



The Genesee County Great Start Collaborative Operating Guidelines



VISION

Sustain and maintain a coordinated system of community resources and supports to assist all Genesee County families in providing a Great Start for their children from prenatal through kindergarten entry.

MISSION

The purpose of the Great Start Collaborative is to assure a coordinated system of community resources and supports to assist all Genesee County families in providing a great start for children from prenatal through kindergarten entry.

SYSTEM DEFINITION

Genesee County's comprehensive Great Start Early Childhood System will provide a single, interconnected and intertwined network of public and private services and supports working together in our community to accomplish better outcomes for children and families.

GOVERNING VALUES

Accessible, user friendly and affordable; family guided; community based; collaborative; non-partisan; high quality with measurable results; accountable; continuous financial stability.

INTEGRATED SYSTEM COMPONENTS

Physical health; social and emotional development; parent education; family support; early childhood education and care; basic needs and well-being; economic security; child safety; and system infrastructure.

PURPOSE

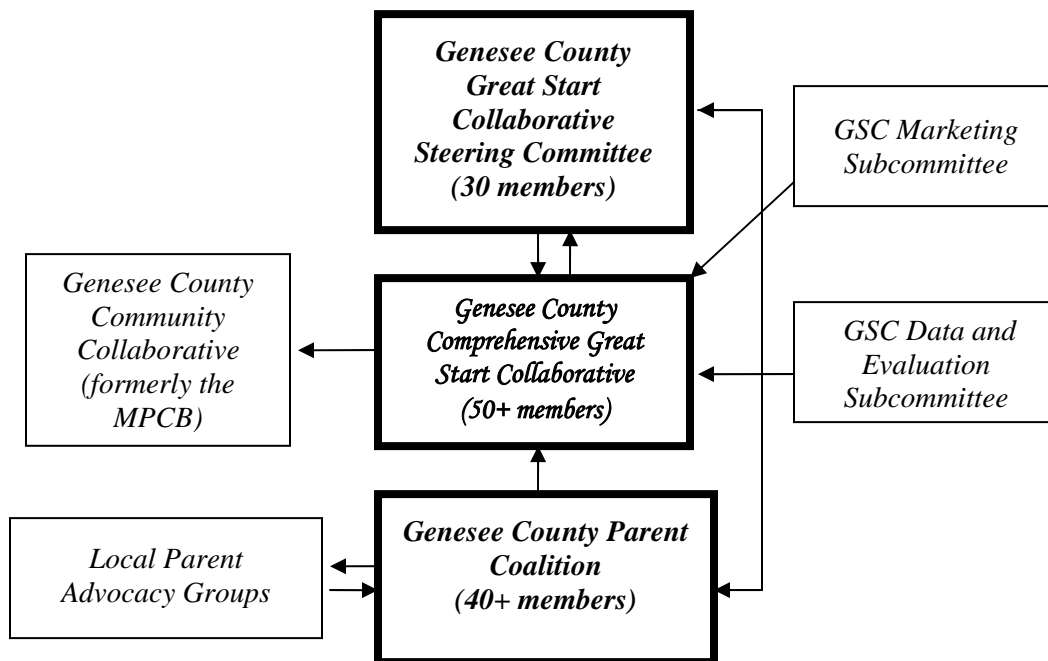
The Genesee County Great Start Collaborative (GSC) commits to:

1. Maintain diverse parent and community participation throughout the GSC process.
2. Provide a county-level structure to be used for strategic planning, coordination, collaboration, and development with a principal focus on improved outcomes for children in Genesee County from prenatal through kindergarten entry.
3. Work collaboratively with the Early Childhood Investment Corporation (ECIC) and the State of Michigan systems reform efforts, to bring together collaborative multi-agency initiatives and set priorities for the allocation, re-allocation, and repositioning of resources for children prenatal through kindergarten entry.
4. Engaging in the review and evaluation of early childhood programs and activities to determine their effectiveness, enhance coordination of services, seek to reduce gaps in existing services, and strive to maintain positive customer services and satisfaction.

5. Report activities monthly to the Genesee County Community Collaborative (GCCC) (formerly the Multipurpose Collaborative Body), and serve as a resource for information regarding early childhood.
6. Advocate for effective systems change based on a needs assessment and the development and implementation of a strategic plan.
7. Assure that evidence-based approaches are used in working with families, neighborhoods and communities.

