

BURLINGTON COUNTY COMMUNITY ACTION PROGRAM
HEAD START/EARLY HEAD START

ARTICLE I
NAME

The name of this organization is the Burlington County Community Action Program Head Start/Early Head Start Policy Council (“Policy Council”). It is located in Burlington County, NJ.

ARTICLE II
PURPOSE AND FUNCTIONS

SECTION A. **DEFINITIONS**

1. **Agency.** A public or private nonprofit or for-profit entity designated by Administration of Children and Families to operate a Head Start. The agency for this Policy Council is Burlington County Community Action Program (“BCCAP”)
2. **Governing Body.** The governing body for the agency. The governing body shall have such responsibilities as enumerated in 42 U.S.C. §9837(c)(1)(E).
3. **Parent Committee.** A parent committee is comprised exclusively of parents of currently enrolled children.
4. **Policy Council.** A Policy Council is established by an agency to establish and maintain a body responsible for the direction of the Head Start program at the agency level.

SECTION B. **PURPOSES**

The Policy Council approves Head Start and Early Head Start policies and procedures, reviews and approves the Head Start and Early Head Start service plans, is responsible for the direction of the Head Start and Early Start programs, including program design and operation and long and short-term goals and objectives, is responsible to review and evaluate the current programs, and encourage maximum involvement of the parents and community.

Policies and programs shall be established within the guidelines provided by the Department of Health and Human Services, Administration of Children and Families, Office of Head Start and subject to the review and approval of this Policy Council and the Governing Body of Burlington County Community Action Program.

SECTION C. FUNCTIONS

1. Responsibilities. The Policy Council shall approve and submit to the Governing Body for approval by the Governing Body decisions about each of the following activities:
 - a. 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.
 - b. Program recruitment, selection, and enrollment priorities.
 - c. Applications for funding and amendments to applications for funding for programs under this subchapter, prior to submission of applications described in this clause.
 - d. Budget planning for program expenditures, including policies for reimbursement and participation in Policy Council activities.
 - e. By-Laws for the operation of the Policy Council.
 - f. Program personnel policies regarding the employment of program staff, consistent with paragraph 42 U.S.C. §642(c)(1)(E)(iv)(IX)¹, including standards of conduct for program staff, contractors, and volunteers and criteria for the employment and dismissal of program staff.
 - g. Developing procedures for how members of the Policy Council of the Head Start agency will be elected.
 - h. Recommendations on the selection of delegate agencies, if any, and the service areas for such agencies.

ARTICLE III
MEMBERSHIP AND DUTIES

SECTION A. MEMBERSHIP

1. The Policy Council shall be composed of persons elected from each Parent Committee as follows (“Parent Representatives”):

¹ Approving personnel policies and procedures, including policies and procedures regarding the hiring, evaluation, compensation, and termination of the Executive Director, Head Start Director, Director of Human Resources, Chief Fiscal Officer, and any other person in an equivalent position with the agency shall be the responsibility of the governing body.

Head Start

Delanco Center	2 – Representatives	2 – Alternates
Lumberton Center	2 – Representative	2 – Alternates
Pemberton Center	1 – Representative	1 – Alternate
Sunbury Center	1 – Representative	1 – Alternate

Early Head Start

Home Based	1 – Representative	1 – Alternate
Center Based	1 – Representative	1 – Alternate

- a. At least fifty-one percent: 51% of the members of the Policy Council shall be parents of currently enrolled children.
 - b. All Policy Council Parent Representatives shall be active members of their respective Parent Committee.
 - c. Alternates shall not be considered regular members of Policy Council but shall have full voting authority when serving in place of a Parent Representative at a Policy Council meeting.
 - d. An Officer from a Parent Committee may serve as the Representative or Alternate for a center if no other parent can be found to fill the position.
2. No more than 49% of the members shall be members of the community served by the agency (“Community Representatives”). All Community Representatives must be elected by the Parent Representatives of Policy Council.
- a. Former Head Start and Early Head Start parents may serve as a Community Representative.
 - b. Persons representing county-wide public and private organizations which have a concern for low-income children and their families and can contribute to the program may be recruited by members of Policy Council and staff.
3. Outgoing Policy Council members must give new Policy Council members orientation, on their duties and responsibilities and to new Parent Committees before the election of Parent Committee officers.
4. No member of the Head Start, Early Head Start staff, BCAP agency staff, BCAP Board of Trustees, or any member of their immediate family (wife, husband, brother, sister, son, daughter, mother, father, or any of these like relationships created by marriage) may serve on Policy Council.
5. No two relatives may hold Policy Council office simultaneously.
6. Low-income members may be reimbursed for reasonable expenses incurred to enable participation.

