



HEAD START
&
EARLY
HEAD START

509 W Houston,
Broken Arrow, OK

CARDHEADSTART.COM



PARENT & FAMILY ENGAGEMENT HANDBOOK

WELCOME TO HEAD START / EARLY HEAD START

WELCOME

to

CARD Head Start / Early Head Start

Dear Parents and Guardians,



We are thrilled to welcome you to our Head Start and Early Head Start community! These programs are designed with your child's holistic development in mind, ensuring they receive a strong foundation in their early years. Head Start caters to preschool children, providing them with educational, nutritional, and social services to prepare them for school. Meanwhile, Early Head Start focuses on infants, toddlers, and pregnant women, offering comprehensive early childhood and family support services. Our mission is to empower families, like yours, by providing resources, knowledge, and skills that nurture your child's growth and potential. Together, we'll pave the way for a brighter future for your child!

Embark on a journey that's not just about early education, but about fostering a thriving family dynamic.

YOUR INVOLVEMENT MAKES A DIFFERENCE!

Your active participation in our Head Start and Early Head Start programs is invaluable. When you're involved, not only does your child thrive, but our entire community benefits. Joining our Parent Committees allows you to collaborate with fellow parents and staff, ensuring our programs meet the unique needs of every child. By being a part of the Policy Council, you can influence decisions and shape the direction of our programs. Additionally, in-kind volunteering offers a hands-on approach to support our initiatives, from classroom activities to community events. Your voice, time, and dedication play a pivotal role in enhancing the quality and impact of our programs. Together, we can create a nurturing environment where every child succeeds!

UNDERSTANDING IN-KIND VOLUNTEERS









WHAT IS IT?

"In-Kind" for Head Start and Early Head Start programs refers to the non-cash contributions that the program receives. "In-Kind" can be in many different forms such as, goods, services, time, facilities, and partnerships. These contributions are invaluable, with a significant portion stemming from our dedicated parents and families.

WHY DO IT?

CARD HS/EHS harnesses a blend of Federal, State, and private funds. The federal government provides funding for Head Start and Early Head Start programs, but it also requires these programs to secure a portion of their budget from non-federal sources. The annual cost to support a child in our program is \$23,000 for an infant or toddler and \$14,000 for our Pre-K children. A pivotal way we sustain this funding is through In-Kind dollars.

WHAT ARE IN-KIND CONTRIBUTIONS?

CATEGORY	DESCRIPTION		COMMON EXAMPLES
GOODS	Donation of supplies, equipment, or other tangible items that the program would otherwise need to purchase.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • clothes • treats for parties • take-home projects for classrooms
SERVICES	Professional services donated to the program.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • medical, dental, legal, or educational services • engage/interact with your child at home, like reading or eating a meal together.
TIME	Volunteer hours contributed by parents, community members, or professionals. This can include time spent in classrooms, on field trips, in training sessions, or in administrative roles.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Come in and read to kids. • Work on a science experiment with classes. • Help with parties. • Host a science fair or an art show. • Participate in Career Day. • Do cleaning tasks. • Come eat lunch with the children. • Attend Parent Meetings and Center events/activities
FACILITIES	Use of space or facilities at no cost or at a reduced rate.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a community center allowing the program to use a room for meetings. • Building beautification • Using space or facilities for improvement projects.
PARTNERSHIPS	Collaborations with local organizations or businesses for events where they might provide services or support without charging the full rate.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Science fairs • Art shows • Career Day

Your involvement and contributions not only help meet our funding requirements but also enrich our community, ensuring that every child receives the best possible start in life.

UNDERSTANDING PARENT COMMITTEE



WHAT IS IT?

The Parent Committee is a platform for parents to actively participate in our programs, ensuring they cater to the unique needs of every child and family. Every family with an enrolled child is automatically a member.

By joining Parent Committee meetings, you become an advocate for your child's education and well-being.

Parent meetings are an opportunity for you to actively participate in decision-making processes, plan and conduct meetings, and collaborate on activities that benefit both children and families. Your involvement is key to our collective success, and we encourage you to be an active part of this empowering community.

WHEN ARE THE MEETINGS?

- Meetings are held monthly at the center.
- Times are determined through a survey at the start of each program year to ensure convenience for most families.
- If attendance is low, a resurvey may be conducted to find a more suitable time during the year.

