



# Operating Guidelines

Collaboration is a mutually beneficial and well-defined relationship entered into by two or more organizations to achieve common goals.

The relationship includes a commitment to mutual relationships and goals; a jointly developed structure and shared responsibility; mutual authority and accountability for success; and sharing of resources and rewards.

Wilder Foundation, 2001 (2)

## I. Who We Are

The Menominee County Great Start Collaborative (GSC) is a partnership of community leaders, health care professionals, human service agencies, charitable and faith-based organizations, educators and parents dedicated to improving programs and services that are available to Menominee County families. GSC is the local planning and decision-making body for the Great Start system – Michigan’s comprehensive early childhood system, directed by Michigan Department of Education’s Office of Great Start. The Great Start system components are: Physical Health, Social-Emotional Health, Family Support, Parenting Education, Early Care and Education; Basic Needs; Economic Security and Safety; and Infrastructure.

**GSC is charged with four state directed outcomes. These include:**

- 1.) Children are born healthy
- 2.) Children, healthy, thriving and developmentally on track from birth-third grade
- 3.) Children developmentally ready to succeed in school at the time of school entry
- 4.) Children prepared to succeed in fourth grade and beyond by reading proficiently by the end of third grade

**The goal of the Great Start system is for all Michigan children to be healthy and ready to succeed in school and in life.**

## II. Mission and Vision

- a. **Mission-** Our mission is to ensure all Menominee County children age birth to 8 have access to high quality developmental and early learning opportunities and enter kindergarten ready to succeed in school and throughout their lives.
- b. **Vision-** All Menominee County children experience a Great Start: a healthy birth, appropriate early learning opportunities, on-track development, and a successful entrance to kindergarten.

## III. Purpose

The purpose of these guidelines is to establish an organizational and procedural framework for the GSC and its committees and workgroups. The GSC is being convened as a result of the **32P Block Grant** by the Menominee County Intermediate School District (MCISD) **from the Office of Great Start (OGS)**. GSC will conduct a community needs assessment based on the Great Start Components, and a long-term strategic plan will be developed based on the findings of the needs assessment. The strategic plan will outline how, over time, services and supports from all of the Great Start system components will be made accessible to **every child from birth to third grade and to his/her family.**

## IV. Membership

The membership list is based on requirements developed by the Early Childhood Investment Corporation (ECIC)/Office of Great Start as a part of the grant approval process.

**Required members are as follows:**

- Parents of children aged 12 or younger
- Business leaders e.g. Chamber of Commerce President, Directors of Economic Development, A Manufacturing Association, or Workforce Development

- Philanthropic and charitable organization Directors e.g. the United Way, A Community Foundation, A Service Organization
- Faith-based organization Director
- Two Directors of Organizations serving minority populations
- Intermediate School District Superintendent
- Directors of local departments of Public Health, Human Services and Community Mental Health
- Director/CEO from a hospital, health care system and/or managed care health plans
- Family court or juvenile court Judge
- *Early On* Michigan Coordinator
- Head Start and the Great Start Readiness Program Director
- The Great Start to Quality Resource Center
- Zero-to-Three Secondary Prevention Program Director
- Director of a Licensed Child Care Center and/or Group Home
- Elementary School Principal
- Elected Government Official

**Other membership requirements:**

- Parents (birth, adoptive, foster, non-custodial or legal guardian) must constitute at least 20 percent of the total membership, be reflective of the ethnic and racial makeup of the community, and be parenting children aged 12 or younger. Parent members are to receive, in a timely manner, the same supports and resources available to non-parent members. This would include at a minimum, financial reimbursement for expenses incurred as a member, and access to professional development and mentoring opportunities.
- The members of the collaborative, with the exception of parents, must have sufficient authority to commit funds, staff and other resources on behalf of their organization.
- Communities may include other members on the Menominee County Great Start Collaborative whom they deem appropriate and necessary to the work of the collaborative. Members are selected by an informal process of referral to the Collaborative, followed by a brief interview and orientation with the prospective member to insure they meet requirements, and have sufficient understanding and commitment to the mission of the collaborative. Referrals can be made by any collaborative member, the GSC Director, or other interested parties. Once selected for membership, the new prospective member shall submit a letter of commitment to the GSC Director and complete a member of information sheet to provide contact information. Updated membership lists will be provided to members as necessary at regularly scheduled meetings.

