

**BY-LAWS OF THE  
FAMILIES AND CHILDREN TOGETHER, INC.  
POLICY COUNCIL**

**ARTICLE I  
PURPOSE**

To encourage parent and community participation in the process of making decisions about the nature and operation of the Head Start (and Early Head Start) program.

**ARTICLE II  
COMPOSITION**

The Policy Council, at a minimum, will have proportionate parent representatives from all program options with a maximum of forty-nine percent of the Council being comprised of Community Representatives. There will be two (2) elected Head Start (HS) members for the combined counties of Calhoun, Dallas, and Ouachita; one (1) elected HS member for Columbia County; two (2) elected HS members for the combined counties of Hempstead, Lafayette, and Nevada; three (3) elected HS members for Union County; two (2) elected Early Head Start (EHS) members; one (1) elected Home Based (HB) member; and three (3) Community Representatives. Community Representatives will be members at-large from the FACT, Inc. service area. This describes a total membership of fourteen (14) members.

Upon the selection and seating of the new parent members, the names of the Community Representatives, recommended by the Governing Board, Head Start Director, staff, and parents, will be submitted to the parent members for approval. The parent members may choose to submit other names for approval. Only the parent members of the Policy Council will vote on the Community Representatives.

There will be no staff or Governing Board Member (nor members of their families) allowed to serve on the Policy Council in a voting capacity.

**ARTICLE III  
MEMBERSHIP TERMS**

The membership of the Policy Council will be rotated to assure a regular influx of new ideas into the program. Terms of membership extend from the time of election until the next Council is seated. All terms are one (1) year in length. Membership is limited to no more than five years.

Policy Council Representatives who miss two consecutive meetings without having submitted a legitimate excuse in writing will be notified in writing of their removal from the Council. The parent group(s) in the area represented by the exiting member will be notified of this action and will have the option to have another parent fill this vacancy. Should the child of the EHS member “age out” of the EHS program during the year, the parent may, if he/she so desires, continue to serve on the Council for the remainder of that year in the capacity of an at-large Community Representative member.

In the event of a Community Representative vacancy, the Chair will appoint a nominating committee to submit additional names in order to fill the vacancy. Only the parent members of the Policy Council will vote on the replacement.

#### **ARTICLE IV** **OFFICERS**

New officers will be elected annually at the first meeting of the full Policy Council. The officers will be the Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson, and Secretary. The minutes will be recorded by the Secretary and distributed to all members of the Council for approval. The minutes will be signed by both the Chairperson and Secretary.

The Chairperson will conduct the meeting according to Robert’s Rules of Order and will only vote in the case of a tie.

Elected officers will serve as the Policy Council Executive Committee.

#### **ARTICLE V** **MEETINGS**

The Policy Council will meet at least four times per year at a time and place determined by the Council, with special meetings called by the Chair or Head Start Director. The Council and Governing Board will have joint meetings a minimum of twice per year. Emergency meetings may be convened by phone

with all available members. Documentation, in the form of minutes, will be given to the Council for approval at the next regularly scheduled meeting.

Policy Council business will be conducted only in the event that a quorum is present. For the purposes of the Policy Council, a quorum is to be comprised of no less than 40% of the total membership, and, of that quorum, at least 51% must be parent members of the Council. During the months of June, July, August, and September a quorum is to be comprised of no less than 30% of the total membership, and, of that quorum, at least 51% must be parent members of the Council.

## **ARTICLE VI** **MISCELLANEOUS**

Between regularly scheduled Policy Council meetings, the Executive Committee (or two-thirds majority of the Executive Committee) will have the authority to act upon emergency actions requiring Council approval.

The full Policy Council will be made aware of any actions taken by the Executive Committee (or two-thirds vote of the Executive Committee) at the next regularly scheduled full Council meeting by way of minutes and/or special reports.

In situations in which time or costs would preclude calling a regular meeting, and when the business is brief and uncomplicated, it will be permitted to use alternate methods such as e-mail or conference calls for voting purposes. All efforts will be made to involve every member. Total number of participation must be at least equal to the quorum required for a meeting at that date. A detailed recording will be kept and reported on at the next regular meeting.

## **ARTICLE VII** **FUNCTIONS AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **GENERAL PROCEDURES**

#### **Operating Responsibility:**

- Assist in the method of hearing and resolving community complaints about the HS program.

#### **Must approve or disapprove:**

- Composition of the Policy Council and the method of organizing it according to guidelines.
- Procedures identifying shared decision-making between the Governing Body and the Council.

- Written procedures for resolving internal disputes, including impasse procedures, between the Governing Body and Council.

## **PLANNING**

### **Must approve or disapprove:**

- Procedures for program planning.
- The agency's philosophy and long- and short-range program goals and objectives.
- Criteria for the selection of children within applicable laws and guidelines.
- Requests for funds and major changes in funding prior to submitting to DHHS.
- Council and Parent Committee reimbursements for reasonable expenses incurred by members.
- The agency's annual self-assessment.

## **HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT**

### **Must approve or disapprove:**

- Personnel policies and changes including standards of conduct for staff, consultants, and volunteers.
- Hiring and termination of the Early Head Start and/or Head Start Director.
- Hiring and termination of the Early Head Start and/or Head Start staff.

Revised 07/20/2017