guidance to the Head Start Policy Council in their advisory and oversight responsibilities of the Head Start Program.

## SECTION 3: DEFINITIONS (Reserved)

## SECTION 4: DELEGATED AUTHORITY (Reserved)

## SECTION 5: AUTHORIZED PROGRAMS AND SERVICES (Reserved)

## SECTION 6: SELECTION OF MEMBERS

At the beginning of each school year, the Head Start Director will provide a notification to each parent and define the process for nomination and election of Policy Council members for the upcoming school year. Nomination will be sought from existing members of the Head Start Parent Committee, and from all enrolled

parents. An election shall be held by written ballot. Those parents receiving the highest votes are elected.

The notification will include the following:

- (a) The criteria for candidate eligibility,
- (b) The process and schedule for nomination of candidates,
- (c) The process and schedule for voting for candidates, and
- (d) The proposed date the new Policy Council will assume responsibilities.

Community representatives for the Policy Council will be nominated by parents, staff and Tribal Council and also elected by parents.

- e) the Tribal Council ratifies the election of both parent and community representative at its earliest meeting following the election. .

#### SECTION 7: MEMBERSHIP AND TERMS OF OFFICE

The Policy Council shall be composed of nine voting members who are elected by the parent body and approved by the Tribal Council. Six members shall be parents of children currently enrolled, who shall be nominated and elected by the Head Start parent community. There shall be three Community representatives who should be familiar with the resources and services of the program and may include parents of formerly enrolled children. Additionally there must be one Tribal Council person serving as a liaison on the Policy Committee; the Tribal Council representative is a non-voting member. There may be up to three (3) parent alternates who have voting privileges only in the absence of another voting member.

#### SECTION 8: ELIGIBILITY

The Policy Council must be comprised of at least 51 percent parents of currently enrolled children and not to exceed 49 percent Community Representatives. No agency staff directly related to or who directly impact Head Start are eligible. (Substitutes and classroom volunteers are exempt.) Only one family member may serve on the Policy Council at any given time. The Policy Council may invite any number of non-voting members as it wishes; they may work on committees and be included in discussions, but have no nominating or decision making authority. Appointment for all Head Start Policy Council members will be made annually, provided that, individual members must limit their service to a combined total of three terms. The annual term runs October to September.

#### SECTION 9: REMOVAL

It is essential that the Policy Council be able to remove a member if necessary in order that business may continue to be conducted. The removal of a Policy Council member will follow the sense of the Tribal Governing Policies:

- (a) Any member of the Policy Council may present an accusation to the Policy Council in writing alleging that a particular Council member

violated, neglected or over-stepped their role as Policy Council member. The accusation must occur during the member's term.

- (b) The Policy Council shall hear the matter in open session at the next regular meeting, but not longer than 30 days.
- (c) The party accusing the Council member shall present evidence and witnesses to support the accusation.
- (d) The Council may conduct an independent investigation and enter evidence if appropriate.
- (e) The accused shall have the right to confront witnesses and challenge evidence.
- (f) The Policy Council shall render its determination in writing in a timely manner, which must be approved by at least five of those Policy Council members voting. (The accused shall not vote in this determination.)
- (g) If the Policy Council determines that the accused member has neglected, violated or surpassed their role, they shall be removed from the Policy Council and their vacancy immediately filled.
- (h) Should the terminated member decide to appeal, he or she may do so by notifying the Policy Council chairperson in writing and by contacting the Tribal Council chairperson within five working days. Their case shall be heard at the next available Tribal Council meeting. The decision of the Tribal Council shall be final.

#### SECTION 10: SELECTION OF OFFICERS

The principal officers for the Head Start Policy Council shall be a Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson, and Secretary/Treasurer. The Head Start Policy Council may select their officers, provided they are elected by a majority vote of the Head Start Policy Council members with a quorum present. After the selection of officers, the Policy Council will submit the list of members and officers for approval by the Tribal Council.

#### SECTION 11: DUTIES OF OFFICERS

The duties of each of the Head Start Policy Council officers shall be consistent with the responsibilities and authorities outlined in Section 10 of this policy.