SECTION B. CONFLICT OF INTEREST

Members of the Policy Council shall: (i) not have a conflict of interest with the Head Start agency; and (ii) not receive compensation for serving on the Policy Council or for providing services to the Head Start agency.

SECTION C. REQUIREMENTS

Policy Council members shall read the agenda and review materials prior to the start of any meeting; attend meetings regularly and arrive on time, actively participate in the meetings; remember the rights of other members to express their opinions; consider all information and arguments before voting; debate the issues, not persons; accept and support any final decision of the majority of the Policy Council. Parent Representatives shall discuss matters to be considered with other parents in their Parent Committee and shall report back any action taken by the Policy Council. Community Representatives shall keep the organizations they represent, if any, and the general community informed regarding the Head Start and Early Head Start programs.

SECTION D. MANNER, TIME AND TERM OF APPOINTMENT

1. Each Parent Representative and Alternate shall be elected by his/her parent committee prior to the regular meeting of the Council in October of each year and shall serve a term of one year from the beginning of the October meeting and until their successors are elected.
2. Community Representatives shall be elected by the Parent Representatives at the November meeting and shall serve for a term of one year from their election and until their successors are elected.
3. Policy Council members who desire to serve another one (1) year term must stand for re-election. A person may serve no more than five (5) consecutive one year terms as a Parent Representative and Alternate or as a Community Representative, but may serve again after one year absence from the Council.

SECTION E. VACANCIES

A vacancy on the Policy Council shall occur when a member has been notified of his or her official removal by action of Policy Council for cause, when a member notifies Policy Council of his/her resignation in writing or when the member is physically unable to serve.

1. When a Parent Representative vacancy occurs, the Representative's alternate shall become the Representative for the balance of the remaining term. If there is no available alternate, the vacancy shall be filled according to the procedure set forth in the Article III Section A1, for the remaining term.
2. When a parent alternate vacancy occurs, the vacancy shall be filled according to the procedure set forth in Article III Section A1, for the remaining term.

3. When a Community Representative vacancy occurs, it shall be at the discretion of the Policy Council that another Community Representative be selected. If it is the decision of the Policy Council to fill the vacancy, it shall be filled according to the procedures set forth in Article III Section A2 for the remaining term.
4. Service for a partial term to fill a vacancy pursuant to this Section E shall not be considered a term for purposes of the limitation on service set forth in Section D2 above.

ARTICLE IV **MEETINGS**

SECTION A. **TYPES OF MEETINGS**

1. An Annual Orientation and Training meeting shall be held in October of each year. The time for holding the Annual Orientation and Training meeting of the Policy Council may be altered by a majority vote of the Policy Council members present and voting at any duly convened meeting.
2. A Nominating Committee will be formed in October to present a slate of candidates for officer and for Community Representatives at the November meeting.
3. Election of officers shall be held in November.
4. Policy Council shall establish a schedule for regular monthly meetings to take place prior to 3rd Tuesday of each month including the dates, time and location for these meetings. The schedule may be altered by a majority vote of the Policy Council members present and voting at any duly convened meeting.
5. Special meetings may be called by the Chairperson and shall be called by the Chairperson upon request of 25% of the members of the Policy Council.

SECTION B. **MEETING NOTICES**

1. Regularly Scheduled Meetings

Written notices of the Policy Council's regularly scheduled meetings shall be mailed (postmarked) or distributed to each member and alternate at least (7) days prior to the date of each meeting. Notices shall include the agenda for the meeting and information on major items on the agenda.

2. Special Meetings

Notices (written, by electronic mail or by telephone call) of special meetings including agendas and related information shall be given to each Policy Council member and Alternate a minimum of twenty-four hours prior to the date of the meeting with an explanation for calling the special meeting.

