

**Hoboken School District
The Hoboken Early Childhood Education Advisory Council Bylaws**

**Prepared by: A Subcommittee of the Hoboken Early Childhood Education Advisory Council
October 28, 2003**

**Revised December 2007; January 2008; February 16, 2010; March 30, 2010;
March 29, 2011; September 27, 2011, May 21, 2013, May 20, 2014, February 3, 2015**

Article I

Name of Organization

The name of the Early Childhood Advisory Council serving the Hoboken School District shall be The Hoboken Early Childhood Advisory Council (HECAC).

Article II

Purpose and Function

1: Primary Function

The primary function of The Hoboken Early Childhood Advisory Council (HECAC) is to provide all of the stakeholders an opportunity to be active participants in the assessment of needs, development of priorities based on recommendations of the Early Childhood Education Director and the Community and Parent Involvement Specialist (CPIS), and identification and use of resources based on an analysis of available school data related to the Hoboken Early Childhood Program. The Council serves the District as an external advisory body.

2: Primary Responsibilities

The responsibilities of the HECAC are:

1. to provide all stakeholders an opportunity to be active participants in the assessment of needs and resources, including facilities, as it pertains to the implementation of high quality preschool to third grade programs;
2. to develop priorities based on recommendations of the Early Childhood Education Director and Community and Parent Involvement Specialist (CPIS); and
3. to review and comment on program reports at the request of the district's Director of Early Childhood Education; and
4. to enlist, promote, and support collaboration between the Early Childhood Program and the community.

The Council may establish one or more committees per year to fulfill specific responsibilities as directed by the Council. Each committee will have one or two Lead Members responsible for organizing committee activities, facilitating the development of committee objectives, and reporting progress to the Council. The Lead Member(s) of the committee may delegate the reporting duties to another committee member as needed.

Article III

Representation and Membership

1: Number of Members

The membership of The Hoboken Early Childhood Advisory Council (HECAC) shall be limited to no less than nine members and not more than twenty members. Following election to the Council, membership begins with the individual's attendance at his/her first HECAC meeting.

2: Representation

The membership of the HECAC shall be representative of the community served by the Hoboken School District, and shall have an appropriately balanced number of stakeholders.

HECAC membership is made up of three categories of representatives:

1. Mandatory stakeholders
2. Parent representatives
3. Community representatives

3: Mandatory stakeholders

Mandatory stakeholders are Hoboken School District or Contracted Provider employees. These mandatory stakeholders include:

- the Principal/Director of Early Childhood Education;
- the Community and Parent Involvement Specialist (CPIS); and
- one representative from each Contracted Provider.

Mandatory stakeholders are required to maintain membership on the Council. Those members are appointed by the Principal/Director of Early Childhood Education or the contracted providers.

4: Additional stakeholders

Additional include Parent Representatives and Community Representatives.

Parent Representatives are Council members who have children participating in preschool through grade 3 as part of the Hoboken Early Childhood Education Program and the Hoboken Board of Education School District.

HECAC will aspire to include Parent Representatives *ideally* with at least one current parent from each site, from each provider, and from each age level, as well as a member of the Brandt PTO. The same parent member can fulfill multiple criteria.

Community Representatives may or may not have children currently in the Early Childhood Program, and should have ties to the Hoboken community at large. These representatives bring different experiences and perspectives to the Council based on their personal and professional background and expertise. The Council will strive to recruit Community Representatives who can help the Council address current priorities and needs.

Community Representatives may be representatives of, but not limited to, the following groups or disciplines:

- Local child care providers
- Local Head Start agency
- Child and family advocates
- Family worker/outreach program
- Health professionals or agencies
- Social service providers
- Local business representatives
- Higher education
- Philanthropic community
- Mental health professionals or agencies
- District office staff
- Hoboken Education Association
- Supervisors and administrative organizations
- Early intervention and special education groups
- Community groups such as NAACP, Urban League, churches, YMCA, or YWCA
- State and national education associations
- Parents whose children have graduated from the Early Childhood Education program or have progressed beyond 3rd grade.

Parent and Community members may only be voted on by the Council, of which a quorum will decide membership.

5: Balance across Stakeholder Groups

In order to achieve a balanced HECAC composition, the following minimums have been established:

- The Principal/Director of Early Childhood Education and the Community and Parent Involvement Specialist will both maintain permanent membership on the Council although the Principal/Director of Early Childhood Education is a non-voting member.
- At least one representative from each Contracted Provider will maintain permanent membership on the Council as representatives of their respective groups. As stated in Section III.2, these members will be appointed by their respective providers. Contracting Providers may send a proxy with full voting rights.

Ideally, at least one quarter of the Council will constitute Hoboken School District Board of Education employees or their contracted employees representing different disciplines and departments. There will be at least two Community Members and four Parent Members on the Council.

