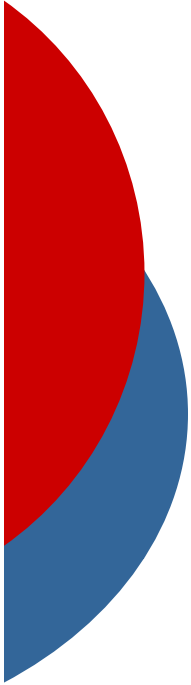




Understanding the Appeal Process

Revised May 2011



NAEYC Academy and Governance Structure

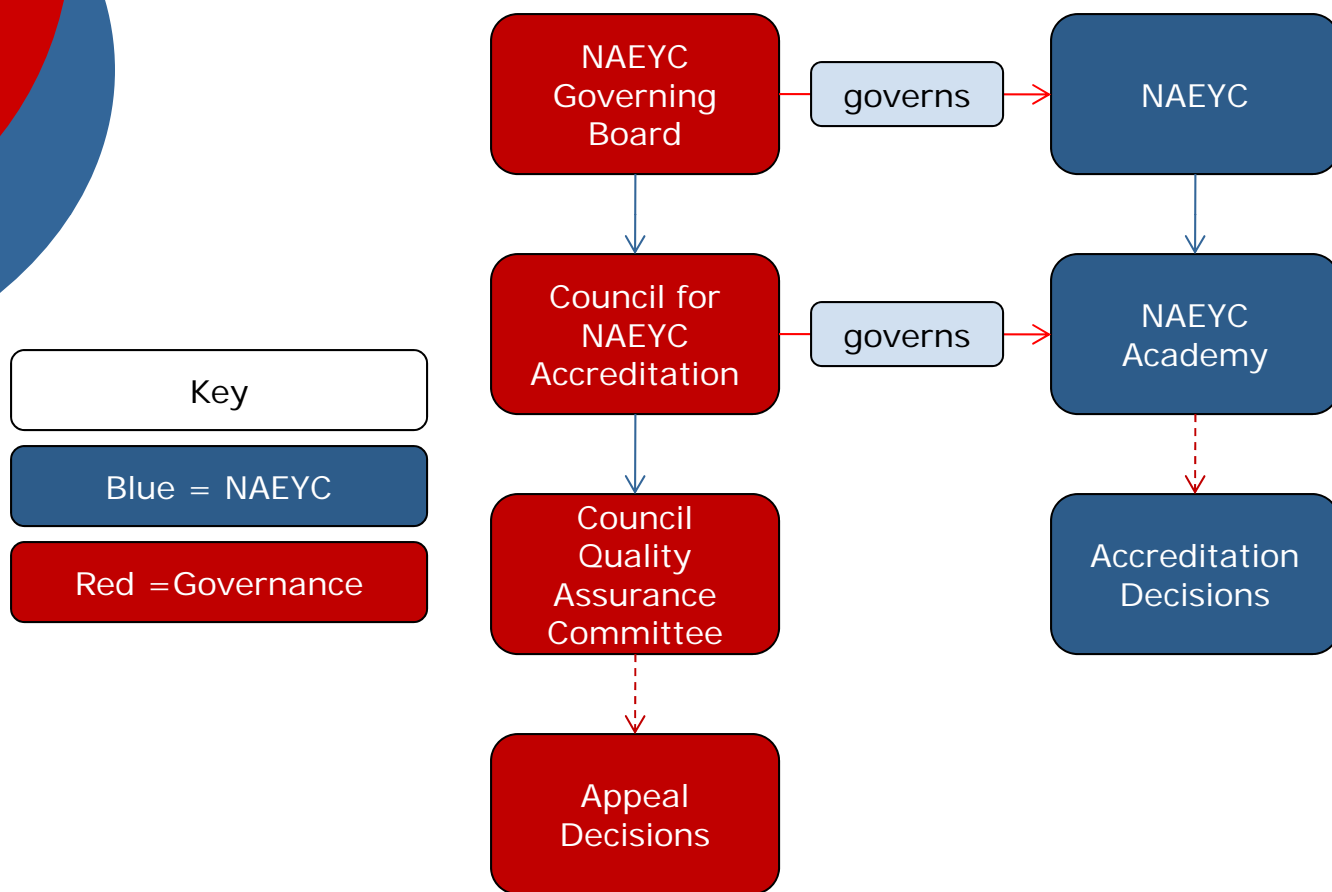
NAEYC Governance Structure

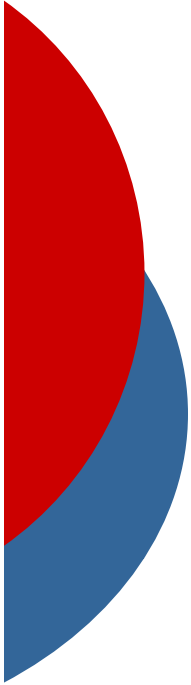
- The **NAEYC Governing Board (Board)** is the governing body for the NAEYC Association, comprised of qualified NAEYC members that demonstrate strong leadership, commitment, and contributions to the field of early childhood education and in assuring the well-being of all young children.
- *The Governing Board oversees the work of the NAEYC Association.*
- The **Council for NAEYC Accreditation (Council)** is an independent body of early education experts with knowledge of NAEYC Accreditation of early childhood programs that ensures the equity, integrity, and accountability of the accreditation system.