SECTION C. TIME AND PLACE

All Policy Council meetings must be held at reasonably convenient times and places as decided by the majority of Policy Council members.

SECTION D. QUORUM REQUIREMENTS

The Quorum for a meeting of Policy Council shall be twenty-five (25%) of the membership. A member may attend a meeting by conference telephone or similar electronic equipment by which all members can hear each other and respond at the same time.

SECTION E. ATTENDANCE

1. When a Policy Council Representative cannot attend a meeting, the Representative must notify their assigned alternate to attend in his/her place as well as the Family/Community Coordinator or Family Partner Supervisor/Parent Involvement Specialist with the reason for the absence and the name of the alternate. (See Attachment for Alternates)
2. A Policy Council Representative who has three unexcused absences will be subject to removal from the Council.
3. If a Representative does not attend a meeting, regardless of whether they have an alternate or not, they will be considered absent.
4. Following two (2) unexcused absences a letter will be sent to the Representative, and their Parent Committee, if applicable, stating that additional absences may be cause for removal from the Policy Council. Excused absences shall include, but not be limited to, hospitalization, serious illness, death in family, illness of child, Parent Teacher Conference, transportation problems, inclement weather and/or unusual work circumstances.

SECTION F. REMOVAL

1. Council may remove a Representative from Policy Council for cause, which may include, but shall not be limited to, three consecutive absences, habitual absences/tardiness, or disruptive behavior that doesn't respond to intervention.
2. Council shall notify the Representative, and their Parent Committee or organization in writing fifteen (15) days in advance of the Policy Council meeting at which the Representative's removal will be considered. The Representative shall be removed by a majority vote of those Council members (other than the individual being considered for removal) present and voting.
3. The Representative and the Parent Committee will be notified in writing of the Policy Council's decision to remove or retain a Representative as well as any special conditions that must be met for retention.

SECTION G. VOTING

A majority vote of those Representatives present and voting shall decide any matter, except when these By-Laws, or state or federal law requires otherwise.

Each Representative shall have one (1) vote.

SECTION H. MINUTES

Written minutes shall be kept for all meetings and include actions on all motions. Minutes of the previous meeting will be presented at each scheduled meeting. Upon request, a translation of any specified minutes shall be made available in the language of the individual or individuals requesting the translation.

SECTION I. OPERATING PROCEDURES

The order of business at Policy Council meetings shall be determined by a written agenda as required by the Open Meeting Act of New Jersey. Whenever possible, meetings of the Policy Council shall be conducted in a manner intended to provide the maximum opportunity for member participation. However, questions of procedure will be resolved by reference to Robert's Rules of Order Revised, unless otherwise provided for in these By-Laws or state or federal law or regulations.

ARTICLE V
OFFICERS

SECTION A. OFFICERS

Officers of the Policy Council shall consist of a Chairperson, a Vice-Chairperson, Recording Secretary, and a Corresponding Secretary. The BCAP Head Start/Early Head Start Programs Director or his/her designee shall serve as staff liaison to the Policy Council.

SECTION B. ELECTION OF OFFICERS

1. The Chairperson, the Vice-Chairperson, the Recording Secretary, and the Corresponding Secretary shall be elected from among the members of the Policy Council at the Policy Council meeting in November of each year (after selection of the Community Representatives) and shall serve from the time of their election to the next November meeting or until their successor has been designated. A member may only hold office while a member of Policy Council. Alternates are not eligible to be elected as an officer.

2. Officers shall be elected by secret ballot by a majority vote of Policy Council members or the corresponding alternate present and voting at the meeting. If a candidate does not receive a majority vote on the first ballot, subsequent ballots will be taken including the top two (2) candidates (or more in case of a tie) until one (1) candidate has received a majority vote.