Article IV

Membership Selection

1: General Membership Selection

Members representing the Hoboken Board of Education School District and Contracted Providers shall be selected by their respective groups and become appointed to the Council with final approval from the Principal/Director of Early Childhood Education.

Other stakeholders (including replacements) will be identified based on the recommendation of Council members to the Principal/Director of Early Childhood Education for his/her approval. In turn, the Director will forward to the Superintendent for a final vote of approval by the Hoboken Board of Education Trustees.

Parent and Community Representative candidates may be identified through a number of avenues, including recommendations of current members, survey responses in which interest in volunteer participation is solicited, the Hoboken Board of Education web site and related online properties, and through other referral mechanisms. All candidates must complete an application. Parent and Community Representative candidates must submit the appropriate Representative Interest Form and resume to the Council Co-Chairperson.

A subcommittee of the Council will be formed to facilitate the process of reviewing applications of interested Parent Representative candidates and interested Community Representative candidates and presenting that information to the Council for discussion to determine which candidate(s) will be recommended for consideration by the Council. A letter of recommendation may be requested at the discretion of the Council. In the event that there are more candidates than available seats on the Council, consideration will be guided by the procedures outlined by Article VIII, with the goal of maintaining balance in the Council's membership. The Council will elect new Parent and Community Representatives through a formal vote.

2: Replacements

There is no requirement that new members represent the same organization or constituency as the member they are replacing, provided the balance of the HECAC is maintained.

Article V

Terms of Office

1: Definition and length of term

For the purposes of these bylaws, a year constitutes the academic calendar year and summer, September through August 31st.

The term of office for members representing the Hoboken School District Board of Education and Contracted Providers shall be a two-year term. The number of terms of service is indefinite provided that the member continues to be appointed by his/her organization.

The term of office for other stakeholders shall be a two-year term, which may be renewed at the last meeting of the year by consensus of the Council. The number of terms of service is indefinite provided the council votes to renew the member's term.

Article VI

Officers, Election of Officers and Key Duties

1: Officers

The officers of this Council shall be two Co-Chairpersons and a Secretary.

The following rules shall apply for appointing officers:

- One of the two Co-Chairpersons shall be the Community and Parent Involvement Specialist from the Hoboken Board of Education;
- The second Co-Chairperson may be any other member of the Council except the Principal/Director of Early Childhood Education (and is elected by the Council); and
- The Secretary role can be filled with a representative from any of the stakeholder groups.

2: Election of Officers

The Council shall elect its own officers at the first regular meeting of the academic year. Officers shall serve one term and may be re-elected to additional terms. The Community and Parent Involvement Specialist (CPIS) serves as a permanent Co-Chairperson.

The other Co-Chairperson and Secretary will be determined by the following:

- 1) Nominations will be made by HECAC members.
- 2) A vote by show of hands or paper ballot will be conducted.

In the event of a vacancy in a Council office during an existing term, the vacancy will be filled by the HECAC through consensus. In the event that consensus cannot be reached, Council members may cast ballots and majority rule shall prevail.

3: Key Duties of Officers

- Co-Chairperson (CPIS): The CPIS shall preside at all meetings of the Council and be a de facto member of all committees, in addition to maintaining the Council's permanent records and minutes. The CPIS shall solicit agenda items at least 1 week prior to each scheduled meeting and shared the prior to the meeting. The Council reserves the right to modify agenda as needed,
- Co-Chairperson (other stakeholder): The Co-Chairperson may preside over meetings when the CPIS is not present.
- Secretary: The Secretary shall keep minutes of the meetings and shall be responsible for such correspondence as is delegated to him/her by the Co-Chairperson. The Secretary shall also document activities, decisions, and attendance of the Council and its committees for accountability. The Secretary shall distribute a draft of meeting minutes to the CPIS within one week following a meeting.

Either the Secretary or the Community and Parent Involvement Specialist (CPIS) shall also distribute a final draft of meeting minutes to the Council no later than one week prior to the next meeting.

4: Key Duties of Council Members

- Attendance at HECAC meetings. No member may miss more than three meetings per academic year. In the event of recurring absences, the HECAC Co-Chairpersons shall have the option to recommend that the member be replaced as specified in Article IV (Membership Selection). This will be voted upon by a quorum of the Council
- Participation on at least one HECAC subcommittee. Depending upon the subcommittee and the tasks at hand, subcommittee participation may require a few hours of effort each month, possibly including attendance at additional meetings scheduled at the convenience of the committee members.
- Participation in Early Childhood Development Program events. Each council member must attend at least one event per school year (e.g. Open House, Parent Workshops, PTO meetings).

Article VII

Meetings

There shall be a Council meeting at least six times per academic year. In addition, the Council may elect to meet during the summer. A preliminary HECAC meeting calendar shall be set at the first meeting of the academic calendar year; however, this may be modified over the course of the year with consensus of the council.

