



Marquette-Alger Great Start Collaborative

Operating Guidelines

Adopted March 16, 2009

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

Marquette Alger Great Start Collaborative (MA-GSC) Operating Guidelines

I. Vision

A Great Start for every child in Alger and Marquette counties: safe, healthy and eager to succeed in their education and in life.

II. Mission

The purpose of the Great Start Collaborative (GSC) is to assure a coordinated system of community resources and supports to assist all families in Marquette and Alger Counties in providing a “great start” for their children from pre-birth through age five.

III. Affiliation

Under the direction and guidelines of the Early Childhood Investment Corporation (ECIC), this is the official collaboration engaged in the planning and enhancement of the Marquette and Alger Counties’ early childhood system components: physical health care, social-emotional health care, education and early care, parent education and family support, and basic needs.

IV. Purpose

The purpose of the Collaborative is to:

- A. Provide input into the on-going process of making decisions about the needs of the community and coordinating collaboration among the early childhood-related programs and services in Marquette and Alger Counties.
- B. Assist in the development and implementation of a local early childhood and parenting services action plan based on the local needs assessments.
- C. Hire and assist the local Great Start Collaborative Director in accomplishing early childhood-related tasks, goals and objectives from the action plan.
- D. Establish a parent coalition that will assist the collaborative in meeting the objectives.
- E. Assist in recruiting volunteer efforts and local support, including philanthropic, faith-based, public and private support, as well as applying for additional grants and funding sources.

V. Membership

- A. Composition of the Marquette Alger GSC will represent the diversity of the two counties and be comprised of agency members as prescribed by the ECIC and other agencies as deemed appropriate by the GSC membership.
- B. The agency members of the Collaborative must have sufficient authority to commit funds, staff, and other resources on behalf of their organization.

- A. Charter members are those in place as of the March 16, 2009 meeting.
- B. For proposed additions to the Marquette-Alger GSC membership list, a Membership Request Form will be submitted to the Marquette-Alger GSC chairperson for review. At the next regularly scheduled meeting, the GSC chairperson shall submit the membership form for consideration. A simple majority of those present is required to approve an interested party's membership application for acceptance in the Marquette-Alger GSC. (See Appendix A)
- C. When recruiting members from the approved membership list (see section G, below), voting members may make recommendations to the GSC Committee. In order to request a representative, the Chairperson will make personal contact or send a letter to the Director/Chief of the organization.
- D. Members are required to sign the Marquette-Alger GSC Memorandum of Commitment. (See Appendix B)
- E. In accordance with guidelines from the Early Childhood Investment Corporation, and to assure diverse representation, the MA-GSC Committee membership shall consist of representatives from the following groups:
 - Parents (minimum of 20% of membership)
 - Philanthropic Organization/s
 - United Way
 - Business Leader/s
 - Faith Based Organization/s
 - Marquette County Community Collaborative
 - Alger County Community Collaborative
 - Marquette-Alger RESA Superintendent
 - Community Mental Health (Pathways)
 - Marquette County Health Department
 - Department of Human Services
 - Director/CEO of a hospital, health care system and/or managed care plan
 - Juvenile or Family Court Judge
 - Early-On Coordinator
 - Directors (2) of organizations that provide services on behalf of minority populations
 - Director of the Zero-to Three Secondary Prevention Program or parent education or family support program not administered by MARESA
 - MSU-Extension Office/s
 - Elementary School Principal
 - Director of a licensed child care center and/or owner/operator of a home or group home
 - MARESA Special Education Director
 - 4C of the UP
 - Director of Head Start
 - Director of Great Start Readiness Program
 - Child Care Provider
 - Director of MGH Women's and Children's Center

- Elected Official from local Government
 - Great Parents/Great Start Coordinator
 - Others, as deemed appropriate and necessary to the work of the collaborative
- F. The total number of meetings scheduled annually will be a minimum of six. Members are required to attend a minimum of 75% of the scheduled meetings. Attendance may be in the form of participation in person which is highly preferred, or when absolutely necessary through interactive television, conference calling, web conferencing, or another technology method, when available. The absence of any agency/member for (3) consecutive regularly scheduled meetings within a year without justifiable reason will be cause for removal from the Marquette-Alger 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.
- G. The director/CEO of each organization is required by ECIC grant rules to attend GSC meetings a minimum of twice per year. A designee may be assigned beyond the two required meetings in a year if the director/CEO is unable to attend.
- H. Officers and Executive Committee members will be elected by a majority vote of the members present and will take office immediately following election at which they are elected. Terms of office will be October 1st through September 30th of each year. 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.
- I. Officers and Executive Committee members will serve for a term of one year. They may serve no more than two consecutive terms in the same position.
- J. A Great Start Director will be hired to support the development of shared leadership, ownership and capacity amongst all members of the collaborative. The Director's role is crucial to the accomplishment of tasks as outlined in the plan of work for the Great Start Collaborative. The Great Start Collaborative Director's position will be a 1.0 FTE dedicated staff member selected by the Executive Committee via a group interview process. Lake Superior Community Partnership will be the employing agency. A detailed list of qualifications and a job description can be found in the posting. (See Appendix C)

