

**STATE EARLY CHILDHOOD
ADVISORY COUNCIL
OF MISSISSIPPI**

BYLAWS



TABLE OF CONTENTS

ARTICLE 1: CREATION AND PURPOSE 1

ARTICLE 2: COMPOSITION 1

ARTICLE 3: MEETINGS 3

ARTICLE 4: COMMITTEES 4

ARTICLE 5: RECORDS 4

ARTICLE 6: CONFLICTS OF INTEREST 4

ARTICLE 7: AMENDMENT OF BYLAWS 5

ARTICLE 1: CREATION AND PURPOSE

The State of Mississippi recognizes the importance of early childhood education and development programs and services for children from birth to school entry. This supports the overwhelming research that identifies the lifelong benefits of early childhood development. Sound economic evidence also indicates that smart investments in early childhood education yield long term gains by improving the quality of the future workforce and creating significant cost savings for society.

The State Early Childhood Advisory Council (SECAC) was established through the reauthorization of Head Start in Public Law 110-134 (Improving Head Start for School Readiness Act of 2007), to be dedicated to early education and care issues. Mississippi's families and children need a coordinated system of quality care and education with comprehensive supports to enable school success and lifelong learning.

State Early Childhood Advisory Council (herein referred to as "the Council"), located in the Office of the Governor, will be directed to carry out the duties and functions specified in Public Law 110-134, including:

- a. periodically conducting a statewide needs assessment concerning the quality and availability of early childhood education and development programs and services for children from birth to school entry, including assessing the availability of high-quality pre- kindergarten services for low-income children in Mississippi;
- b. identifying opportunities for, and barriers to, collaboration and coordination among Federally-funded and State-funded child development, child care, and early childhood education programs and services, including collaboration and coordination among State agencies responsible for administering such programs;
- c. developing recommendations for increasing the overall participation of children in existing Federal, State, and local child care and early childhood education programs, including outreach to underrepresented and special populations;
- d. developing recommendations regarding the establishment of a unified data collection system for early childhood education and development programs and services throughout Mississippi;
- e. developing recommendations regarding statewide professional development and career advancement plans for early childhood educators in Mississippi;
- f. assess the capacity and effectiveness of 2- and 4-year public and private institutions of higher education in Mississippi toward supporting the development of early childhood educators, including the extent to which such institutions have in place articulation agreements, professional development and career advancement plans, and practice or internships for students to spend time in a Head Start or prekindergarten program; and
- g. make recommendations for improvements in the State Early Learning Guidelines and undertake efforts to develop high quality comprehensive early learning standards, as appropriate.

ARTICLE 2: COMPOSITION

Section 1: Council Membership

The Council shall be composed of an executive director, chairperson and members as designated in Executive Order No. 128. The Chairperson (hereafter referred to as the "Council Chair") and members collectively shall be referred to hereafter as the "Council members."

The membership of the Council in accordance with Public Law 110-134, shall include the following members to be appointed by the Governor:

- a) A representative of the Mississippi Department of Human Services;
- b) A representative of the Mississippi Department of Education;
- c) A representative of local educational agencies;
- d) A representative of Mississippi Institutions of Higher Education;
- e) A representative of local providers of early childhood education and care services;
- f) A representative from Head Start agencies located in the state, including Indian Head Start programs and migrant and seasonal Head Start programs as available;
- g) The State Director of Head Start Collaboration;
- h) The Part C Coordinator and/or the Section 619 Coordinator of programs under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (20 USC 1419, 1431 et seq.);
- i) A representative of the Mississippi Department of Health;
- j) A representative of the Mississippi Department of Mental Health; and
- k) Representatives of other entities deemed relevant by the Governor.

Section 2: Officers

The officers of the Council shall be an Executive Director and a Council Chair. These officers shall perform the duties prescribed by these bylaws and by the parliamentary authority adopted by the Council.

1. Council Chair

The Council Chair shall preside at all meetings of the Council and ensure that minutes of each meeting are kept and adopted by the Council. The Council Chair shall preside over the meetings and shall oversee the use of Robert's Rules of Order in order to conduct meetings by the Council.

2. Executive Director

The Executive Director shall preside as the primary liaison to the Governor and in the absence of the Council Chair, shall preside at all meetings of the Council. The Executive Director will provide ongoing updates to the Governor on the activity the Council, as well as provide any relevant updates from the Governor at the Council meetings.

Section 3: Appointment

Officers and members of the Council shall be appointed by the Governor. Nothing in this subsection shall be construed to limit the Governor's authority to make a direct appointment to the Council without prior notification of the Council, Council Chair, or Executive Director.

Section 4: Terms of Service

Members of the council shall serve at the pleasure of the governor.

