Center Parent Committee Meeting Procedure

POLICY/APPROACH:

Our program creates a variety of opportunities for interaction with parents throughout the year. Center Parent Committee membership includes all parents and guardians of children enrolled at the center. Parent Committee meetings are the opportunity to form friendships and social networks between parents; to educate and inform parents of their role in children’s school success; to elect Policy Council representatives who report back to the parent committee regarding program governance activities and actions; and to stimulate connections between parents and staff. Meetings and interactions must be respectful of each family’s diversity and cultural background.

Policy Council Approval 8/19/2014
Board Approval 8/21/2014

HEAD START PROGRAM PERFORMANCE STANDARDS:

1301.4 & 1302.46 Family Partnerships
1301.2 Program Governance

PROCEDURES:

Head Start center parent committees are convened as soon as possible after the start of school and meet monthly at each center.

EHS centers meet every other month at a minimum, or monthly dependent upon parent interest.

Each Head Start center parent committee will be comprised of 1-4 classes. The optimal size is 2 classes per center parent committee. In EHS, one center parent committee is established at each center.

The first gathering of the year is significantly different to subsequent gatherings, as the group needs to decide on its leadership, and elect representatives to Policy Council. The first meeting is necessarily guided by staff, in conjunction with returning parents, while subsequent gatherings will be steered by parent leaders with staff in a supporting role.

Staff will maximize opportunities for families to share their own interests, concerns and aspirations, using a discussion-based approach.
ELECT OFFICERS AND POLICY COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVES

- At the first parent meeting elections will be held for Parent Committee officers: Chairperson, Vice Chairperson, Secretary, and for Policy Council representatives (see Policy Council By-laws for details).

- Election results must be recorded in the minutes and kept in the Parent Center Committee Meeting Notebook.

TRAIN CENTER OFFICERS

- Center Officers receive training packets when elected.

- Family Advocates/EHS center managers are responsible for ensuring that officers are oriented to the meeting process and receive ongoing training and support to fulfill their leadership roles.

MEET WITH OFFICERS TO PLAN

- Family Advocates/EHS Center Managers in conjunction with parent group officers, they will develop the parent meeting topic, discussion questions, and agenda ahead of time.

ELEMENTS OF A PARENT MEETING:

- Publicity and forward planning are key to the success of forming an engaged parent group.

- Empower parents to build strong relationships amongst other families at their center in order to develop a strong network of peer support and involvement.

- Required topics:
  - Initial Parent Meeting- use the Family Interest Form to gather interests including volunteer and center activity opportunities, center officer election, and Policy Council representative elections. *see Family Interest Form for details
  - During October or November- first Opportunity Gap workshop
  - Other required topics: Health/Nutrition, Disabilities/Mental Health, Financial education
  - During February or March- second Opportunity Gap workshop
  - Integrate Opportunity Gap, Summer Slide into the Transition Parent Meeting in the spring.

- A Teacher or Site Manager will attend each parent meeting to present information or training from a child development perspective.
• Secretary records minutes of decisions, elections, events and other business to be placed in Center Parent Committee Meeting Notebook.

• Policy Council report: Representatives report back from the previous month’s Policy Council. PC Reps may gather parent interests, inquiries, concerns, as appropriate for inclusion on the PC agenda.

• Support parent networking and linkages in school and in the community, by sharing class lists and community events.

• Develop sub-committees when needed.

HONORING DIVERSITY

It is important for Parent, Family and Community Engagement (PFCE) staff to recognize the diversity in their parent group and develop activities that celebrate, and are respectful of, all families.

• Simultaneous interpreting may be provided as available for bilingual families

• Information sent home may be translated to native language.