

POLICY COUNCIL



SEMCAC HEAD START

I hear you're interested in representing your Head Start site as a Policy Council Delegate?

Well, we are excited to have you join us!

Like many parents that serve on the council, I am sure your wondering what you have to do. So let's get started learning about the responsibilities and the benefits of serving on Policy Council, or as we say, "PC" for short.

A little background information:

Our program serves a six county area, Dodge, Mower, Fillmore, Houston, Steele, and Winona. We have nine Head Start sites. Each site has 1-3 delegates (delegate and alternate) depending on what program options are offered, Head Start, Early Head Start, and Early Head Start Home – base.

Each site has their own local parent committee and all parents of enrolled children belong to the committee. The committee meets four times a program year. The delegates are elected by the parents. Each parent, including yourself, has one vote. The votes are used for such things as planning parent/child activities, how to spend parent/child funds, and of course, elect delegates. But those are just a few ways parents vote. As part of the local parent committee you are able to:

- Share ideas, concerns, and opinions about what is happening at your site or in your community.
- Gain knowledge from special speakers.
- Share, learn, and strengthen parenting skills.
- Learn about, and help plan activities for your child.
- Learn about Policy Council decisions.
- Meet other parents; make friends, and HAVE FUN!

By the way, the upside to being elected a delegate is there are no speeches involved, you just let your teaching team know that you are interested and they will take care of the rest!

So how do the teaching teams take care of the rest? Typically, they will pass out ballots to every parent and ask them to vote. Once ballots have been collected and tallied, the Family Education Paraprofessional for your classroom will notify you that you have been voted in by your local parent committee.

Okay, you've been chosen as a delegate, so now what?

Great question! As the delegate for your site, you will serve as the "link" between your local parent committee and the Policy Council. You will share with your local parent committee things that are discussed and/or voted on at the Policy Council meeting. Your job as delegate is to:

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1. Provide your parent committee with clear and accurate information and
2. Ask for input from your parent committee on upcoming Policy Council agenda items.

Parents/Guardians with children in the program now, past parents, and community members make up the Policy Council. Every Early Head Start/Head Start site elects one – three Parents/Guardians to represent it at Policy Council. This gives Parents/Guardians the chance to take part in making decisions to better our program. The work of Policy Council is to:

- Voice ideas of your local parent committee to better the whole program.
- Share Policy Council information with your local parent committee.
- Give input into program design, planning and policies. For example, help determine the criteria for selecting who is in the program.
- Be involved in the hiring and, if needed, dismissing of staff.
- Serve as a link to the community and advocate for the needs of children and families.

There are other responsibilities like making sure that parents understand their rights, responsibilities, and opportunities in Head Start; and to encourage parents to participate in planning, coordinating, and organizing program activities. But don't worry, you'll receive a lot of help and support from your teaching team. And all the Coordinators are happy to help as well!

So, you have more questions? Okay, let's get those questions answered!

When are the Policy Council Meetings?

PC meetings are held on Saturdays during the program year with the exception of the months of February and July – unless there is important business that needs to be discussed.

The group decides as a whole what Saturday works best to hold the meeting. Meetings start around 9am – yes that's a little early however, we start that early so we can provide you with a delicious breakfast – on us! Meetings are over by 11 am allowing you plenty of time to enjoy your day.

Where are Policy Council Meetings held?

Meetings are usually held in Rochester at Charley's Eatery (directions will be provided). Meetings can be held at other places; the group decides what works best for them.

We pay your mileage too! So you're going to want to keep track of that, but don't worry, we provide all the forms you need to do that.

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I really want to be a delegate, but what do I do with my children?

We provide for that too! You hire your own childcare provider and we will reimburse you \$4.00/hr. for one child and \$8.00/hr. for two or more – with a maximum of \$60.00 per day. Of course, we need to have receipts for “Uncle Sam” but we provide those too, you just have to fill them out.

Is there anything else?

If meetings are held via conference telephone call due to weather or other circumstances, you will be reimbursed \$10.00 for the use of your own technology.

The best part of Policy Council is that you get to meet some great people, make some new friends, and **have fun** while supporting your Head Start and/or Early Head Start program!

PS. It looks nice on a resume too.

Thank you for taking the time to consider representing your local parent committee as a Policy Council Delegate. We could not be the program we are, without parents like you!



- Yes! I am excited and want to be a part of this great opportunity to support my local parent committee by volunteering to be a delegate for Policy Council. Sign me up!**

Name: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Site: _____

Parent Signature: _____

Date

Head Start FEP Signature: _____

Date