MEMBERSHIP AND FINANCIAL SUPPORT POLICY

1. Membership is open to any group or individual located in Genesee County which is committed to the vision and mission of the GSC. Everyone is welcome at the Comprehensive Great Start Collaborative meetings. The Great Start Collaborative Steering Committee has specific and limited membership necessary to facilitate the contractual requirements of the Collaborative with the Early Childhood Investment Corporation.
2. Organizational Structure:



3. In accordance with guidelines from the Early Childhood Investment Corporation, the Genesee County Great Start Collaborative Steering Committee membership shall consist of representatives from the following groups:

- Parents (20% of membership)
- Philanthropic Organizations
- United Way
- Business Leaders
- Faith Based Organizations
- Genesee County Community Collaborative
- Genesee Intermediate School District Superintendent
- Local School District(s)
- Genesee County Community Mental Health
- Genesee County Health Department
- Genesee County Department of Human Services
- Managed Care Health Plan
- Family Court
- Directors of area hospitals
- Juvenile Court
- *Early On®*
- *Directors (2) of organizations that provide services on behalf of minority populations*
- *Director of the Zero-to Three Secondary Prevention Program or parent education program not based at GISD*
- Preschool Special Education
- 4C Child Care Unlimited
- GCCARD Head Start
- Michigan School Readiness Program
- Child Care Provider
- Local College
- Mott Community College
- Elected Official from Municipal Government
- Others, as deemed appropriate and necessary to the work of the collaborative
- Child Care Directors Association
- Day Care Home
- Day Care Provider
- GFAEYC
 - Priority Children
 - Mott Children’s Health Center
 - Ready, Set, Grow! Passport
 - Greater Flint Health Coalition

Each organization must have a representative at 75% of the meetings. If a representative cannot meet their attendance requirements, a new representative shall be selected. The “chief executive” will be notified and asked to select a new representative.

The chief executives of the organizations are required to meet twice per year .

4. The “chief executive” of a member group shall be the attending representative at monthly GSC Steering Committee meetings or a designee may be assigned by the “chief executive”. Designees or representatives other than chief executive officers must be submitted in writing (on letterhead stationery) to Beth Hackett, Great Start Collaborative Coordinator, Genesee Intermediate School District, 2413 W. Maple Ave. Flint, MI 48507. Designees or representatives other than chief executive officers must

be fully authorized and prepared to represent, make decisions and commitments, and allocate resources on behalf of their organizations.

5. RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE GSC STEERING COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

The membership provides overall direction in identifying and prioritizing local planning and coordination issues related to Early Childhood. It is the responsibility of the GSC Steering Committee members to commit their agencies/coalitions/partnerships to the purpose of the GSC, fulfill commitments made by the GSC, appoint representatives of their agencies/coalitions/partnerships to serve on the Comprehensive GSC as appropriate, participate in and support the purposes and functions of the GSC, and act as liaisons to their respective agencies/coalitions/partnerships, at the local, state, and national levels.

Membership duties include:

- Create the strategic plan with input from the Comprehensive GSC
 - Meet on a regular basis
 - Elect a chairperson and vice chairperson
 - Approve an annual work plan with input from the Comprehensive GSC
 - Review recommendations and requests for support from the Comprehensive GSC
 - Initiate and support appropriate implementation steps of the strategic plan
 - Assure input and participation of diverse stakeholders within Genesee County
 - Keep state agencies informed and advocate for system changes
 - Assure accountability for commitments made within the GSC and the community
6. The original funding for the GSC was derived from grants from the Early Childhood Investment Corporation, The Community Foundation of Greater Flint, United Way of Genesee County, the Greater Flint Education Foundation and Genesee Intermediate School District (GISD). The GSC Steering Committee shall seek additional funding to support sustainability of the Great Start Collaborative if there is a need for funds in the future.
7. Meetings of the GSC Steering Committee shall generally be held ten times per year. The GSC does not meet in July or August. All meetings will be held at the Genesee Intermediate School District when possible. If the GISD is not available, an alternate site will be identified and indicated on the agenda dispatched prior to the meeting.
8. A Chairperson and vice chairperson of the Great Start Collaborative will be selected by the GSC Steering Committee bi-annually to coincide with the fiscal year of October 1 through September 30. Selection will be by consensus of the members present. The Chairperson and vice chairperson will serve for a period of two years, until the next annual election of officers. There is a four year limit on each position.

