

# CEO

(**C**OOPERATIVE **E**FFECTIVE **O**VERSIGHT)

**For Head Start & Early Head Start  
Decision Makers**



# CEO – Cooperative Effective Oversight

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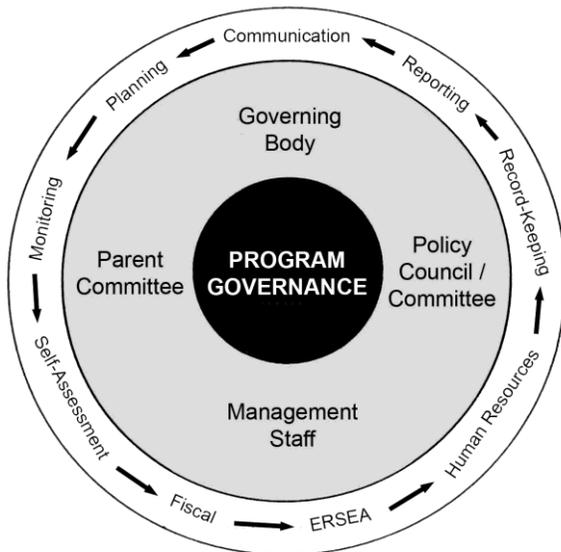
# Chapter One - Introduction

Harmony, synergy, alliance, unity, and cooperation are appropriate synonyms to describe the characteristics of the effective decision makers in a Head Start and Early Head Start Program. Understanding the role of decision-makers is critical to the success of a Head Start and/or Early Head Start program. Decision making groups share many responsibilities with the management staff to ensure that there are effective practices, policies, and procedures. Sharing responsibility for program governance supports the role of parents and the community as significant elements in effective and successful Head Start and Early Head Start Programs.

The Governing Body and the Policy Council or Policy Committee, are central in the design and delivery of services, and it is important that the members of each group fully understand the processes for meeting those responsibilities. Successful shared decision-making requires an ongoing commitment to change, growth, and to the continuous improvement of practices, policies and procedures. Successful shared decision-making means that sometimes it is more important to compromise than to win. Each respective player has a critical role in bringing his or her unique voice to balance the Head Start/Early Head Start equation.



## Cooperative Effective Oversight



Cooperative, Effective Oversight, or CEO is a term used to denote that although some of the roles of the decision makers involve oversight... cooperation is essential in effective governance. The relationships among members of the Governing Body, policy group(s), and the management team should be built on mutual trust and respect, along with teamwork, cooperation, and clear lines of authority. Because the decision makers must work together as a coordinated team, a thorough review and understanding of Head Start management systems is critical. Decision makers should be able to articulate their roles and responsibilities in the overall operation of the program, as outlined in the systems depicted in the outer circle of the graphic on the left-hand side of this page.

## History of Head Start and Early Head Start

Head Start began as an eight-week summer program in 1965. It was developed as one approach to fight “The War on Poverty” by the administration of President Lyndon Johnson. The founders of Head Start knew that in order to break the cycle of poverty, early education could be a path to school readiness. In addition, health services and social services along with parent and community involvement were imperative to serve children and families in a holistic, comprehensive manner. Today, Head Start and Early Head Start operate in all 50 states, Washington D.C., Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Territories.

In 1970, Transmittal Notice 70.2 strengthened the role of parents and the community with a formal structure that included Policy Council and Center Committees. In the 1990’s, the Head Start Program Performance Standards were again revised, and those revisions further supported shared decision-making and clear roles and responsibilities. In 1994, Early Head Start began as a natural spin off from Parent Child Centers, Comprehensive Child Development Programs, and Migrant and Seasonal Head Start.

In 2007, Head Start was reauthorized by Congress. The Improving Head Start for School Readiness Act of 2007 (Public Law 110-134), commonly called the Head Start Act, further informed the role of the decision makers. It also clarified the increased role of the Governing Body.



# Head Start Core Values

Head Start core values embody vital and essential guiding principles that are central to the operation and successful implementation of the program. Decision makers can use these core values to examine where and how they fit into the organizational structure.

**Quality** – Striving to consistently provide the highest level of service to children and families. Head Start leadership seeks to create a dynamic and cohesive environment that fosters commitment and supports continuous improvement. To effectively accomplish its goals, Head Start respects and values the time, effort, and resources that the community provides.

