

Chicago Department of Family & Support Services
Best Practices for Board and Policy Committee Meeting Minutes
Pertaining to Head Start/Early Head Start Business
The Head Start Legal Advisory Service
www.nhsa.org/training/advisory

1. Board minutes should reflect the development, review, and approval/disapproval of board responsibilities of Head Start Program Performance Standard-1301 Program Governance of w/ the 2007 Head Start Act Section 642 (c) Program Governance. Boards and Policy Committees are to be actively involved the Head Start/Early Head Start program and grant development process.
2. Minutes should give an accurate reflection of what was discussed in the meeting.
3. Minutes should reflect how internal controls are been maintained and monitored by the board.
4. Ensure and record that the board and the policy committee have received proper training on their roles & responsibilities and expectations to help them carryout their oversight responsibilities to the program, can be conducted as part of a the scheduled meeting or a separate training session. Make sure to have an agenda, sign-in sheets, training materials, and evaluations.

What should be in Board/Policy Committee Minutes:

- Name of Attendees (can refer to sign-in sheet for policy committee meetings)
- Date & Location of meeting
- Record of a quorum present/or not present
- Reflect accurate start and end time
- Potential/Appearance of conflict of interest (recusals/dissentions/abstains)
- Name of person who drafted/submitted minutes/final copy signed by the secretary
- Copies of handouts distributed:
 - helps to demonstrate board carrying out duties
 - monthly budgets, balance sheets, cash flows
 - issues/projects discussed with board from senior management
 - planning, procedures, personnel, etc.
- What actions were taken/not taken
 - Record who made the motion and who seconded the motion
 - Record the vote outcome
 - Give a brief synopsis of the discussion
 - Use accurate terminology:
i.e.: distinguish self – assessment from OHS Monitoring Tool

- If using a staff person or assistant for recording the minutes, make sure it's someone who is familiar with the context of the meeting and HSPS; and is able to carefully draft the minutes and prepare them with accuracy
- Proofread carefully for substance and accuracy.
- Good minutes take time; they are considered as evidence by the courts.
- Remember, if it is not written in the minutes, it didn't happen.
- Good minutes help to demonstrate that the board and the policy committee are making reasonable, prudent decisions about the program.
- If a member doesn't like grammar, then they should not volunteer or agree to serve as the secretary or the note taker.
- Head Start Reports/Program Updates/Financial Reports
 - News Articles
 - Enrollment/Attendance
 - Snack/Meal Counts
 - Program Information Reports
 - Child Outcomes Reports
 - CFO/ CEO Reports (finance reports, financial statements, in-kind reports, payroll tax status, insurance claims, unpaid vendors, etc.
- Identify who gave what report (should be a written report as well)
- Office of Head Start Correspondence: Information Memorandums/Program Instructions, DFSS' Policies and Procedures as appropriate