- (a) Policy Council Chair shall:
  - (1) Issue notices of meetings.
  - (2) Preside at all Head Start Policy Council meetings.

- (3) Present reports to the Tribal Council and tribal community.
  - (4) Serve as official representative and spokesperson for the Policy Council.
  - (5) Coordinate planning between the Head Start Policy Council and the Head Start Program.
  - (6) Serve as the primary liaison between the Head Start Policy Council, the Head director, the Tribal Council and the community.
  - (7) Maintain cordial relationships between the community, the program and the Tribal Council.
- (b) Policy Council Vice-Chairperson shall:
- (1) Support the duties of the chairperson.
  - (2) Serve as chairperson in the chairperson's absence.
- (c) Policy Council Secretary / Treasurer shall:
- (1) Support the duties of the chairperson.
  - (2) Serve as chairperson in the chairperson's absence.
  - (3) Notify all members of meeting schedules.
  - (4) Provide for a written record of all meeting minutes.
  - (5) Support the duties of the chairperson and vice chairperson.
  - (6) Coordinate and review program financial information with the tribal CFO.
  - (7) Provide for reports to the Head Start Policy Council on financial status of the program and the Head Start Policy Council.

## SECTION 12: MEETINGS

Meetings of the Head Start Policy Council may be conducted once each month, but not less than four times each year, at a time and location determined by the Head Start Policy Council Chairperson. All meetings shall be open to the tribal and parent community, provided that, meetings may be closed when the Head Start Policy Council is discussing confidential material.

All meetings require seven days notice except emergency meetings. Such notice shall be delivered to each Head Start Policy Council member and shall be posted in a

conspicuous place at all tribal offices and Head Start. Notices shall include date, time, place and agenda for the meeting.

Emergency meetings require twenty-four hours notice by telephone, and may be called by the Chairperson or by any five members of the Council. The notice shall include the names of those members requesting the emergency meeting and the nature of the emergency. No business shall be transacted at any such emergency meeting except as specified in the notice.

#### SECTION 13: QUORUM

To conduct business, a simple majority of voting members constitute a quorum. For the purpose of passing a motion, a simple majority of voting members present shall rule.

When a quorum is not present, those present may conduct the meeting, with the use of absentee ballots from those not present to secure a quorum. A majority vote of five of the nine voting members is required to pass a motion using absentee ballots. The minutes shall reflect the use of absentee ballots.

#### SECTION 14: RESPONSIBILITIES AND AUTHORITY

The Head Start Policy Council shall work in partnership with the Head Start director, the Chief Executive Officer or his/her designee, and the Tribal Council to establish the short and long term goals of the program and provide advice and recommendations for program policies and procedures to ensure a quality Head Start program. These responsibilities include approval or disapproval of the process for any Head Start personnel hiring or termination, review and recommendation of the Head Start funding application, procedures for shared decision making, criteria and geographical area for recruitment, annual selection and enrollment priorities, participating in the annual program self assessment, participating in the program and community needs assessment and review of follow up actions and recommendations that may result from an annual audit or a federal monitoring visit.

The Head Start Policy Council will advise the tribal Chief Executive Officer or his/her designee on recommended improvements in tribal personnel policies regarding standards of conduct for Head Start program staff, consultants and volunteers, and including recruitment, retention, and development of staff.

The Head Start Policy Council will serve as the Tribal Council's link to parents and the community, assist parents in understanding their rights and responsibilities, encourage parent participation in the program, assist program staff in coordination of parent activities, assist in volunteer recruitment and the mobilization of community resources to support the program, and maintain communication with the Head Start Director, Chief Executive Officer or his/her designee and the Tribal Council to resolve community complaints about the program.

## SECTION 15: VACANCIES

Any vacancy shall be filled by appointment by the Head Start Policy Council chairperson for the duration of the un-expired term, subject to approval by Tribal Council. Vacancies shall occur when a Head Start Policy Council member resigns for any reason, or is removed based on Tribal Governing Policy.

