

Mansfield Advocates for Children
By-Laws

Article 1

Name

The name of the organization shall be Mansfield Advocates for Children, henceforth referred to in this document as MAC.

Article II

MAC Mission Statement: “To contribute to the positive development of all young children in Mansfield.

Article II: Purposes/Goals:

#1: To improve access to quality early care and education for young children in Mansfield.

#2: Empower parents to move the public will by having an active voice and role in the interest of Mansfield's Children.

#3: Serve as leaders to strengthen early childhood experiences for Mansfield's children and their families.

#4: To increase awareness and understanding of early care and education issues among residents of Mansfield.

#5: To seek funding and training to support children's initiatives in Mansfield and to advocate for long-term investment in early care and education by the community and the municipal government.

#6: To gather early care and education data and make use of these data to improve the lives of young children in Mansfield.

#7: To identify, promote and publicize programs and resources for early care and education for Mansfield families.

#8: To recruit and orient new members so that there is diverse representation of all constituents of Mansfield on MAC.

#9: To be active in the work of improving early care and education in Mansfield, not only to be advisory in nature.

#10. Ensure compliance with Public Act 97-259, an Act concerning School Readiness and Child Day Care.

Article III

Section 1: Membership

1. The council shall appoint the MAC chairperson and/or Co-Chair.
2. The executive committee shall present a MAC membership slate to the Mayor and Superintendent of Schools and the Mansfield Committee on Committees annually.
3. MAC council members shall be representative of the community and shall include:
 - The Mayor or designee
 - The Superintendent of Schools or designee
 - Parents of Mansfield children
 - Representatives of local programs associated with children including but not limited to:
 - o Local early care and education providers
 - o Home based early care providers
 - o Birth to Three
 - Public Librarian
 - Public & Private Sector Services
 - Business
 - Healthcare Providers
 - Faith Based Organizations
4. The Council shall be limited to 25 people with a specific limited membership from any one organization or group.

Section 2: Duties of the Membership

1. Attendance at meetings is expected. If a member misses three consecutive meetings, a letter and/or phone call from the Chair or designate will follow to inquire about absence.
2. If a member is unable to attend for an extended period of time, an alternate representative from their organization, if available, should be designated.
3. Members shall be active participants of at least one committee.
4. Resignation of any council member should be in writing, and should be submitted to the Town Committee on Committees. If no effective date is stated, the resignation shall be effective upon receipt.
5. Role of the recording secretary shall be to take minutes and post same on the website, as well as the dates of the meetings and the agenda.

Section 3: Voting

1. Each member in good standing has voting privileges, except in certain circumstances indicated below, and will be counted as one vote when voting takes place at MAC meetings. Except as otherwise provided herein, 7 voting members shall constitute a quorum and shall be required to decide any question submitted to MAC.
2. There are voting and non-voting members. Members receiving School Readiness funding shall be non-voting members on matter pertaining to the School Readiness Grant program.
3. Administrators, staff or employees of the sub-grantee applicant program are not allowed to vote.
4. Council members may periodically bring resource people to MAC meetings. These individuals may not vote and their participation will be permitted upon recognition by the MAC chairperson.

Section 4: Vacancies

1. Members serve on MAC council for terms of two years, staggered. The member will decide then to whether to make a decision regarding a continuing commitment to MAC membership.
2. In the event of resignation, retirement, disqualification, leave of absence or removal from office, for any cause whatsoever, an officer of MAC in the manner prescribed in these by-laws for election or

appointment to the office, MAC council shall fill the vacancy so created.

3. Executive committee members shall be elected at the annual meeting, with terms of office running October to September. These terms shall be for a period of two years, staggered.

Article IV.

Meetings

1. An annual meeting shall be held in Mansfield Connecticut during the month of September.
2. Regular meetings shall be scheduled for the upcoming year during the annual meeting.
3. Election of an executive committee shall be conducted at the annual meeting.
4. A quorum shall be comprised of seven regular members including members from three difference organizations or groups.
5. The annual meeting and regular meetings shall be open to the public.
6. The Chairperson or the executive committee upon request of three members may call special meetings. Except in the case of an emergency, all members will be given a five-day notice of the meeting.

Article V.

Programmatic Responsibilities and Powers

MAC shall monitor its contracted School Readiness programs as well as other grant-funded programs to ensure programmatic and fiscal responsibility. MAC shall ensure that each School Readiness funded program is implementing the quality components specified in Connecticut General Statute Section 10-16q as amended by Public Act 99-230 by ensuring:

1. A plan for collaboration with other community programs and services and for coordination of resources in order to facilitate full-day and year-round childcare and education programs for children of working parents and parents in educational training programs.
2. Parent involvement, parent education and outreach.

3. Referrals for health services, including referrals for appropriate immunizations and screenings.
4. Nutritional services.
5. Referrals to a family literacy program that incorporate adult basic education and provide for the promotion of literacy through access to public library services.
6. Admission policies that promote enrollment of children from different racial, ethnic and economic backgrounds.
7. A plan of transition for participating children from school readiness program to kindergarten.
8. A plan for professional development for staff.
9. A sliding fee scale for families participating in the program pursuant to section 8 of PA 99-230.
10. An annual evaluation of the effectiveness of the program.

Article VI

Committees

1. The Executive Committee shall be comprised of the chair, co-chair, secretary, financial agent, and chairs of committees as determined by the membership of MAC.
2. MAC shall appoint a School Readiness Grants Committee annually.
3. MAC may convene other committees as the need arises. The chair of each committee needs to be a member of MAC, but the members do not need to be.
4. The Executive Committee shall oversee all operations of MAC.
5. The Membership Committee shall recruit, orient and retain MAC members.
6. The School Readiness Committee shall provide School Readiness for Mansfield's children in partnership with families and the community according to the guidelines of Public Act 97-259.
7. The School Readiness Committee shall be Co-Chaired by a designee of the Mayor's office and of the Superintendent's office.

Article VII

Finances

1. The fiscal year shall be from July 1 to June 30.

2. The Executive Committee shall annually appoint specific members to have the authority to sign financial vouchers.
3. Upon the recommendation of the School Readiness Committee, MAC will vote on the allocations of slots. Administrators, staff or employees of the sub-grantee applicant programs are not allowed to vote.

Article VIII

By-Laws

1. MAC shall enact such by-laws and rules and regulations governing the proper conduct of its business as necessary.
2. The by-laws may be amended at any MAC meeting by a majority vote when no less than three different MAC organizations are represented.

Article IX

Conflict of Interest

1. Council members and committee members shall disclose to MAC any possible conflict of interest. Conflict of interest will be disclosed at the beginning of each term.
2. Council members and committee members may not vote on policies or budget related applications in which they have a conflict of interest.
3. In the event that a member questions whether a conflict of interest exists, the issue shall be decided by a majority vote of MAC.

Respectfully Submitted by Sandy Baxter on September 5, 2007