**Inclusion** – Building a community where each child and adult is treated as an individual while maintaining a sense of belonging to the group. An inclusive community values, respects and responds to diversity – in culture, ethnicity, language, and ability.

**Empowerment** – Believing that people can identify their own needs and interests and are capable of finding solutions and making changes. Head Start offers people opportunities and support for growth and change.

**Collaboration** – Building relationships among children, families, staff, and the larger community, a network of community agencies and informal networks, working in partnership with one another, jointly serves families. Head Start does not act alone, but it is a key player in a community of providers.

**Learning** – Creating a culturally sensitive environment for children, parents and staff, in which enhancing awareness, refining skills, and fostering understanding are valued and promoted. Children, parents and staff can teach and learn from one another.

**Advocacy** – Reaffirming that personal responsibility is critical to change, while acknowledging that social and economic factors can negatively affect the lives and promise of children and families. Change occurs at the individual and systems levels and addresses both the symptoms and underlying causes.

**Wellness** – Embracing a comprehensive vision of health for children, families and staff that assures that basic health needs are met; encourages practices that prevent future illness or injury; and promotes positive, culturally relevant health behaviors that enhance lifelong wellbeing.

**Nurturing** – Supporting the physical, social, emotional, and cognitive development of each child in the context of the child's family and culture. Development is supported through nurturing relationships among staff, parents and children.

**Diversity** – Recognizing and embracing the idea that all members of the Head Start community – children, families and staff – have roots in many cultures. Head Start families and staff, working together as a team, effectively transform negative responses to promote respectful, sensitive and proactive approaches to diversity issues within their programs.

**Continuity** – Creating a continuum of care, education and services to provide stable, uninterrupted support to families and children during the early childhood period beginning with birth through age eight.

*Core Values Source: Participating in the Management Process: Training Guide for the Head Start Learning Community, Aspen Systems for Head Start Bureau, ACF/DHHS, 1997*

## Glossary of Useful Terms

**45 CFR 1304:** The Program Performance Standards for the Operation of Head Start Programs by Grantee and Delegate Agencies; usually referred to in shorter form as the Head Start Program Performance Standards, or simply the Performance Standards. This document outlines the rules and regulations that every Head Start or Early Head Start program must follow. In addition to explaining the roles of the parents in the program, the Performance Standards outline standards for educational and health services, community and family services, and program management. The standards were revised in November 1996. New revisions are expected to be forthcoming in response to the 2007 Head Start Act.

**45 CFR 1307:** Regulations for designation renewal of Head Start and Early Head Start grantees. This regulation outlines the open competition requirements and process. Governing bodies should have a clear understanding of the implications of re-designation as it relates to the agency and Head Start Program.

**45 CFR 1300 series:** The set of Head Start regulations ( including 1304 & 1307 described above) that guide program operations and services in the following areas: Administration of the Head Start grant; selection, termination and appeals for Head Start agencies; eligibility, recruitment, selection, enrollment and attendance of Head Start children; program options and staffing; services to children with disabilities, facilities, and transportation.

**ACF:** Administration for Children and Families, a division of the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) that oversees Head Start/Early Head Start. The Office of Head Start (or OHS) is the division of ACF that directly administers the Head Start and Early Head Start program.

**COMMUNITY ASSESSMENT:** A study and review of the demographics, services and resources of the program's service area. This document is used to help plan program services. A community assessment must be conducted once every three years and updated in the two years in between.

**COMMUNITY REPRESENTATIVES:** People from the local community who serve on the Policy Committee/Policy Council, and who know about the services available in the community and have an interest in children and families. They may be business people, civic or religious leaders, or people who work in the community, or professionals, such as doctors or lawyers. Parents who used to have children in Head Start may also be Community Representatives.

**DELEGATE AGENCY:** An organization to which the Grantee gives the responsibility to run in part or in whole the Head Start or Early Head Start program on behalf of the Grantee Agency.

**DHHS or HHS:** These initials refer to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, which is the government agency that awards grants to Head Start and Early Head Start programs. DHHS, through the Administration for Children and Families, oversees the operations of all Head Start and Early Head Start programs and enforces regulations and standards. DHHS operates from Washington, D.C. and from Regional Offices around the country.