

SHARED DECISION-MAKING PROCESS

INTERNAL DISPUTE RESOLUTION POLICY

POLICY: UMCHS, Inc. will have a systematic, ongoing process of program planning and decision making that includes consultation with the Board of Directors, Policy Council, program staff, and community organizations. Effective decision making for the program will be the product of the Staff, Board, and Policy Council working cooperatively together using the best available and accurate information to solve a problem or to make a decision.

PROCEDURE: **SHARED DECISION-MAKING:** An essential aspect of the shared decision-making process is for the individual or group who has the responsibility of making a decision to obtain any necessary information, advice, and technical assistance from any other individuals or groups who may be affected by the decision or who may have the responsibility to carry out the decision.

§ **Identification and Clarification of the Issue.**

- Determine the issue
- Determine which individuals or groups should be consulted

§ **Gather Opinions and Facts about the Issue.**

- Raise questions of each other about the issue and value each others information, advice, and assistance.
- Distinguish opinions from facts.

§ **Develop Alternative Solutions to the Issue.**

- Develop possible solutions to the issue.
- Respect the proposals or possible solutions that have been offered.

§ **Identify the Consequences of Each Alternative Solution to the Issue.**

- Obtain information from parents, community and other individuals or groups
- Obtain technical advice and assistance from professional consultants, Regional Office, and staff to help identify potential consequences of alternative solutions to the issue.
- Seek advice from those individuals or groups who are needed to help carry out or implement the decision

§ **Make the Decision.**

- Make the choice or decision that has the least amount of potential negative effects or consequences on the program or on the individuals who are served by or work for the program.

- The decision should be the one that is best for all concerned and the organization, the children and their families.

§ **Evaluate the Outcomes of the Decision.**

- The responsible individuals or groups should check to see that the decision was carried out properly.
- If necessary go back to one of the earlier steps in the shared decision-making process and possibly change the decision if the outcome of the original decision is not satisfactory.

UMCHS, Inc. has established and will maintain a formal structure of shared governance through which parents, community and staff can participate in policy making or in other decisions about the program. This structure consists of a Board of Directors, Policy Council, Parent Center Committees, Administrative Team, Management Team, Staff Development Association, and Center Teams. Representatives from each of these groups will work cooperatively together, following the process described above, to make decisions that impact the agency, children, and families.

Governance and management responsibilities of the Governing Board and Policy Council as stated in performance standards are attached to this policy and procedure.

INTERNAL DISPUTE RESOLUTION: If groups fail to reach consensus during the shared decision making process, an agreement will be reached so that the proposal or action can be put into effect. UMCHS, Inc. will follow, in order, the following process for facilitating dispute resolutions.

If a decision cannot be reached, the Executive Director, PC Chair and the Board Chair will meet to resolve.

If still no decision can be reached the Executive Director, PC Executive Committee and the Board Executive Committee will meet to resolve.

If a decision cannot be reached after this process, the problem, issue, or concern will be submitted to voluntary negotiation or mediation within 30 days. This process involves voluntary action to continue discussion with the help and assistance of an outside third person or persons (professional consultants or other community citizens mutually agreed upon by the PC and the Board).