## SECTION 16: CONFLICT OF INTEREST

Members of the Head Start Policy Council may vote on matters regarding the general operation, policies, funding and others issues of the Head Start program, provided that, no Head Start Policy Council member shall vote on any action being taken by the Head Start Policy Council which directly involves the member's child or a member of his or her immediate family. A Head Start Policy Council member may participate in the discussion and count toward the quorum requirements regarding action taken by the Head Start Policy Council which involves a member of his or her immediate family. For purposes of this provision, "immediate family" is defined as father, mother, sister, brother, daughter, son, spouse or spouse equivalent or any other person living in the Head Start Policy Council member's household.

## SECTION 17: TRAVEL AND OTHER REIMBURSEMENTS

Reasonable reimbursement for expenses can be made to Policy Council members for expenses associated with attendance at meetings or training.

Head Start Policy Council travel and reimbursement shall follow the sense of the tribal fiscal management policies. In summary, all travel shall be requested and approved by the Policy Council and signed off by the Program Manager in advance. Any receipts and/or mileage records must be submitted for reimbursement within 30 days. Additionally, Policy Council members may be reimbursed for reasonable meeting expenses such as mileage to and from meetings and trainings or child care. Members requesting reimbursement for meeting expenses must likewise submit a request in advance.

## SECTION 18: FINANCIAL ACCOUNTABILITY

The Head Start Program Design Manager must document and sign off on all financial transactions including but not limited to requests, purchases and travel vouchers; and make regular financial reports to the Policy Council. The Chairperson and the Treasurer shall be primarily responsible for ensuring the financial accountability of the Head Start Policy Council funds and will report in writing any discrepancies to the Education Director and the CFO.

All financial transactions will be approved by the Policy Council at a duly called meeting. Authorized transactions can only be executed by the Program Design Manager as directed by the Policy Council.

Any monetary amounts raised through fund raising or donations will be delivered to the Tribal Finance Department for deposit in a separate tribal account assigned to the Policy Council. Use of these funds is solely at the Policy Council's discretion, and shall be allocated only after approval at a duly called meeting. The Chairperson and the Treasurer shall be primarily responsible for managing this account.

Head Start Policy council funds, budgets and travel shall be administered pursuant to the Tribal Fiscal Management policies adopted by the tribal council. In summary:

- (a) Tribal Council must approve the overall fiscal management policy of the Head Start program.
- (b) Tribal Council must approve all program plans and budgets.
- (c) Tribal Executive Management must approve all contracts that Head Start might enter into.
- (d) Tribal Council must approve all Grants.
- (e) Tribal Council must approve any borrowing and/or financing arrangements.
- (f) Tribal Executive management designates the Department Director as manager for the Head Start budget(s); the Department Director may further allocate that responsibility to the Program Design Manager.
- (g) The budget manager is responsible to prepare and present information related to each budget at tribal meetings and to be available at such meetings to answer questions.
- (h) The manager who is responsible for preparing budgets shall be responsible for maintaining information related to changes made to proposed, recommended and approved budgets during the review process and for future reference.

## SECTION 19: REPORTING

The Head Start Program Manager shall prepare a monthly department report for Tribal Council which includes program highlights and a monthly financial statement.

The chairperson of the Head Start Policy Council will report to the Tribal Council at its request, on highlights and activities of the Head Start Policy Council and policy matters affecting the Head Start program.

## SECTION 20: SEVERABILITY

If a court of competent jurisdiction finds any provision of this policy to be invalid or illegal under applicable tribal and/or federal law, such provision shall be severed from this policy and the remainder of this policy shall remain in full force and effect.

## SECTION 21: REVIEW

The Chairperson of the Head Start Policy Council, in coordination with the Head Start program director and the tribal Chief Executive Officer, will review this policy at least once each year and make recommendations for improvement or changes to the Policy Council. When approved by the Policy Council, these amendments would be forwarded to the Tribal Council for their approval.

Legislative History:

Originally Adopted by Tribal Council Resolution #056-06-16-09, dated June 16, 2009.

Amended by Tribal Council Resolution #059-10-09-12, dated October 9, 2012. Amended by Tribal Council Resolution #029-04-14-15, dated April 14, 2015.

