

Operating Guidelines

Delta-Schoolcraft Great Start Collaborative

Operational 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.

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Delta-Schoolcraft Great Start Collaborative Operating Guidelines

I. Who We Are

The Delta-Schoolcraft Great Start Collaborative (DSGSC) is the local planning and decision-making body for the Great Start system – Michigan’s comprehensive early childhood system. The Great Start system components are: Pediatric and Family Health, Child Care and Early Education, Social and Emotional Health, Family Support, Parenting Leadership. The goal of the Great Start system is for all Michigan children to enter kindergarten safe, healthy, and eager to succeed in school and in life.

II. Vision

A Great Start for every child in Delta and Schoolcraft Counties in Michigan; safe, healthy and eager to succeed in school and in life.

III.Mission

The purpose of the Great Start Collaborative is to assure a coordinated system of community resources and supports to assist all families in Delta and Schoolcraft Counties in Michigan in providing a great start for their children from birth through age five.

IV.Purpose

The purpose of these guidelines is to establish an organizational and procedural framework for the DSGSC and its committees and workgroups. The DSGSC is being convened as a result of a grant received by the Delta-Schoolcraft Intermediate School District (DSISD) from the Early Childhood Investment Corporation (ECIC). The grant award is for an initial 6 month period. The DSGSC 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 kindergarten entry, and to his/her family.

V.Membership

The membership list is based on requirements developed by the ECIC as a part of the grant approval process.

Required members are as follows:

1. Parents of children aged 12 or younger- appointed by the Executive Committee with a minimum term of 2 years.
2. Business leaders e.g. Chamber of Commerce President, Directors of Economic Development, A Manufacturing Association, or Workforce Development
3. Philanthropic and charitable organization Directors e.g. the United Way, A Community Foundation, A Service Organization
4. Faith-based Organization Director
5. Two Directors of Organizations serving minority populations
6. Intermediate School District Superintendent
7. Directors of local departments of Public Health, Human Services and Community Mental Health
8. Director/CEO from a hospital, health care system and/or managed care health plans

9. Family court or juvenile court Judge
10. *Early On* Michigan Coordinator
11. Early care and education professional development providers, including Community Coordinated Child Care (4Cs) and MSU Extension
12. Head Start and the Great Start Readiness Program Director
13. Zero-to-Three Secondary Prevention Program Director
14. Director of a Licensed Child Care Center and/or Group Home
15. Elementary School Principal
16. 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 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 Director, or other interested parties. Once selected for membership, the new member shall sign a *Great Start Collaborative Letter of Commitment*. Updated membership lists will be provided to members as necessary at regularly scheduled meetings.

VI. Membership Responsibilities

It is crucial to the success of the DSGSC to have an active and engaged membership. It is a requirement, per the Early Childhood Investment Corporation (ECIC) 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-conferencing
- 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 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 Delta-Schoolcraft Great Start Collaborative

VII. Officers

Elected/appointed officers of the DSGSC Executive Committee shall be the Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson, Past Chairperson, Recording Secretary, Parent liaisons, and 1 additional Collaborative member. Executive Committee members will include representatives from both Delta and Schoolcraft Counties.. Any member of the collaborative may serve as an officer.

Responsibilities of officers are as follows:

Chairperson:

- Preside at all DSGSC scheduled meetings
- Consult with the Director prior to 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 Past Chairperson in advance in the event that neither the Chair or Vice-Chair will be present and able to preside at a scheduled meeting

Past Chairperson

- Provide support to the new Chairperson
- Preside over meetings in the absence of the Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson

Recording Secretary:

- Attend all DSGSC scheduled meetings
- Take detailed minutes of the meetings
- Consult with and provide copies of minutes to the Director within one week following the meeting
- Appoint a designee if unable to attend a scheduled meeting, and notify the Director in advance

VIII. Terms of Office

All elected/appointed officers shall serve a term of two years aligning with the fiscal year (October 1st). Voting shall take place on even years. 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.

IX. 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.

X. Staff Person(s)

A key decision that the DSGSC will make is the identification of the Director for the local Great Start system. The Director will be contracted by the Delta-Schoolcraft ISD and will provide support for the Great Start Collaborative through the development of shared leadership, ownership and capacity amongst all members of the collaborative. The Coordinator role is crucial to the accomplishment of tasks as outlined in the plan of work for the Great Start Collaborative. The Great Start Director position will be a 1.0 FTE dedicated staff for the Great Start Collaborative, and will be selected by the Executive Committee via a group interview process.

XI. Standing Committees

The DSGSC 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

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- Responsible for administrative oversight

Communications Committee

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- Responsible for development of a communications plan which will include a local media campaign and coordination of communications efforts and materials needed for implementation of the strategic plan

Fund Development Committee

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- Responsible for developing and carrying out a fund development plan related to our mission.

Each standing committee will make progress reports to the Collaborative at the regularly scheduled meetings.

The DSGSC 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 DSGSC.

XII.Meetings

The DSGSC will hold a minimum of 4 meetings per year at a time and place designated by the DSGSC. The DSGSC 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.

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 Director immediately.

XIII.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 Director in advance, and if possible, arrange for an authorized designee to attend the meeting. Per the ECIC guidelines, it is expected that , a member must attend at least 50 percent of the scheduled meetings within the year.

XIV.Voting

The preferred decision making process of the DSGSC 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.

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.

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 Delta-Schoolcraft Great Start Collaborative.

XV. Conflict Resolution

Communications between members of the DSGSC 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 they may contact the Director for resolution or referral to the Executive Committee. In the event that a member has a conflict or issue regarding the Director, they may contact the Executive Committee directly. In the event that none of these procedures resolves the conflict or issue, the DSGSC Executive Committee may authorize the use of an outside mediator.

XVI. Procedures and Amendments

These operational guidelines may be amended by a majority vote of the members of the DSGSC as appointed. At least one week prior to voting, DSGSC 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 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 DSGSC membership will vote on the adoption of the revised draft.