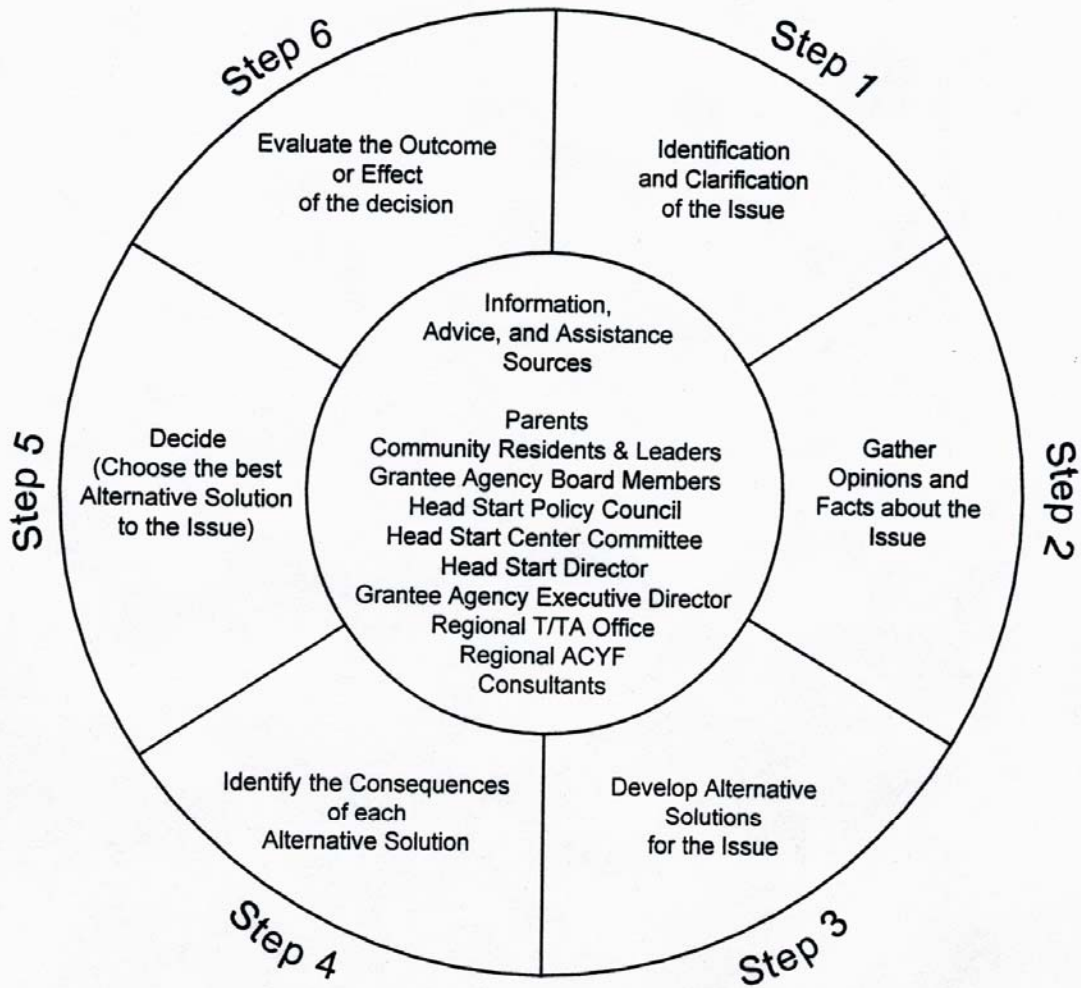
Submit the problem, issue, or concern to mandatory (binding) negotiation arbitration. The third party mediator will have the authority to hear both sides of the dispute, gather any information, analyze and interpret all information, and make a decision that the disagreeing groups or individual will be obligated to follow.

The decision reached through mediation will be final.

The process will take no longer than two months up to the point that it is submitted to voluntary negotiation or mediation. Voluntary negotiations and/or medication may take longer based on the availability of a mediator. The goal is for the resolution process to take no longer than six months.

Often times conflicts tend to bring program planning progress to a halt; all action tends to stop until the conflict is resolved. Therefore, it is important that staff perform their roles well and work with the board and policy council in supporting roles required for the effective contribution of the members of both groups.

A Circular Model of the Shared Decision-Making Process



THREE RESPONSIBILITIES OF HEAD START POLICY COUNCILS

General Responsibility/Operating Responsibility/Must Approve or Disapprove

WHAT DOES IT ALL MEAN??

GENERAL RESPONSIBILITY

The group with legal and fiscal responsibility that guides and oversees policies which are set for the program.

- ∅ The Policy Council has no general responsibilities.

OPERATING RESPONSIBILITY

Is the most active area of responsibility. When an individual or group has this responsibility, it does the work or activity that is necessary.

- ∅ Policy Council's only operating responsibility is to establish and maintain procedures for hearing and working with the grantee to resolve community complaints about the program.