**V. Membership Responsibilities**

It is crucial to the success of the GSC to have an active and engaged membership. It is a requirement that at least 75 percent of the Great Start Collaborative members attend scheduled meetings, with a minimum of six meetings held per year. The membership provides overall direction in the governance and operations of the collaborative, appoints committees to undertake specific functions of the collaborative, and assures accountability for commitments made within the collaborative and the community.

**Membership duties include but are not limited to:**

- A commitment to attend all meetings either in person, or via telephone or video-teleconferencing
- Appoint committees, and/or workgroups for specific tasks
- Provide direction, resources and support for committees and workgroups
- Cooperate with providing necessary statistical and other needed information for the completion of the community needs assessment and strategic plan
- Review progress, and ensure coordination throughout the assessment and strategic planning process
- Assure accountability for commitments made within the collaborative and the community
- Keep the GSC Director informed of any changes in membership, contact information, or availability of time and resources
- Participate in and/or provide for professional development and mentoring opportunities
- Make a good faith effort to contribute toward fulfilling the mission and purposes of the Menominee County Great Start Collaborative

## **VI. Officers**

Elected/appointed officers of the Menominee County GSC shall be the Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson and Recording Secretary. Any member of the collaborative may serve as an officer.

### **Responsibilities of officers are as follows:**

#### **Chairperson:**

- Preside at all monthly meetings
- Consult with the GSC Director and attend Executive Committee meetings prior to GSC meetings
- Provide a collaborative leadership style
- Appoint members to committees and workgroups as necessary
- Notify the Vice-Chairperson if he/she is unable to preside over a scheduled meeting.

#### **Vice-Chairperson:**

- Preside over meetings in the absence of the Chair
- Fulfill the duties of the Chair in the event the Chair is unable to do so for any reason
- Serve out the term of the Chair in the event that he/she is unable to complete the term of office
- Notify the GSC Director in advance in the event that neither the Chair/Vice-Chair will be present and able to preside at a scheduled meeting.

#### **Recording Secretary (s)**

- Attend all monthly meetings
- Take detailed minutes of the meetings; Consult with and provide copies of minutes to the GSC Director within one week following the meeting.
- Appoint a designee(s) if unable to attend a scheduled meeting, and notify the MCGSC-Director in advance.

## **VII. Terms of Office**

All elected/appointed officers will serve a term of one year. The Vice-Chairperson will assume the office of Chairperson whenever the Chairperson is unable to fulfill their responsibilities for any reason. If there becomes a permanent vacancy in any of the elected/appointed positions, a replacement will be elected/appointed at the next scheduled meeting. The recording secretary will appoint a designee if he/she is unable to attend a scheduled meeting.

### **VIII. Election of Officers**

Any member of the collaborative may nominate and cast votes for candidates. In the event that there are no nominations, or candidates willing to fill the offices, the Executive Committee will appoint officers as necessary to fill any vacancies.

### **IX. Standing Committees**

The GSC will be undertaking specific tasks, and will accomplish the detailed work of these tasks and processes via the use of committees and workgroups. The standing committees for the project are as follows:

#### **Executive Committee**

The Executive Committee is responsible for administrative oversight. From the membership of the Menominee County GSC, the Executive Committee members and the Collaborative officers shall be democratically elected. If necessary, the Executive Committee may conduct any business not acted on a regular scheduled meeting to respond to unforeseen deadlines, such as, but not limited to, grant responses. The Executive Committee shall report any action taken at the next meeting. The Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson will be representatives from different organizations.

#### **The Executive Committee shall consist of the following members:**

- Chairperson
- Vice-Chairperson
- Representatives from the Menominee County Great Start Collaborative
- Parent Liaison
- Great Start Collaborative Director

**Kindergarten Readiness/School Readiness Advisory Committee** GSC, along with other community members will convene and participate in a multidistrict, multiagency, school readiness advisory team.

**Strategic Planning Committee** GSC, along with strategic planning facilitator, will develop and review annual progress of a long term strategic plan that addresses the early childhood needs in Menominee County. Members will focus on needs assessment and how needs can be met with assistance from strategic planning facilitator.