- *The Council reports directly to the Governing Board and oversees the NAEYC Academy.*
- The **Quality Assurance Committee (Committee)** is a subset of the Council for NAEYC Accreditation and is responsible for reviewing program appeals and rendering appeal decisions.
- *The Committee is comprised of three individuals who are past or current Council members.*

NAEYC Academy

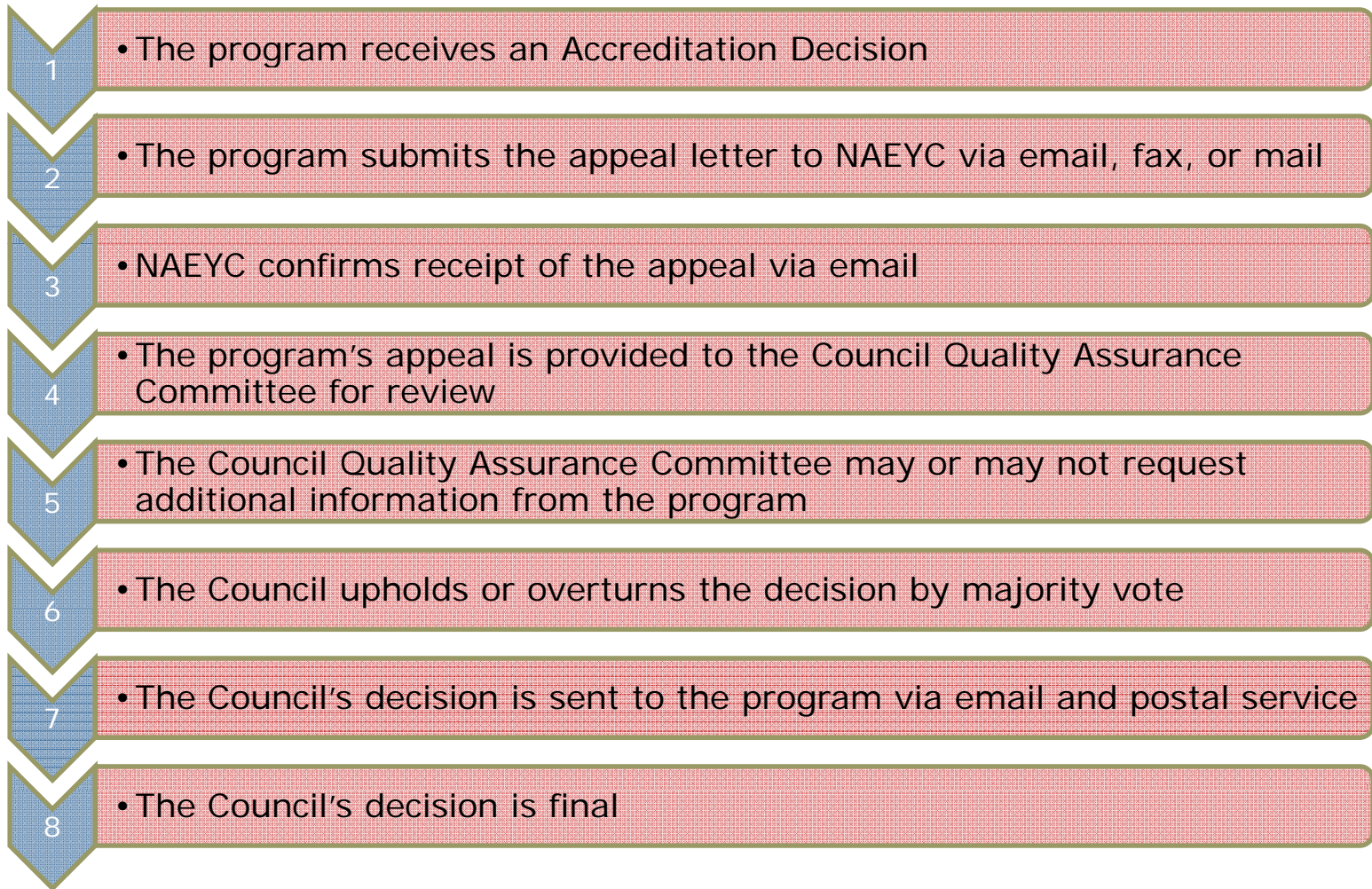
- The **NAEYC Academy for Early Childhood Program Accreditation (NAEYC Academy)** is a department within NAEYC that sets and monitors standards for high quality programs for young children and accredits programs that meet these standards – the mark of quality in early childhood education.
- *The NAEYC Academy is directly governed by the Council for NAEYC Accreditation.*