Section 5: Vacancies

Members of the council who miss three consecutive meetings without reason may be removed from the council with approval of the governor. Vacancies among the council shall be filled according to the appointment section of these bylaws.

ARTICLE 3: MEETINGS

SECTION 1: PROCEDURE

The Council shall follow Robert's Rules of Order to the extent such procedures are not inconsistent with the Council Rules and Regulations, enabling statutes, or other Mississippi law.

SECTION 2: QUORUM

A majority of consistently attending members of the Council (determined to be no less than ten) shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business, which is consistent with Article XI. (64) of Robert's Rules of Order. A smaller number of members may recess from time to time until a quorum is obtained.

SECTION 3: REGULAR MEETINGS

The regular meetings of the Council shall be held at such time and place as established by the Council Chair, in consultation with the Executive Director. The Council shall meet at least four times per state fiscal year.

SECTION 4: SPECIAL MEETINGS

Special meetings may be called by the Council Chair, in consultation with the Executive Director. Members of the Council can also request special meetings through written request submitted for approval by the Council Chair or Executive Director.

SECTION 5: NOTICE OF OPEN MEETINGS

All regular and special meetings of the Council shall be in compliance with the Open Meetings Act.

SECTION 6: VOTING

Except as otherwise provided herein, all actions shall require a majority vote of a quorum. Members participating in a meeting of the Council by means of a conference call, video conference, or such other means that allow for each participant to hear and be heard by each other participant at the same time, shall be deemed to be present at such meeting. Voting on all matters shall be by voice vote or by roll call, and the ayes and nays shall be entered in the minutes of the meeting. Each Council member shall have one vote.

The Council Chair will have a vote on any measure before the Council. The Council Chair may not make or second motions.

SECTION 7: DESIGNEES

If a member of the Council opts to send a designee in his/her place, as allowed by this Section, said member shall notify the Council Chair or Executive Director of his/her designee via his/her agency letterhead or agency email prior to or at the meeting. Any designee would be considered a nonvoting representative of the Council member. Such notice shall remain on file and be considered the official appointment of his/her designee as long as that member remains a member of the Council.

SECTION 8: PARLIAMENTARIAN

The Council Chair, in consultation with the Executive Director, shall appoint a parliamentarian as he or she deems necessary. The ruling of the presiding parliamentarian during the meeting is final.

ARTICLE 4: COMMITTEES

The Council may establish such standing, advisory, or ad hoc committees as necessary to carry out the work of the Council. Committees of the Council shall have such authority as the Council shall provide, subject to the limitations provided in these bylaws. The Council Chair, in consultation with the Executive Director, shall appoint the Chairperson(s) of any committee. Each committee may establish procedures for the conduct of the committee. Each committee must report regularly to the Council and is accountable to the full Council membership.

1. Committee Membership

Only Council Members shall be members on the Committees. Any Council Member may be asked to serve on a specific Committee. Committee membership is voluntary; however Council Members are expected to serve on at least one Committee. The Executive Director serves as a de facto member of each Committee to assist the Committee members in conducting their business as charged. If the Committee deems appropriate to seek out other technical assistance from experts not on the Council, such non-Council representatives can be identified and invited to participate in an advisory capacity only.

2. Activities of Committees

Committees are not required to have a chair but may designate one if desired. In such cases, the Executive Director may not be designated as the Committee chair. Committees may seek input from state and local agencies, businesses, non-profits, and the public at large as needed to conduct their business as charged. Committees may conduct their business using electronic communications, phone conferences, and/or face-to-face meetings as desired. Committees are expected to issue a written report to the Council on their activities at each meeting. The Committee reports are due to the Council as specified under the section concerning Notice of Meetings and Committee Reports.

ARTICLE 5: RECORDS

The conduct of all meetings and public access thereto, and the maintaining of all records of the Council shall be governed by the laws of Mississippi relating to open meetings and accessibility of public records.

ARTICLE 6: CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

No member of the Council or his/her designee may vote on or otherwise participate in discussion or debate with other Council members regarding any matter before the Council in which he or she has a direct personal or pecuniary interest. In addition, no member of the Council or his/her designee may vote on or otherwise participate in discussion or debate with other Council members regarding any matter before the Council if such action would violate Section 109 of the Mississippi Constitution or Section 25-4-105 of the Mississippi Code. It is the responsibility of the member or designee to notify the presiding officer at any Council meeting of the conflict of interest and to abstain from participating in the matter in any fashion.

ARTICLE 7: AMENDMENT OF BYLAWS

These Bylaws may be amended, altered, or repealed by resolution duly passed by not less than a two- thirds vote of the members of the Council provided that a quorum is present during the course of regular or special meetings of the Council provided that any proposed amendments have been filed with the Council Chair and sent to each member of the Council with at least 30 days' notice announcing the meeting at which the proposed amendment will be considered.