**Great Start Initiative component area work groups** Pediatric and family health, social and

emotional health, child care and early education, parenting leadership and family support. These work groups focus on the implementation of the strategic plan action agenda. Work groups are made up of volunteers, GSC/GSPC members and also community members.

Each standing committee will form a leadership structure parallel to the GSC, and make progress reports to the Collaborative at the regularly scheduled meetings. GSC and/or standing committees may form other sub-committees and/or workgroups as needed to fulfill specific tasks. The sub-committees and/or workgroups will make progress reports to the designated standing committee or to the GSC. **Chairpersons of each standing committee will also serve as a member of the Executive Committee, and make progress reports at regularly scheduled Executive Committee meetings.**

**Recommendations for additional workgroups should be submitted to the Menominee County GSC Chairperson for consideration.**

#### **X. Meetings**

The GSC will hold a minimum of 6 meetings per year at a time and place designated by the GSC. The GSC may add meetings as necessary in order to complete assigned tasks. Notice of meetings will be sent via e-mail at least one week prior to meetings. Agendas will be provided in advance of the meeting. Members without e-mail access will receive meeting notices via the U.S. Mail.

The standing committees and any sub-committees and/or workgroups will be responsible for scheduling meetings that will accommodate the members of that committee or group and of sufficient frequency and duration to complete the task assigned to it within the timeframes allotted. Any unforeseen issue that may cause a delay in completion of the assigned task shall be reported to the GSC Director immediately.

#### **XI. Non-Attendance**

In order to meet the 75 percent attendance criteria, it is crucial that members attend scheduled meetings. If a member is not available for a scheduled meeting, the member shall contact the GSC Director in advance, and if possible, arrange for an authorized designee to attend the meeting. The absence of any member for (3) consecutive regularly scheduled meetings without justifiable reason can be cause for removal from the GSC. Nothing in these guidelines would prevent the GSC from reinstating an individual or agency/organization membership based upon a review and recommendation from the Executive Committee.

#### **XII. Voting**

The preferred decision making process of the GSC shall be consensus. Consensus is defined as: *A decision, which every member of the group can support, even if the decision is not every member's preference.*

Consensus via email is acceptable. If consensus cannot be obtained, Robert's Rules of Order shall guide the voting. For voting purposes, a quorum shall consist of a simple majority of those members or approved designees in attendance. Each member or designee shall have one vote. Participation in a meeting via tele-conferencing, or video tele-conferencing constitutes presence at the meeting. When role call voting is required or requested, the names and votes of members or designees shall be recorded in the minutes. Members or designees shall abstain from voting when the question to be

voted upon directly or indirectly provides the member's organization with funding or services through a contractual relationship. When role call voting is required or requested, the names and votes of members or designees shall be recorded in the minutes. Members or designees shall abstain from voting when the question to be voted upon directly or indirectly provides the member's organization with funding or services through a contractual relationship.

Members are expected to report any other issue that may constitute a conflict of interest. The membership will then determine through the rules above if a conflict does exist, and if so, the member will abstain from voting on the issue. Members will also excuse themselves from discussion regarding issues with which a conflict of interest exists. Actions voted on by a majority of members or designees where a quorum is present shall constitute authorized actions of the Menominee County Great Start Collaborative.

### **XIII. Conflict Resolution**

Communications between members of the Menominee County GSC shall be mutually respectful reflecting the shared vision and spirit of cooperation. In the event that a conflict should arise, it shall be handled in a respectful and discreet manner. Should a member have an issue or conflict that they are not able to address at a scheduled meeting, they may contact the GSC Director for resolution or referral to the Executive Committee. In the event that a member has a conflict or issue regarding the GSC Director, they may contact the Executive Committee directly. In the event that none of these procedures resolves the conflict or issue, the Menominee County GSC Executive Committee may authorize the use of an outside mediator.

### **XIV. Procedures and Amendments**

These operational guidelines may be amended by a majority vote of the members of the GSC as appointed. At least one week prior to voting, GSC members will receive written notification of the proposed amendment and the meeting at which it will be considered.

These guidelines will be reviewed annually by the GSC Director and revised as needed to comply with relevant available documents as provided by the ECIC as part of the grant award process. The revised guidelines will be reviewed and the GSC membership will vote on the adoption of the revised draft.