NAEYC Academy and Governance Structure





Appeal Process: Step-by-Step





Appeal Process

Purpose: The Council for NAEYC Accreditation (Council), provides a formal appeal process for programs that receive the following decisions from the NAEYC Academy for Early Childhood Program Accreditation (NAEYC Academy):

- Deferral, Denial, or Revocation of Accreditation,
- Denial of Candidacy, or
- Denial of Extension Request.

The appeal process is available to currently accredited programs or programs seeking accreditation. Appeals that meet the guidelines established in this document will be forwarded to the Council Quality Assurance Committee for review.

The appeals process is not available to a program that receives the decision of “Accredited with Additional Verification Required.” In this instance, the program must either submit to an Unannounced Verification Visit that documents continued ability to perform at the level associated with NAEYC Accreditation or withdraw from the NAEYC Accreditation process and restart the accreditation process if it desires to pursue accreditation for a new term. If a program has already completed Enrollment (Step 1) it may proceed directly to Step 2 (Application).



Appeal Process

Grounds for Appeal:

- A legitimate appeal should provide evidence that, when rendering a decision, the NAEYC Academy:
 - did not follow its established policies and/or procedures; and/or
 - made a substantive error, such as a factual error, mistake, or misinterpretation.
- In addition, the program should provide evidence that the NAEYC error or NAEYC's failure to follow its established policies and/or procedures affected the outcome of the program's accreditation decision.
- Dissatisfaction with the decision is not sufficient grounds for an appeal.
- The appeal may not include new information that the program had the opportunity to provide previously or changes to the program that occurred after the NAEYC Academy's decision. The only exception is that programs may include documentation not previously available from external investigations, such as licensing, regulatory or medical investigations, related to a program's ability to meet and maintain the NAEYC Accreditation required criteria (1.B.09, 3.C.02, 3.C.03, 5.A.12, 10.B.04).
- Currently accredited programs will maintain their NAEYC Accredited status until an appeal decision is reached by the Council unless there are circumstances present that, in NAEYC's reasonable judgment, jeopardize the health or safety of the children enrolled at the program. The Council's appeal decision supersedes and replaces any extensions granted by the NAEYC Academy.



