

# **WASHITA VALLEY COMMUNITY ACTION COUNCIL HEAD START/EARLY HEAD START**

## **TRAINING AND CAREER DEVELOPMENT**

The Washita Valley Community Action Head Start Training and Career Development Plan assists staff members in improving their career potential, educational status, and to meet program plans and performance objectives.

New staff will receive an orientation which includes the philosophy of Head Start and periodic new employee training sessions. Washita Valley CAC Head Start will provide pre-service and monthly in-service training to current staff. Classroom staff receives on-site training from managers and from the mentor teacher. Center Directors and teachers receive additional training at the center director/teacher meeting which is conducted at least every other month.

All staff are encouraged to participate in advanced education at local universities. Staff may be allowed to attend conferences which pertain to their jobs when funds are available.

Policy Council and Governing Board members are offered training in program governance and roles and responsibilities after the new policy council is seated. In addition, training is conducted at each policy council meeting.

Parents are trained through parent orientations at the beginning of the school year and through monthly parent meetings. Training can also be acquired by volunteering in the Head Start classroom and attending in-service training with staff.

### **In-Service Training**

All staff will complete a training needs assessment each program year. The assessment is developed by the Content Area Managers to assist in making recommendations about the types of training needed and requested by staff at pre/in-service training sessions.

*Attendance at staff pre/in-service training is mandatory for teaching staff.* Parents, Policy Council and governing board members are welcome and encouraged to attend.

### **Out-of-Agency Training**

Each employee is encouraged to take a minimum of one out-of-agency workshop, course, conference, training session, etc. each year that applies to her/his job responsibilities.

### **Career Progression**

Head Start offers employees opportunities to advance within the program. The Human Resource Manager or the Head Start Director will inform all employees of vacancies that occur in the agency.

Employees complete a staff development form setting career and educational goals that they wish to attain. Employees are encouraged to formulate a long-term plan for acquiring the degrees or certification needed to assist in career development. The Education Manager and/or the Head

Start Director will provide career counseling upon the request of an employee.

Any teacher assistant not having a Child Development Associate (CDA) must attain it within two years of date of hire. All classroom teachers not having a Bachelor Degree in Child Development or Early Childhood Education are encouraged to attain it.

### **Procedures for Requesting and Receiving Training or College Courses**

Classes or workshops requested must directly relate to the employee's job. Teaching staff must be seeking a CDA or Baccalaureate degree in Early Childhood or Child Development.

1. An Education Plan for the employee requesting college courses must be on file prior to enrollment.
2. All employees must apply for Federal Student Aid or other forms of financial assistance before requesting agency funds to attend college classes. Documentation of acceptance or denial must be submitted to the Education Manager with the Career Development Request.
3. Employees attending classes not paid from agency funds do not need to submit a career development request.
4. Employee will submit a Career Development Request Form to the Education Manager for college or CDA classes. All other requests for training will be made to the Head Start Director.
5. After ensuring the classes are required to complete the education plan, the Education Manager will forward the request to the Procurement Clerk/Administrative Assistant for a purchase order to be written.
6. Employees requesting agency funds may enroll only after receiving a copy of the approval letter sent to the institution.
7. Where funds are limited, the following criteria for selection will be followed.
  - a. Staff required to obtain a CDA or Associates Degree
  - b. Personal need for training to improve job performance
  - c. Satisfactory job performance.
  - d. Leadership ability exhibited by the employee.
8. A copy of the grade report showing completion of the course must be mailed immediately to Education Manager.
9. Employees must maintain an average of 2.0 or C in all Early Childhood classes to continue to receive funding.
10. If a course is dropped, incomplete, the employee receives a failing grade, or the employee terminates employment before the class is completed, the cost must be reimbursed to

Washita Valley CAC Head Start.

11. Employees who have not completed their introductory period must reimburse the agency for funds expended for coursework, should the employee terminate.
12. Employees who receive financial assistance to pursue a degree shall teach or work in a Head Start program a minimum of three (3) years after receiving the degree, or repay the total or prorated amount of the financial assistance based on the length of service completed after receiving the degree.
13. Tuition, books, and required institution fees may be paid for employees as long as the classes pertain to their job responsibilities and with approval of the Head Start Director.
14. Early release during regularly scheduled working hours must be approved in writing by the direct supervisor and the Head Start Director. All efforts must be made to arrange course schedules during non-working hours. If released during working hours, employees must maintain the same high quality work performance.
15. Completion of study assignments must be done outside of the employee's regular working hours. Unsatisfactory job performance during enrollment may result in future forfeiture of educational funding for the employee.