The HECAC Co-Chairperson (CPIS) shall notify members of an upcoming meeting at least 2 weeks prior to the next meeting date. The HECAC Co-Chairperson may call a special meeting as needed.

Should a meeting date be rescheduled within two weeks of the initially proposed date, an inability to attend the rescheduled meeting shall not be counted toward the three allotted absences per year.

Article VIII

Decision-making

1: General Decision-making

A quorum is required at any meeting for action to be taken. A quorum shall be defined as one-half the current Council membership plus one. One exception is with regard to Article X, where a two-thirds majority is required for action to amend bylaws.

Consensus will be the primary decision-making method to be used by the HECAC. Consensus is reached when all members understand the decision, will support, and are willing to implement the decision.

2: Voting and Approvals

Voting will be used when a consensus cannot be reached. Votes can be taken for several purposes:

- To determine if an issue should be referred to committee for further study; or
- To come to a decision when the Council is unable to reach consensus;
- To approve new candidates to the Council.

Voting can take place at a meeting or be held electronically.

A majority vote held by a quorum of Council members shall become the official position of the HECAC.

As per NJAC 6A:10A-2.2, the HECAC is an advisory council. The Principal/Director of Early Childhood Education and other Hoboken Board of Education employees have primary responsibility and accountability for determining how relevant HECAC recommendations will be carried forth.

In the absence of the Principal/Director of Early Childhood Education, the Council may still meet and work towards its stated mission.

Article IX

Rules of Order

The HECAC need not operate under Parliamentary Procedures or Robert's Rules of Order.

As a general best practice, the HECAC operates by consensus and motions are advanced, seconded, and voted upon. See Article VIII for more detailed information.

Article X

Amendments

The bylaws may be amended at any regular meeting of the HECAC by a two-thirds majority of the members present and voting. Amendments may also be voted upon electronically.

Notice of the proposed amendment shall be given at least 7 days prior to the meeting at which it is to be voted upon. Amendments voted upon electronically will be preceded by at least 7 days for review and discussion as warranted.

A subset of the Council shall be appointed to review, and when appropriate, recommend revisions to the Council bylaws at least once every year. The adoption of revised bylaws shall follow the procedure for amendments.

Article XI

Confidentiality Clause

All HECAC members are required to sign the most current version on the Confidentiality Clause on an annual basis. The language of this clause appears on the next page.

(Significant changes made to these Bylaws are outlined at the end of this document.)

Confidentiality Clause

I, _____, as a member of the Hoboken Early Childhood Advisory Council (HECAC) acknowledge and agree that sensitive information and information not for public consumption discussed at HECAC meetings will not be shared with others including members of the Hoboken Board of Trustees.

I also understand and agree that only Co-Chairs of HECAC or unless otherwise approved by council can represent the full Council before local boards to address or comment on any issues discussed at a HECAC meeting. Official statements of information shared publicly in these forums are reserved for the HECAC Co-Chairs or delegee. If any member of HECAC speaks at a Board of Education meeting, he or she should refrain from comments that may suggest that he or she is representing the entirety of HECAC.

I acknowledge that my membership on HECAC is voluntary. I am volunteering without promise, expectation, or receipt of compensation for my services. Any member who fails to sign this agreement and follow the HECAC Bylaws may forfeit his/her membership on the Council.

HECAC MEMBER's SIGNATURE _____ Date: ___/___/___

Signature	Print Name
Co-Chairperson	
Co-Chairperson	
Secretary	
Provider	
Provider	
Parent	
Parent	
Parent	
Parent	
Community	
Community	

Significant Changes Made to Bylaws in February 2010

1. The primary responsibilities of the Council were expanded.
2. Minimum balances in Council membership were re-configured.
3. Bylaws reflect that committees may be established and that non-voting volunteers may be appointed to these committees.
4. Minimum attendance requirements were changed.

Significant Changes Made to Bylaws in March 2010

1. Signature lines were added.
2. A provision was included to allow amendments via electronic vote.
3. Procedures were delineated for election of second Co-Chairperson.

Significant Changes Made to Bylaws in March 29, 2011

1. Amendment to Article III Representation as there was no prior mention of parent representation. It now reads "HECAC will aspire to include parent members with at least one current parent from each site, from each provider, and from each age level. The same parent member can fulfill multiple criteria. Parents of a kindergarten student who has previously served on HECAC can be considered a parent member."
2. Amendment to Article V Terms of Office to reflect expectations surrounding meeting attendance. It now reads "No member may miss more than three meetings. In the event of recurring absences, the HECAC Co-Chairpersons shall have the option to recommend that the member be replaced as specified in Article IV (Membership Selection). This will be voted upon by the full Council."