VI Duties

- A. Membership Duties include but are not limited to:
- Be committed to attend all meetings.
 - 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 purpose of the Marquette-Alger Great Start Collaborative
- B. GSC Officers: The chairperson and Vice-chair will be representatives from different organizations. Duties of the officers include:
- Chairperson
- Prepare the meeting agenda in consultation with the GSC Director and input from membership during the previous meeting.
 - Use simple parliamentary procedures.
 - Be prepared to conduct all meetings using good techniques of leadership.
 - Call special meetings of the subcommittees/work groups as needed.
 - Appoint members to committees and subcommittees/workgroups as necessary.
 - Act as the spokesperson for the Marquette-Alger GSC when requested by the Great Start Director.
- Vice-Chairperson
- Be prepared to preside at meetings in the absence of the Chairperson.
 - Use simple parliamentary procedures.
 - Inform others about the collaborative.
 - Be responsible for new member orientation.
 - Serve out the term of the Chair in the event that he/she is unable to complete the term of office.

VII Meetings

- A. A Marquette-Alger GSC member who is unable to attend should have an official designee as their representative and will notify the Director before the day of the meeting. Although GSC members may have an agency guest attend the meetings, only one designated representative is able to vote on their agency's behalf.
- B. Members of the Marquette-Alger GSC, in cooperation with the GSC Director, will determine, by majority vote, the frequency, location and time of the GSC meetings.
- C. Members will receive reminder notification of general meetings at least one week before the scheduled meeting.
- D. The total number of meetings scheduled annually will be a minimum of six.

VIII Voting

- A. Each required and assigned member of the GSC will have one vote. If an interested party sends more than one representative to a GSC meeting, the voting representative must be identified. No representative shall cast a vote from more than one agency department at any meeting.

- B. A majority of the total voting members in attendance at the GSC meeting constitutes a quorum.
- C. Business decisions regarding the collaborative will be made by a simple majority vote of those in attendance at the collaborative meeting. (see V, H)
- D. Members or designees shall abstain from voting when the topic to be voted upon directly or indirectly provides the member's organization with funding or services through a contractual relationship.
- E. Members are expected to report any issues that may constitute a conflict of interest. The membership will then determine 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 unless asked for input by the Chairperson.

IX Amending Operating Guidelines

- A. These operating guidelines may be amended by a two thirds (2/3) majority vote at any future MAGSC meeting if at least one (1) week notice of the proposed change is given to the Chairperson..
- B. An annual review of the Operating Guidelines will be completed by the Executive Committee.

X Standing Committees

- A. The Executive Committee will consist of seven members and one ex officio member. Other standing committees will be made up of 8 to 10 members.
- B. To ensure diverse representation on the standing committees, no one agency may be represented by more than two individuals.
- C. Each standing committee will form a leadership structure parallel to the Marquette-Alger GSC and make written progress reports to the Collaborative at the regularly scheduled meetings.
- D. The Marquette-Alger GSC may form other sub-committees and/or workgroups as needed to fulfill specific tasks. The sub-committees and/or workgroups will make written progress reports to the designated standing committee or to the GSC Committee.
- E. Standing Committees 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 talk 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.

1. Executive Committee- Responsible for Administrative Oversight

From the membership of the Marquette-Alger GSC, the Executive Committee members shall be democratically elected. If necessary, the Executive Committee may conduct any business not acted on at 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 Executive Committee shall consist of the following members:

- Chairperson

- Vice-Chairperson
- One parent representative from Alger County
- One parent representative from Marquette County
- Three representatives from the full body at large
- Great Start Collaborative Director (ex-officio)

2. *Strategic/Action Planning Committee- Responsible for creation of the Operating Guidelines, work of the needs assessment, development of the strategic plan, and completion of the infrastructure review.*

This committee will be made up of volunteers of the GSC or will be assigned by the Chairperson. Their first task is the development of the GSC’s Operating Guidelines. The second task of this committee will be completion of the Community Needs Assessment and reporting. It will then develop, and review annually, the Strategic Action Plan that addresses the early childhood needs in Marquette and Alger Counties. Members will present a plan based on the needs of their target population and how those needs can be met. Lastly, they will complete the infrastructure review and develop a written plan to disseminate to the community.

3. *Communications Committee- Responsible for the development and implementation of a Communications Plan*

This committee will be made up of volunteers of the GSC or will be assigned by the Chairperson. This committee will develop a written communications plan that will include the creation and maintenance of a website, publication of brochures, reports, press releases, media messages, etc. This committee will work with the Rossman Group for publicity as needed and will use the ECIC Communications Toolkit for communication technical advice.