SECTION C. DUTIES OF OFFICERS

1. The Chairperson shall prepare an agenda for each meeting; preside at all meetings; appoint committees with the concurrence of the Policy Council and serve as a non-voting ex-officio member of these committees; work closely with the Vice-Chairperson, Head Start/Early Head Start Director or designee, and other assigned Head Start and Early Head Start staff as designated by the Director and function in such capacities as Policy Council may designate.
2. The Vice-Chairperson shall preside in the absence of the Chairperson; assist in preparing an agenda for each regular meeting; work closely with the Chairperson, Head Start/Early Head Start Director, and other assigned Head Start and Early Head Start staff; and, perform all other duties as assigned by the Policy Council.
3. The Recording Secretary shall have the primary responsibility of maintaining all records of the Policy Council, including recording the minutes of each meeting, providing notification of minutes to all members and alternates, for keeping attendance, for informing members of absences and removal, and for carrying out all other appropriate support activities required by these By-Laws or the Policy Council.
4. The Corresponding Secretary shall be responsible for notifying Policy Council members of meetings and other information/events, for processing correspondence, responding to letters received and initiating letters as required by Policy Council, using Family/Community Coordinator as a resource.

SECTION D. REMOVAL OF OFFICERS

1. After advance notification in writing to all Policy Council members and Alternates, and any Parent Committee or Organization of the officer being considered for removal, any officer may be removed by a vote of a majority of Policy Council members (other than the officer being considered for removal) present and voting when the proposed removal has been included in the notice of the meeting.
2. Reasons for the proposed removal shall be given at the meeting and the officer whose removal is being proposed, shall be provided an opportunity to be heard prior to the taking of a vote on the removal.
3. The Representative, the Parent Committee/or Organization will be notified in writing of the Policy Council decision to remove or retain as well as any special conditions that must be met for retention.

SECTION E. VACANCIES

Policy Council will fill a vacancy in any office by election following election procedures, as stated in Section B, without the necessity of a recommendation by the Nominating Committee.

ARTICLE VI
COMMITTEES

SECTION A. **GENERAL PROVISIONS**

The Chairperson, with the concurrence of Policy Council, shall appoint such committees as are necessary for assisting Policy Council in carrying out its responsibilities. The staff liaison shall designate staff to assist the committees.

SECTION B. **STANDING COMMITTEES**

In addition to the Executive Committee and such other committees as Policy Council may establish, there shall be the following standing committees, with the concurrence of Policy Council, established by the second regular meeting following the annual November meeting:

Personnel Committee	Nominating Committee
Budget Committee	Health Advisory Committee

SECTION C. **EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

The Executive Committee shall consist of the Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson Recording Secretary, Corresponding Secretary.

The Executive Committee shall have the power to conduct business for the Policy Council between regular meetings of the Council subject to ratification by the Council at its next meeting.

A quorum shall consist of three (3) members.

SECTION D. **PERSONNEL COMMITTEE**

The Personnel Committee shall consist of at least two (2) Policy Council members. This may expedite the hiring process as Policy Council meets only once a month. In the event that personnel are needed immediately, the Personnel Committee is authorized to make the final selection and the selected candidate may commence employment prior to Policy Council approval. However, all prospective BCAP Head Start and Early Head Start employees must also be approved by Policy Council at a regular meeting. The hiring and firing of Head Start and Early Head Start staff will comply with BCAP Personnel Policies and Procedures including Policy Council approval.

SECTION E. **BUDGET COMMITTEE**

The Budget Committee shall consist of no fewer than two (2) Policy Council Representatives. The committee shall meet with the Head Start/Early Head Start Director to review the budget for the next fiscal year, and present the final budget to Policy Council for approval.

SECTION F. NOMINATING COMMITTEE

The Nominating Committee shall consist of no fewer than (2) Policy Council Representatives. The committee searches for nominees for positions on Policy Council and presents the nominees to Policy Council.

SECTION G. HEALTH SERVICES ADVISORY COMMITTEE

The Health Services Advisory Committee shall consist of no fewer than (2) Policy Council Representatives.

SECTION H. COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP AND OFFICERS

Each standing committee shall consist of at least two (2) Policy Council members of which one (1) is a Parent Representative. Parent Committee members not on Policy Council may also be appointed to all Policy Council committees except the Executive Committee. All members shall have a full and equal vote as regular Policy Council members of that standing committee. The Committee Chairperson shall be elected by the committee members.