WHAT HAPPENS DURING THE MEETINGS?

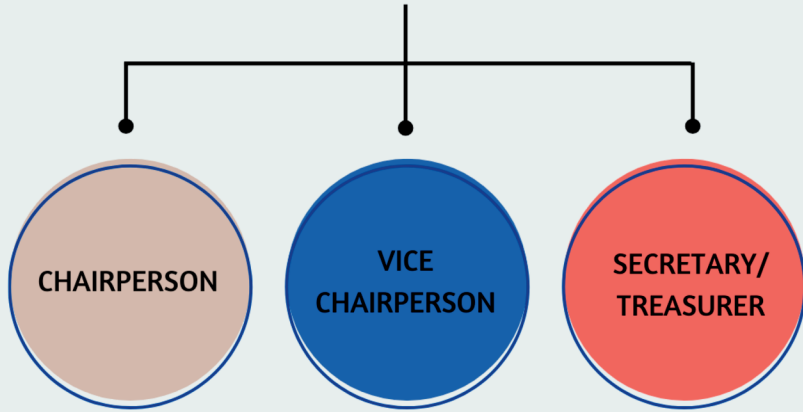
Each meeting focuses on a specific topic, determined by the Family Interest Survey. Some topics are mandatory as part of the Parent Training Plan.

Meetings include a parent-run business segment, where:

- Activities for the classroom and outside socializations are planned.
- All decisions, especially regarding funds, require a formal vote by enrolled members.
- All business discussions are recorded on the Parent Business Meeting Form by an enrolled parent.

Meetings also feature a break with snacks and a chance for parents to mingle with other families and Family Specialists.

PARENT COMMITTEE OFFICERS



The chairperson leads the parent business meeting and guides the Council in following all instructions from the Department of Health and Human Services.

Carries out the duties of Chairperson.

1. Keeps Roll call and minutes of all meetings
2. Keeps records of non-governmental collected by the Council. Co-signs the checking account with EHS/ HS Director.

PARENT COMMITTEE GUIDELINES

- Every meeting must have a written agenda, which will be posted.
- Meeting agendas, attendance forms, summaries, and handouts are submitted to the Family Specialist after each meeting.
- The Family Specialist acts as an advisor but does not have voting rights. They ensure all program policies are followed and provides a copy of the previous months policy council meeting minutes and other relevant information.

We encourage you to attend as many meetings as possible. Your involvement is crucial in shaping our programs and supporting your child's school readiness. If you can't attend all meetings, please join those that fit your schedule.

UNDERSTANDING POLICY COUNCIL



WHAT IS IT?

The Policy Council is a formal leadership body, comprising both Head Start and Early Head Start parents and community members. Its primary role is to guide and make decisions about the program as a whole.

PARTNERING WITH PARENTS

From its inception, Head Start has recognized parents as essential partners in educating young children. The founders believed that parents should have a say in deciding the services that would most benefit their families and the broader community.

HOW DOES IT WORK?

- **Election:** Members of the Policy Council are elected by parents of children enrolled in the program via parent meetings.
- **Transition:** Many parents transition to the Policy Council after serving on a parent committee.
- **Duration:** Members can serve for one year at a time, with a maximum tenure of up to five years.
- **Collaboration:** The Policy Council collaborates closely with the program's management team and Governing Body to set the overall direction for the program.
- **Meetings:** The Policy Council convenes monthly. Meetings are the second Wednesday of each month in Claremore at 9:30 AM.

POLICY COUNCIL MEMBERS

POSITION	DUTIES
Policy Council Representative	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Vote and represent your child's center on issues that affect the whole program.• Provide input and take part in the process for approving Head Start policies.• Communicate ideas and suggestions to Policy Council from Parent Committee and vice versa.
Policy Council Alternate	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Attend meetings with representative when possible (must attend one meeting to be seated and considered active)• Attend meetings in place of the representative when they can not attend.

POLICY COUNCIL PERKS

- Have a voice in shaping how Head Start services are delivered.
- Attend monthly meetings.
- Enjoy a free food during meetings.
- Contribute to the in-kind claim for the agency.
- Mileage costs are covered to and from monthly meetings.

Your involvement in the Policy Council ensures that our program remains responsive to the needs of our families and community. We encourage you to consider joining and making a positive difference!

NOTES