### **Qualifications of Parent Representatives**

1. Must be a parent or guardian of a child currently enrolled in the Head Start or Child Care Program.
2. Must be able to attend regular meetings locally and regionally.
3. Cannot serve more than three years.
4. Must be selected by a majority of parents in the center who attends the election meeting that has been previously scheduled.
5. Must not be related to staff (directly or by marriage).
6. Must not be a staff person directly involved with Head Start.
7. Must be willing and able to communicate with:
  - a) Parents
  - b) Staff
  - c) Tribal Council
  - d) Schools and other agencies
  - e) The general public
8. Previous experience as a volunteer, etc., should be considered.

### **Qualifications of Community Representatives**

1. Must be able to attend regular meetings locally and regionally.
2. Cannot serve more than three years.
3. Must be elected by the parents and approved by the Tribal Council.
4. Must not be related to staff (directly or by marriage).
5. Must not be a staff person directly involved with Head Start.
6. Must be willing and able to communicate with:
  - f) Parents
  - g) Staff
  - h) Tribal Council
  - i) Schools and other agencies
  - j) The general public
7. Previous experience as a volunteer should be considered.

## **Duties and Responsibilities of Policy Council Members (Parent and Community Representatives)**

1. Serve as a link between public and private organizations, other local, state and federal programs and the community it serves. Serve as liaison between the Parent Center Committee and the Policy Council.
2. Assists in identifying and mobilizing community resources to meet identified needs.
3. Take the initiative to obtain information and knowledge about the program in order to offer suggestions and ideas for program improvement; participate in the process of making decisions about the nature and operation of the program.
4. Recruit volunteer services from parents.
5. Participate in the local classroom as a volunteer and /or observer.
6. Keep written materials in an organized, accessible manner and be able to refer to specific guidelines, directives, memorandums, etc., when this is appropriate.
7. Assist in the development of Policies and Procedures for the Head Start program.
8. Evaluate the Head Start Program Components through the self-assessment process outlined in the Head Start self-assessment instrument to summarize compliance with the Performance Standards of which will be submitted to AIPB (American Indian Program Branch) for review and validation.
9. Visit the program at least once a month.
10. Conduct oneself in a professional, ethical manner, such as keeping certain program matters confidential.
11. Be accountable to the parents in the center.
12. Serve as an ambassador for the Head Start Program; be loyal to the program; serve as an advocate for the children in the total program not just those in the local center.
13. Must be willing and able to participate/attend training sessions on a regular basis (locally and regionally).
14. Review, study and understand the Head Start Program Performance Standards.

## **Duties and Responsibilities of Tribal Council Liaison Member**

1. Serve as a link between the Tribal Council and the Policy Council, and between the Rancheria Head Start and public and private organizations, other local, state and federal programs and the community it serves.
2. Keep Tribal Council informed about Head Start issues; keep Head Start informed about Tribal topics.
3. Assists in identifying and mobilizing tribal and community resources to meet identified needs.
4. Take the initiative to obtain information and knowledge about the program in order to offer suggestions and ideas for program improvement; participate in the process of making decisions about the nature and operation of the program.
5. Keep written materials in an organized, accessible manner and be able to refer to specific guidelines, directives, memorandums, etc., when this is appropriate.
6. Assist in the development of Policies and Procedures for the Head Start program.
7. Evaluate the Head Start Program Components through the self-assessment process outlined in the Head Start self-assessment instrument to summarize compliance with the Performance Standards of which will be submitted to AIPB (American Indian Program Branch) for review and validation.
8. Visit the program at least once a month.
9. Conduct oneself in a professional, ethical manner, such as keeping certain program matters confidential.
10. Serve as an ambassador for the Head Start Program; be loyal to the program; serve as an advocate for the children in the total program not just those in the local center.
11. Must be willing and able to participate/attend training sessions on a regular basis (locally and regionally).
12. Review, study and understand the Head Start Program Performance Standards.