MUST APPROVE OR DISAPPROVE

This group must be involved in the decision-making process prior to the point of seeking approval. If it does not approve, a proposal cannot be adopted, or the proposed action taken, until agreement is reached between the disagreeing groups.

- ∅ Policy Council's functions in this area are many:

- § Approve or disapprove program's philosophy and long- and short-range program goals and objectives.
- § Approve or disapprove delegate agencies, center locations.
- § Approve or disapprove procedures for program planning.
- § Approve or disapprove the recruitment, selection, and enrollment of children.
- § Approve or disapprove the numbers and members of all policy groups and the methods for recruiting and selection.
- § Approve or disapprove the amount of reimbursement to Policy Council members for expenses.
- § Approve or disapprove employment policies and periodic changes to them.
- § Approve or disapprove the hiring or firing of the Head Start Director of Grantee

- Agency.
- § Approve or disapprove the hiring or firing of the Head Start staff of Grantee Agency.
- § Approve or disapprove the program=s funding applications and amendments.
- § Approve or disapprove the annual self assessment and audit.
- § Approve or disapprove the procedures describing shared decision-making.
- § Approve or disapprove the written procedures for resolving internal disputes.

THREE RESPONSIBILITIES OF GRANTEE BOARDS

General Responsibility/Operating Responsibility/Must Approve or Disapprove

WHAT DOES IT ALL MEAN??

GENERAL RESPONSIBILITY

The group with legal and fiscal responsibility that guides and oversees policies which are set for the program.

- The Grantee Board's responsibilities in this area are many:
- § Ensure procedures for program planning are in place.
- § Establish goals of Head Start program and develop ways to meet them.
- § Determine Delegate Agencies and areas in the community in which Head Start programs will operate.
- § Ensure that all funding applications and amendments are submitted to HHS.
- § Establish criteria for recruitment, selection and enrollment of children.
- § Determine the composition of the appropriate policy group and the method for setting it up.
- § Hire and fire Head Start Director of Grantee Agency.
- § Ensure that procedures are in place for the hiring and firing of Head Start staff.
- § Establish reimbursement rates for Policy Council member=s expenses.
- § Determine Head Start Employment Policies and periodic changes.
- § Ensure through the annual self assessment that the program is carrying out the programmatic and fiscal intent of its grant application, including review of the annual audit and findings from the Federal monitor review.
- § Ensure there are employment policies in place and updated periodically.

- § Ensure there are written policies that define the roles and responsibilities of the governing body members and that inform them of the management procedures and functions necessary to implement a high quality program.
- § Ensure there are procedures for the implementation of shared decision making.
- § Ensure there are written procedures for resolving internal disputes, including impasse procedures, between the governing body and policy group.
- § Ensure that appropriate internal controls are established and implemented to safeguard federal funds.
- § Ensure that the annual audit is conducted.

OPERATING RESPONSIBILITY

The most active area of responsibility. When an individual or group has the operating responsibility, it carries out the work or activity, which is necessary, in meeting a need of the Head Start program.

- ∅ The Grantee Board must establish and maintain procedures for hearing and working with the grantee to resolve community complaints about the program.

MUST APPROVE OR DISAPPROVE

This group must be involved in the decision-making process prior to the point of seeking approval. If it does not approve, a proposal cannot be adopted, or the proposed action taken, until agreement is reached between the disagreeing groups.

- The Grantee Board has several responsibilities to Approve or Disapprove.
 - § Approve or disapprove procedures for program planning.
 - § Approve or disapprove program's philosophy and long- and short-range program goals and objectives.
 - § Approve or disapprove delegate agencies, center locations.
 - § Approve or disapprove the program's funding applications and amendments.
 - § Approve or disapprove the numbers and members of all policy groups and the methods for recruiting and selection.
 - § Approve or disapprove the written policies that define the roles and responsibilities of the governing body members and that inform them of the management procedures and functions necessary to implement a high quality program.
 - § Approve or disapprove the procedures describing shared decision-making.
 - § Approve or disapprove the written procedures for resolving internal disputes.
 - § Approve or disapprove employment policies and periodic changes to them.
 - § Approve or disapprove the hiring and firing of the Head Start Director.