Appeal Process

- **Submitting an Appeal:** The program's appeal letter must be submitted to the NAEYC Academy Quality Assurance Department for review by the Council within 30 days of the receipt of the NAEYC Academy's decision. Emailing or faxing the appeal letter to the NAEYC Academy usually assists in expediting the appeal decision process. A NAEYC Academy staff member will confirm receipt of the appeal letter within 2 business days of receipt. Appeals received more than 30 days after the decision date will not be reviewed.
- Although many programs find that they are able to provide a summary of their appeal in 1-2 typed pages, an appeal letter may be up to 5 pages. If the appeal letter exceeds the 5 page limit, information beyond the fifth page will *not* be considered.
- Please remove all personal identifying information from the appeal letter and attached materials, including names of children, families and staff members (use Teacher A, Child B, etc.)



Appeal Process

- **Reviewing the Appeal:** The Council Quality Assurance Committee (Committee) is a subset of the Council for NAEYC Accreditation and is responsible for reviewing appeals and rendering appeal decisions. NAEYC Academy staff members black out all personal identifying information, including names of program staff members and children, before providing the program's appeal letter, factual summary, and related documents from the program's NAEYC Accreditation file to the Council Quality Assurance Committee.
- Appeals are typically reviewed in the calendar month following the date that the appeal is received.
- The Council Quality Assurance Committee may request additional factual information about the appeal from NAEYC, the NAEYC Assessor, and/or the program. NAEYC Academy staff members are available to assist the Committee with questions.



Appeal Process

Accountability:

The Council is an independent body of early education experts with knowledge of NAEYC Accreditation of early childhood programs that ensures the equity, integrity, and accountability of the accreditation system. Each appeal is handled equitably throughout the appeal process.

Conflict of Interest Policy:

Council members are required to disclose for himself/herself and members of his/her immediate family the existence of any actual or pending employment, appointment, activity, relationship, or other position which may be of divided interested with the program or its appeal under consideration; or the existence of any actual or pending investment, contract, conveyance, purchase, sale or other transaction directly or indirectly involving or affecting such persons and which might involved a real or potential conflict with the interest of program or its appeal under consideration.

If a conflict of interest is disclosed between a Council Quality Assurance Committee member and a program or its appeal, the Council Quality Assurance Committee member will not participate in the appeal decision process for that program.

Conflict of interest is defined as when a relationship exists between the Council Quality Assurance Committee member and the program's appeal and/or the program's staff that might compromise the objectivity and reliability of the Quality Assurance Committee member's review of the program's appeal. This would include but not necessarily be limited to employee/employer relations, family or close friendship relations, any evaluative or consultative capacity, and/or board member representation.



Appeal Process

- **Reaching a Decision:** After a detailed review of the program's appeal letter, factual summary, and related documents from the program's NAEYC Accreditation file, the Council Quality Assurance Committee determines the outcome of the appeal by majority vote.
- The following are possible outcomes of the appeal:
 - Uphold the NAEYC Academy decision,
 - Overturn the NAEYC Academy decision, with additional verification (such as a verification visit) required at the program's expense,
 - Overturn the NAEYC Academy decision, with a revisit required at NAEYC's expense, or
 - Overturn the NAEYC Academy decision.
- The Council Quality Assurance Committee communicates the outcome of the appeal to NAEYC Academy staff members.
- **Notification of Decision:** The primary and secondary program contacts will receive the Council's decision through e-mail *approximately* 90 calendar days after the program's receipt of their accreditation decision. The appeal decision letter is sent via postal service soon afterwards.
- **The Council's decision is final.**