## **Roles and Responsibilities of Policy Council Officers**

### **The Head Start Policy Council chairperson shall:**

- Issues notice of meetings
- Preside at all Head Start Policy Council meetings
- Present reports to the Tribal Council and tribal community as needed
- Serve as official representative and spokesperson for the Head Start Policy Council
- Coordinate planning between the Head Start Policy Council and the Head Start program
- Serve as the primary liaison between the Head Start Policy Council, the Head Start director, the Tribal Council and the community
- Maintain cordial relationships between the community, the program and the Tribal Council

### **The Head Start Policy Council Vice-Chairperson shall:**

- Support the duties of the chairperson
- Serve as chairperson in the chairperson's absence

### **The Head Start Policy Council Secretary/ Treasurer shall:**

- Notify all members of meeting schedules
- Provide for a written record of all meeting minutes
- Support the duties of the chairperson and vice chairperson
- Coordinate and review program financial information with the tribal CFO
- Provide for reports to the Head Start Policy Council on financial status of the program and the Head Start Policy Council

### **Literacy Volunteer**

- Assists with children's literacy projects
- Recruits parents to assist with children's literacy
- Acts as parent advocate for those adults who struggle with reading

# Redding Rancheria Head Start

1950 Redding Rancheria Road, Redding, CA 96001

225-8925 fax 225-8930

I understand the importance of my participation as a member of the Policy Council. As a member I agree to the following responsibilities:

1. To participate in planning for the Head Start Program.
2. To represent the interest of all people served by this organization.
3. To refrain from using the organization or my services on the Policy Council for my own personal advantage or for the individual advantage of my friends or supporters.
4. To approach all Policy Council issues with an open mind, prepared to make the best decisions for the whole organization.
5. To accept responsibility for the actions of the Policy Council.
6. To keep confidential information confidential.
7. To assist in fund raising.
8. To attend all meetings.
9. To never exercise authority as a Policy Council member except when acting in a meeting with the full Policy Council or as I am delegated by this group.

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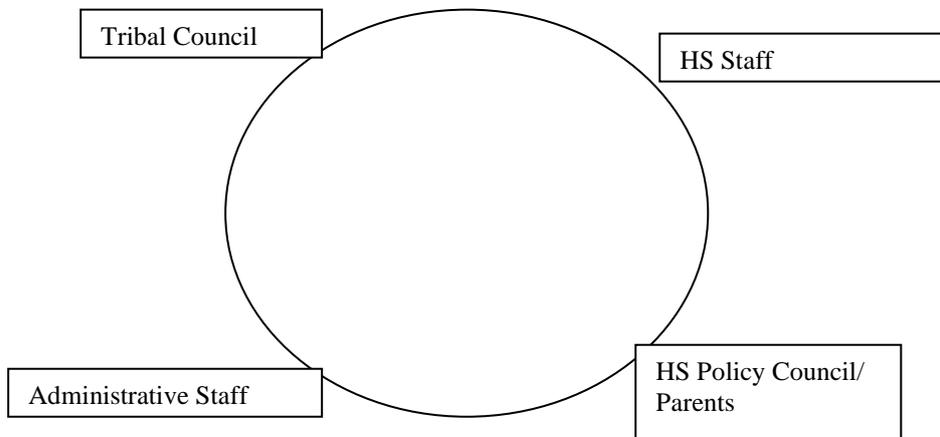
Signature

Date

# Redding Rancheria Tribal Council - Head Start Policy Council Shared Governance Decision Making Circle

As per section 1304.5 of the Head Start Guidelines, every proposed policy, procedure and some specified actions must complete the circle of approval, unchanged, returning to the point of initiation or change before it can be adopted or implemented. The four participants in this process are: 1) The Head Start Program staff and parents 2) The Head Start Policy Council 3) The Tribal Administration staff 4) The Tribal Council.

Proposals can begin at any point in the circle, but must complete the circle with all parties in agreement.



## Date/ Recommendation / Comments

Head Start Staff and parents: \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

Head Start Policy Council: \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

Tribal Administration: \_\_\_\_\_  
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Tribal Council: \_\_\_\_\_  
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