Head Start Governance and Management Responsibilities

**Governing Body/Tribal Council**
Assumes Legal and Fiscal Responsibility for Head Start and the Safeguarding of Federal Funds

- Adopt practices to ensure active, independent, and informed governance:
  - Governing body bylaws
  - Procedures for accessing and collecting information
  - Written standards of conduct, including conflicts of interest and complaints
  - Procedures for selecting Policy Council members
  - Advisory committees

- Select:
  - Delegate agencies and the service areas for such agencies

- Establish:
  - Procedures and criteria for recruitment, selection, and enrollment

- Review:
  - All funding applications and amendments
  - Results and follow-up activities from federal monitoring

- Review and Approve:
  - Major policies and procedures, including Self-Assessment, financial audit, and personnel policies
  - Progress on implementing the HS grant, including corrective actions
  - Major expenditures
  - Operating budget
  - Selection of auditor
  - Actions to correct audit findings

- Receive and Use:
  - Annual, monthly, and periodic reports*

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**Policy Council**
Assumes Responsibility for Head Start Program Direction

- Approve and submit to the governing body decisions regarding:
  - Activities for parent involvement/engagement
  - Program recruitment, selection, and enrollment priorities
  - Funding applications/amendments
  - Budget planning, including reimbursement and participation in Policy Council activities
  - Policy Council bylaws
  - Head Start program personnel policies and decisions, including criteria for employment and dismissal of program staff
  - Policy Council election procedures
  - Recommendations on delegates/service areas

- Take Action:
  - Hire/terminate Head Start Director and other lead staff
  - Establish impasse procedures

- Provide Leadership and Strategic Direction:
  - Focus on Self-Assessment
  - Develop, plan, and evaluate the Head Start program

- Receive and Use:
  - Annual, monthly, and periodic reports*

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**Management Staff**
Assumes Operating Responsibility for Head Start Day-to-Day Functions

- Take Action:
  - Implement policies
  - Develop procedures
  - Provide T/TA to governing body and Policy Council
  - Supervise staff
  - Monitor compliance
  - Generate and use annual, monthly, and periodic reports*

- Receive and Use:
  - Share reports with Policy Council and governing body*

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*Reports that are generated and used by management, then shared with and used by Policy Council and governing body:
  - HHS secretary communication
  - Financial statements
  - Program information summaries
  - Enrollment
  - USDA
  - Financial audit
  - Self-Assessment
  - Community assessment
  - PIR

April 22, 2014
The management staff includes the grantee organization’s executive director, chief financial officer, Head Start program director, and key Head Start managers. Because different agencies have different organizational structures, key management staff titles and responsibilities can vary.

Governing body and Tribal Council members should refer to their Head Start program's organizational structure or chart to identify key Head Start managers in their organization.

Please note that the Head Start Act does allow for exceptions to these composition requirements in certain cases; for further information regarding exceptions and the use of consultants, refer to the Head Start Act Sec. 642(c)(1)(B)(v) and (vi).