**MISSISSIPPI COUNTY, ARKANSAS, E.O.C.**

**EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION DEPARTMENT**

1302.50

**PARENT ENGAGEMENT/PARENT INVOLVEMENT (GENERAL)**

**POLICY**:

In addition to involving parents in program policy-making and operations, the program provides parent involvement and education activities that are responsive to the ongoing and expressed needs of the parents, both as individuals and as members of a group.

**PROCEDURE:**

**1.0 Parent Involvement in Decision-Making**

1.1 The program supports and encourages parents in making decisions about content and operation of the program and how they and their child will participate in it.

1.2 The program maintains a formal structure of shared governance through which parents can participate in policy making or in other decisions about the program.

1. This structure varies from location to location, but normally consists of a Center Committee at the center level, a Parent Policy Committee at the Delegate level, and Parent Policy Council at the Grantee level.

**2.0 Parent Involvement in the Classroom**

2.1 The program supports and encourages parents to visit, work in, and/or volunteer in the classroom.

1. This is a time for staff and parent to become better acquainted and learn from each other.

2.2 Parents may participate in the classroom as paid employees, volunteers, or observers.

1. Qualified parents receive first consideration for employment in Head Start.
2. As volunteers, parents participate in classroom activities and supplement the services of paid employees.
3. The program encourages all enrolled parents to visit the classroom and observe what goes on during the year.

**3.0 Parent Involvement in Parent-Oriented Activities**

3.1 The program respects parents as adults with interests and aspirations of their own.

3.2 Throughout the program year, the program provides opportunities for parent involvement in training, activities, and on community problems of common concern, such as health, education, and housing issues.

**4.0 Parent Involvement in Home Activities with Their Children**

4.1 Classroom Teachers, Home Visitors, and Family Service Advocate provide resources for activities that parents and children can do together.

4.2 Head Start/Early Head Start guides and assists parents in encouraging their children’s development at home.

4.3 Although parents are not required to permit home visits in order for their child to participate in Head Start/Early Head Start, (with the exception of families enrolled in the Home-Based option), Family Service Advocate, ERSEA Staff, Home Base Educators, and Classroom Teachers emphasize the importance and advantage of this service.

**5.0 Parent Involvement with the Program**

5.1 Early Head Start and Head Start settings are open to parents during all program hours.

1. Parents are welcomed as visitors and encouraged to observe children as often as possible and to participate with children in group activities.

5.2 The participation of parents in any program activity must be voluntary, and is not required as a condition of the child’s enrollment.

5.3 The program provides parents with opportunities to participate in the program as employees or volunteers.

5.4 The program includes parents in educational decisions related to their children by encouraging parent input in the selection of curriculum; encouraging parent observation and participation in child activities at the program, etc.

1. Classroom Teaching staff encourage parents to create verbal or written stories with their children in their preferred language.
2. Classroom Teaching staff solicit parent ideas for classroom activities and teaching approaches and work with parents to implement them.

5.5 The program develops and shares materials and activities to encourage parent participation and to make parents feel welcome at the program.

**6.0 Program Services**

6.1 The program provides parents with opportunity to discuss with staff information related to their child’s education/development (such as developmental assessments, screening results, etc.).