

## **Program Self Assessment Policy/Procedure**

The Program Self Assessment is a method of measuring agency accomplishments, strengths, and weaknesses. Self Assessment promotes continuous improvement of program service delivery and quality, as well as focuses attention on issues that arise in the community, the program, and among enrolled families.

### **Process/Procedure**

Arrowhead Head Start will utilize the Self Assessment Guide developed by the Head Start Bureau in completing the annual Program Self Assessment, “Your Foundation for Program Excellence.” Following are the steps or stages that will be implemented in order to accomplish this goal.

- **Stage One: Preparing for the Self Assessment:**

The Head Start Director will convene a team of Head Start Managers to lead the process. This Leadership Team will determine sites involved in the annual process; select Team Leaders and Team Members who will participate in the process; and inform the Policy Council and Governing Body (AEOA Board) about the process. A timeline will be determined for completion of the process. The Regional Technical Assistance Network member may be solicited for training and facilitation of the Self Assessment.

Sites selected will be determined to represent all options of the Arrowhead Head Start program. Approximately one third of the program will be selected each year and attempts will be made to alter sites so all sites will participate in a three year period.

Team Leaders will be a member of the Interdisciplinary Team. These Team Leaders will have specific responsibilities which will be provided to them prior to the Self Assessment training. Four to five teams will be formed and the 18 Self Assessment booklets will be divided among the teams depending upon the length, complexity, and area of the booklets. Qualified Team Members will be recruited to participate. Any Staff who are selected will be based on position, site, and participation in previous Self Assessments. These Staff Team Members will include a cross section of positions in the program including Center and Combination Managers; Teacher Aides/Assistants; Special Needs Aides/Assistants; and Family Advocates. Staff will not be from sites that are selected to be reviewed. Additional Team Members may be selected from Policy Council and Community Resources.

The Head Start Director or a member of the Leadership Team will inform the Policy Council and the AEOA Board about the Program Self Assessment process annually. The Leadership Team will conduct comprehensive training to Team Leaders and Team Members regarding the Self Assessment purpose, process, specific assigned booklets, and methods of obtaining information for booklet completion. The optimal time for the training will be March.

- **Second Stage: Collecting and Synthesizing the Information:**

Team Members, under the guidance of their Team Leader, will conduct the Self Assessment by reviewing documents, making site observations, and interviewing staff, managers, families, Policy Council representatives, AEOA Board members, and community resources. Team Members will draw from multiple sources and summarize booklet information in the Team Member Summary. The general timeline to complete this phase will be 2-3 weeks. At

the completion of the booklets and summary, the Team Leader will consolidate the information from individual Team Members into the Team Leader Booklet Analysis.

- Stage Three: Interpreting the Information:  
The Leadership Team will reconvene with the Team Leaders and ID Team to review and analyze the results. Program strengths will be identified by displaying information from the 18 booklets in a useful manner. The ID Team will use this information to establish patterns of identified needs and reveal underlying causes and systemic issues. The result of this process will be to classify and prioritize the identified weaknesses and areas to strengthen.
- Stage Four: Strengthening the Program:  
The ID Team will utilize the information from Stage Three: Interpreting Information to develop a program improvement plan with identified goals, desired outcomes, and specific action steps. This process will begin the Strategic Plan for the program and will include representatives of Managers, Staff, Families, Policy Council, Governing Body, and Community Resources. This information will be used while developing and implementing a Training and Technical Assistance Plan. On-going monitoring and assessing progress will be the responsibility of the Head Start Director and ID Team while implementing the Program Improvement Plan and T/TA Plan.

This Policy complies with Performance Standard 1304.51(i)(1) in Management Systems and Procedures. Programs are also required to incorporate child outcome data into the Self Assessment process. (ACYF-IM-HS-00-18).

Approved by Policy Council 4-12-06