

Le Jardin Community Center, Inc.

Policy Committee

Overview

The law that authorizes Head Start, and the rules by which all Head Start programs must abide was first authorized in 1961 by the first Head Start Act and subsequent Acts in 1981 and 2007 that have reauthorized the program. The current Act defines the purpose of Head Start and offers general explanation of the funding, management and record-keeping and reporting for Head Start programs. The Head Start Performance Standards are specific regulations that each program must follow - ranging from teacher qualifications to enrollment reporting to mortgage auditing - and their compliance is monitored every three years by the Office of Head Start.

The Head Start Program governance for Le Jardin Community Center, Inc. is the function of three groups:

The Parent Committees, Groups established at the center level, which must be comprised exclusively of the parents of children currently enrolled at the centers.

The Policy Committee, a group established of parents of currently enrolled children and community representatives. The Policy Committee parents are selected from the center Parent Committees.

The governing body or Board of Directors, the group with the legal and fiscal responsibility for administering the Head Start program.

Policy Committee members assure active, independent and informed governance; ensuring compliance with applicable laws and regulations. The Policy Committee must approve policies and procedures, funding applications, and budgets.

Members of the Policy Committee should operate as an entity independent of staff employed by the Head Start program and:

- >Not have a financial conflict of interest with the Head Start program.
- >Not receive compensation for serving on the Policy Committee or for providing services to the agency. Policy Committee members can be reimbursed for reasonable costs incurred by members, such as for transportation and child care, and these costs may be contributed back to the program as non-federal share. The Le Jardin financial Policies and Procedures have a policy for such reimbursements.
- >Not be employed, nor members of your immediate family be employed, by the Head Start program.

All Policy Committee members will sign a *Standards of Conduct* Policy acknowledging that their interests are consistent with the above.

Policy Committee members will receive appropriate training and technical assistance to ensure that information received can be understood.