The vice chairperson must be from different organizations within the county.

The duties of the Chairperson will include:

- Serve as leader of the GSC
- Attend and preside over meetings of the Steering Committee and the Comprehensive Great Start Collaborative
- Work with the GSC Coordinator to plan meeting objectives and agenda
- Connecting with workgroups of the GSC

The duties of the vice chairperson will include:

- Serve as a leader within the GSC and as an advocate for the GSC with other stakeholder groups.
- Attend the GSC Steering and Comprehensive Great Start Collaborative meetings.
- Preside over the GSC meetings if the chairperson is absent.
- Work with the GSC Coordinator to plan meeting objectives and agenda if the chairperson is absent.

SUBCOMMITTEES

A Communications subcommittee will oversee the implementation of a communications plan. The plan will include maintenance of the www.greatstartgenesee website, publication of brochures, reports, press releases, media messages etc.

The Communications subcommittee will:

- Send representatives to meet with the Flint Journal editorial board and/or other media leaders to seek engagement in the activities and successes of the GSC at least twice per year.
- Work with the ECIC Communications Office on state wide messaging.

Subcommittees will be formed by the GSC as needed to fulfill the work of the Collaborative. The committees will report back to the Comprehensive GSC and the Steering Committee.

In addition, workgroups will be established through the GSC Action Agenda by memorandums of understanding with partners to carry out the work of the Action Agenda. The workgroups will report the progress of their work back to the GSC.

THE COMPREHENSIVE GREAT START COLLABORATIVE

1. The purpose of the Comprehensive Great Start Collaborative is to convene a larger group of representatives to help develop a network of public and private services and supports to accomplish better outcomes for children prenatal through kindergarten entry and their families. The Comprehensive GSC will:
 - Serve as a resource of information and experiences to help guide and make recommendations to the GSC Steering Committee

- Provide input to the work of the collaborative including development of cyclical data assessments, strategic plans, finance maps, funding strategies and reviews and reports documenting changes over the course of time.
 - Assist in the implementation of the strategic plan and Action Agenda developed by the Comprehensive GSC and the Steering Committee
 - Include parent representation as 20% of the membership
2. Meetings of the Comprehensive GSC shall generally be held quarterly throughout the year. All meetings will be held at the Genesee Intermediate School District when possible. If the GISD is not available, an alternate site will be identified and indicated on the agenda dispatched prior to the meeting.

Membership and support of parents:

1. 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.
2. Parents will serve as representatives to both the Comprehensive Great Start Collaborative and the Great Start Collaborative Steering Committee.
3. Parents will receive a per hour 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, as needed.
4. 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.

THE GENESEE COUNTY GREAT START PARENT COALITION

The Great Start Parent Coalition will:

- Meet at least 8 times per year
- 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 Genesee County through data assessment and discussion of contributing factors
- Make recommendations to the Comprehensive Great Start Collaborative and the Great Start Collaborative Steering 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 or maintain a parent advocacy group in each local school district

A Parent Liaison will be an employee of the Genesee Intermediate School District. The Parent Liaison will provide leadership to the Great Start Parent Collaborative and coordinate with the parents, other members of the collaborative, the Great Start Coordinator and the Early Childhood Investment Corporation. A job description and application will be posted. Applicants will be interviewed by the Chair of the Great Start Collaborative and one other member of the Steering Committee.

DECISION MAKING FOR ALL GREAT START COLLABORATIVE GROUPS

Decision making by consensus shall guide actions of the meetings of the GSC unless otherwise noted. Consensus is defined as: A decision which every member of the group can accept, even if the decision is not every member's preference. Criteria for determining consensus are:

- a) Was I heard?
- b) Can I live with it?
- c) Does it offer an outcome I can accept?
- d) Can I represent the decision to others?

If an impasse occurs, a simple majority vote of those present will be taken.

Genesee County Great Start Operating Guidelines Revised and Approved September 24, 2008

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