SECTION I. COMMITTEE TERM OF APPOINTMENT AND VACANCIES

The term of appointment to a standing committee shall expire at the next October meeting. Temporary committees (ad hoc committees) shall serve until assignments given to the committee are completed, provided that, if the Policy Council term of a member of a temporary committee expires prior to the completion of an assignment, that person may continue to serve until such assignment is completed.

SECTION J. COMMITTEE PROCEDURES

1. Meetings shall be called by the Chairperson of each committee. Upon petition of two (2) members of any committees, the Chairperson of the committee shall call a meeting.
2. A vote of the majority of the committee members present and voting shall decide any matter subject to these By-Laws.

SECTION K.

Role of BCAP Board of Trustees Representatives.

A member of the BCAP Board of Trustees will be appointed by BCAP as a Representative of the Board of Trustees on Policy Council. Such Representative shall not be considered a member of the Policy Council and shall not have the right to vote.

Responsibilities:

1. To attend Policy Council Meetings and provide information on BCAP Board Meetings.

2. To act as a resource to Policy Council members on procedural and other official matters as needed.
3. To provide support and encouragement to parents in their role as Policy Council Members.

SECTION L.

Role of Policy Council Liaison to BCAP Board.

A member of the Policy Council will be appointed by Policy Council as a Representative of Policy Council to the BCAP Board of Trustees. Such Representative shall not be considered a member of the BCAP Board of Trustees and shall not have the right to vote.

Responsibilities:

1. To attend BCAP Board Meetings and provide information on Policy Council Meetings.
2. To provide information to Policy Council regarding the BCAP Board Meetings.

ARTICLE VII **IMPASSE RESOLUTION**

In order to resolve internal disputes between the Policy Council and the Governing Body without disrupting services to Head Start/Early Start children and families, the following procedure will be implemented:

1. Policy Council will identify the concern regarding the decision of the Governing Body.
2. The Policy Council Chairperson will submit a writing to the Head Start Executive Director within five working days following the final disputed action by the Governing Body.
3. The Executive Director will meet with the Policy Council representative within five days after receiving the writing from the Chairperson.
 - a. If a resolution plan is agreed upon, the Governing Body will review and approve or disapprove at their next meeting.
 - (i) If approved, Policy Council will be notified at their next scheduled meeting.
 - b. If a resolution plan is not agreed upon, or the Governing Body disapproves the plan, then there is an impasse.

- (i) Written notice that an impasse has occurred will be sent to Policy Council and Governing Body members within five working days.
 - (ii) The Executive Director will form an Impasse Committee consisting of two members of the Governing Body and two Policy Council members, the Executive Director and other resource persons as appropriate.
- c. The Impasse Committee will have fifteen (15) days from its first meeting to develop a new resolution plan.
- d. The new resolution plan will be submitted to the Governing Body and Policy Council at their next scheduled meeting for approval/disapproval.
 - (i) Voting results will be shared with the other entity.
- 4. If a new resolution plan is not reached or approved, the Board of Directors and Policy Council agree to participate in a formal process of mediation. The Governing Body and Policy Council shall mutually agree on a mediator or mediation service, giving preference to local mediation services offered at or below market rates.
- 5. If no resolution is reached with a mediator, the Board of Directors and Policy Council will select a mutually agreeable arbitrator whose decision is final, with preference given to local arbitrators performing services at or below market rates.

ARTICLE VIII
AMENDMENT

These By-Laws may be altered, amended, or repealed by an affirmative vote of a majority of the Policy Council members present and voting. Any proposed alteration, amendment or repeal shall be contained in a written notice to each member of the Policy Council mailed (postmarked) at least eight (8) days prior to any meeting at which an amendment of these By-Laws is to be considered. Amendments to the By-Laws require the final approval of the Governing Body.

These By-laws were approved by the Board of Trustees on September 17, 2019.

These By Laws were approved by Policy Council on August 14, 2019.

These By-laws were revised and approved on May 11, 2010.

These By-Laws were revised and approved on May 9, 2006.

These By-Laws were revised and approved on December 11, 2001.

These By-Laws were revised and approved on June 20, 2001.

These By-Laws were approved by Policy Council on October 12, 1999.