4. *Community Fund Development Committee- Responsible for development of fund development strategies and recommendations*

This committee will be made up of volunteers of the GSC or will be assigned by the Chairperson. They will review and complete documentation for the “financing and fund development” section of the Early Childhood Infrastructure Review. From this review, they will develop a written plan of recommendations to leverage sustainable local public and private resources to support the long term implementation of the strategic plan.

XI Funding Decisions:

- A prioritized list of needs will be developed from the Strategic Action Plan by the Strategic Planning Committee. This list will be used for future funding decisions. Members will vote on the priority list of needs to be addressed at a regularly scheduled MA-GSC meeting. The prioritized list will be reviewed at least annually by the Strategic Planning Committee.
- Whenever possible, all members will be notified when grants or public/private donations are made available to the MA-GSC. This may be accomplished through email, phone calls, special meetings or regularly scheduled meetings.

- C. When funds do become available, the Executive Committee will meet to determine if the goals of the new funding fit the MA-GSC Strategic Plan. If it is determined to be a good fit, the Executive Committee will use the MA-GSC Strategic Plan and priority list to develop a recommendation for funding. The Executive Committee will present their recommendations to the MA-GSC membership via email, phone calls, special meetings or regularly scheduled meetings, depending on time restraints. The membership will vote on the Executive Committee's recommendations. In extenuating circumstances, such as short deadlines, the Executive Committee's recommendations will be adopted.

XII Membership and Support of Parents:

- A. Parents (birth, adoptive, foster, non-custodial or legal guardian) must: constitute at least 20% of the total membership of the Great Start Collaborative; must be reflective of the ethnic and racial make-up of the community; and be parenting children ages 12 or younger.
- B. Parents will serve as representatives on the Great Start Collaborative Committee and are encouraged to serve on subcommittees/workgroups.
- C. Parents will receive a stipend for attending meetings, receive mileage to and from their homes to the meeting site, and will be provided with on-site childcare (at no cost) at the meetings or be compensated for off-site childcare when on-site care is not available.
- D. Parents will have access to professional development and mentoring opportunities. Parents participating in professional development are expected to return and share their experiences with the group.

XIII Great Start Parent Coalition

- A. Responsibilities of the Great Start Parent Coalition include:
- Serve as a forum for parents to develop advocacy and leadership skills
 - Provide an opportunity for parents to learn about indicators of child well-being in Marquette and Alger Counties through data assessment and discussion of contributing factors
 - Make recommendations to the Great Start Collaborative and the Great Start Strategic Planning Committee regarding priorities for the strategic plan and implementation of the plan
 - Help inform other parents about the indicators of child well-being and strategies for improvement
 - Develop strategies to start and maintain a parent advocacy group in each county
 - Members of the Parent Coalition come to the table with a passion for the cause. There is no monetary stipend or mileage reimbursement for this role.
- B. Great Start Parent Liaisons
- The Executive Committee will post for Parent Liaisons, run the interviews and do the hiring.
 - Two Parent Liaisons, one from Alger County and one from Marquette County, will be hired.

- The Liaisons will be contracted employees of the Marquette-Alger Regional Educational Service Agency.
- The Parent Liaisons will provide leadership to the Great Start Parent Collaborative and coordinate with the parents, other members of the collaborative, the Great Start Director and the Early Childhood Investment Corporation.
- A detailed list of qualifications and a job description can be found in the posting. (Appendix D)

XIV Conflict Resolution

The Marquette-Alger Great Start Collaborative values and encourages the consideration of new perspectives. The MA-GSC recognizes that in collaborative decision-making, areas of conflict and disagreement may arise. The MA-GSC believes that who is right or wrong is not of concern. The exchange of perspectives and points of view- not the selling of them- is the issue. The MA-GSC will address areas of conflict and disagreement by implementation of a Skillful Discussions Model:

1. Areas of conflict and disagreement will be addressed and facilitated by the Chairperson or Vice-Chair within the GSC meeting by:
 - a. Exploring impasses
 - i. Identifying the areas of agreement
 - ii. Clarifying the points of disagreement
 - A. Exploring the facts: What is the data and what does it tell us?
 - B. Exploring methods: How should we do what we need to do?
 - C. Reviewing Goals: What is our objective?
 - D. Reviewing Values: Why do we think it must be done a particular way? What do we, as the MA-GSC, believe in?
 - b. Reaching group consensus so that the MA-GSC can move ahead on the areas of agreement.
 - c. Continuing to address the point of disagreement as the project develops.
2. When areas of conflict and disagreement cannot be resolved or impedes the process within the MA-GSC, the assistance of the Marquette Area Resolution Center will be obtained.

Attachments:

- A. Membership Request Form
- B. MAGSC Memorandum of Commitment
- C. Director Job Description
- D. Parent Coordinator Job Description

Membership Request Form

Person being recommended:

Agency/group being represented:

Qualifications:

Reason for request:

Recommended individual's contact information (address/phone/cell/e-mail):

Person making referral/contact information (phone/e-mail):

Date Recruited/Denied: _____