Significant Changes Made to Bylaws on September 27, 2011

1. Amendment to Article III (Representation and Membership) to clarify the membership representation definitions (mandatory stakeholders, parent representatives, and community representatives).
2. Amendment to Article III (Representation and Membership) to eliminate section 4: Committee Members. This section had stated that committees could have volunteers who are not HECAC Council members and do not have voting rights. This section was removed in its entirety.
3. Amendment to Article IV (Membership Selection). Previous version outlined process for the Council to review and vote upon its own membership. Amendment outlines membership selection with final approval of the Principal/Director of Early Childhood Education, the Superintendent, and the Hoboken Board of Education Trustees.
4. Amendment to Article V (Terms of Office) to reduce the term of membership from two years to one year.
5. Amendment to Article VI (Officers, Election of Officers and Key Duties) to state that officers (the non-CPIS Co-Chairperson and the Secretary) shall serve one term, and may be re-elected to a second term.
6. Amendment to Article VI (Officers, Election of Officers and Key Duties) to state that the Co-Chairperson may preside over meetings when the CPIS Co-Chairperson is not present, provided that the Principal/Director of Early Childhood Education is present.
7. Amendment to Article VII (Meetings) to remove the paragraph stating that members may join a meeting by teleconference. This paragraph was removed in its entirety.
8. Amendment to Article VIII (Decision-making) to clarify section 2: Voting and Approvals. The entire section was replaced, in order to outline what the Council may meet about and do in the absence of the Principal/Director of Early Childhood Education.
9. Amendment to Article IX (Amendments) to remove the provision allowing for electronic voting on Bylaw amendments.
10. The HECAC Bylaws state: "No member may miss more than three meetings per academic year. In the event of recurring absences, the HECAC Co-Chairpersons shall have the option to recommend that the member be replaced as specified in Article IV (Membership Selection). This will be voted upon by a quorum of the Council." Please note that under the revised bylaws (revised September 2011), "excused" absences are not exempt from

your attendance record. As discussed and agreed upon by the Council, "excused" simply indicates that the CPIS Co-Chair was aware in advance of the meeting that you would not be present.

Significant Changes Made to Bylaws on May 21, 2013

1. Amendment to Article II (Section 2: Primary Responsibilities) to reflect that a standing committee can have two leads.
2. Amendment to Article III (Section 1: Number of Members) to reflect that membership begins with the individual's attendance at his/her first HECAC meeting.
3. Amendment to Article III (Section 3: Balance across Stakeholder Groups) to reflect that there will be at least two Community Members and two Parent Members of the Council.
4. Two amendments to Article IV (Section 1: General Membership Selection) to indicate that the Representative Interest Form would be accompanied by a letter of recommendation (this change will be made on the two Representative Interest Forms). In addition, a rewording was approved to the following sentence: In the event that there are more candidates than available seats on the Council, consideration *will be guided by the procedures* outlined by Article VIII.
5. Amendment to Article VI (Section 3: Key Duties of Officers) to reflect that either the Secretary or the Community and Parent Involvement Specialist (CPIS) shall also distribute a draft of meeting minutes to the Council no later than one week prior to the next scheduled HECAC meeting. In addition, a new section was added (Section 4: Key Duties of Council Members) to delineate the minimum expectations of all council members.
6. Amendment to Article VII (Meetings) to reflect that should a meeting date be rescheduled within two weeks of the initially proposed date, an inability to attend the rescheduled meeting shall be counted toward the three allowed absences per year.

Significant Changes Made to Bylaws on May 20, 2014

1. Amendment to Article V (Terms of Office) to revert the term of membership from one year to two years.
2. Amendment to Article 6 to allow the Co-Chairperson to preside over meetings when the CPIS is not present.

Significant Changes Made to Bylaws on February 3, 2015

1. Amendment to Article II clarifying that the Council serves the District as an external advisory body.
2. Amendment to Article III defining membership as beginning with the individual's attendance at his/her first HECAC meeting.
3. Amendment to Article III acknowledging that since the Brandt location is the core of the early childhood program and holds the majority of Pre K seats and Kindergarten classrooms, a seat on the council for a PTO officer would be made available. There will be at least four Parent Members on the Council.
4. Amendment to Article III, 5 allowing Principal to serve as a voting member on the Council.
5. Amendment to Article V, reflecting that a year constitutes the academic calendar year and summer, September 1st through August 31st. Revisions further stipulated that a letter of recommendation may be requested at the discretion of the Council. It was further clarified that Parent and Community members may only be voted on by the Council, of which a quorum will decide membership. Board of Education approval is not required. The number of terms of service is indefinite provided the council votes to renew the member's term.
6. Amendment to Article VIII indicating that voting can take place at a meeting or be held electronically.
7. Confidentiality clause was amended.