

By-Laws of the Johnson County Empowerment Board

Article I: Name

The name of this organization shall be the Johnson County Empowerment Board (hereinafter the Board).

Article II: Purpose

The Board is duly organized under 2010 Iowa Acts, SF 2088, Sections 281 – 310. The purpose of the Board is to oversee and coordinate collaborative services for children and families in Johnson County. The initial emphasis will be delivery of services to children age 0-5. The long-term purpose will be to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of services in the areas of education, health, and human services for persons of all ages.

Article III: Membership

Section 1 - Qualifications. The Board shall consist of a membership of seven (7) to seventeen (17) members. Members shall be elected officials or members of the public who are not employed by a provider of services to or for the Board. The membership of the Board shall include representation from early care, education, health, human services, business, and faith interests, and at least one parent, grandparent, or guardian of a child from zero through age five. A representative from the Fiscal Agent may participate as a member of the Board and committees. This person shall be permitted full voting rights and membership, if they are a current elected official during the entirety of their term, otherwise they will be granted full ex-officio status and membership on the Board. The representative of the fiscal agent is expected to meet and adhere to all membership requirements, as prescribed by Early Childhood Iowa (ECI), the State of Iowa, and as outlined in Iowa Code Chapter 256i, the ECI Tools, and these by-laws; unless otherwise specified. Members serving terms when these by-laws are adopted may serve out the remainder of their term as allowed by Iowa law.

Section 2 - Selection of Members. Criteria for selection of candidates for the Board will be proposed each year by the Nominating Committee and ratified by the Board. These criteria will not exclude any otherwise eligible applicant from consideration, but will be used for targeted recruitment purposes and to narrow the number of applicants who appear on the final ballot. Criteria will be selected to help meet Board needs for diversity and will be distributed with the application form. The Board shall comply with federal, state, and local laws which prohibit discrimination on the basis of gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, age, race, disability, creed, or national origin. Board membership is in accordance with 2010 Iowa Acts, SF 2088, Sections 281 – 310.

Section 3 - Compensation. Members shall serve without compensation. Members may be reimbursed for child care or travel expenses related to attending Board meetings, as established by the Board, if funds are available.

Section 4 - Orientation for New Members. Prior to the first regular meeting following their appointment, new members shall be provided with copies of the Community Plan, by-laws, annual reports, and other documentation that would be useful to Board members in carrying out their duties. The Chairperson (or designee) will be responsible for orientation. A mentor from among the continuing Board members will be assigned to each new Board member and will assist with the orientation.

Section 5 - Absences. Three unexcused absences in one year shall result in member's removal from the Board. Exceptions shall be subject to approval by the officers.

Section 6 - Vacancies. The Board may choose to fill any vacancy on the Board. The Nominating Committee is charged with recruiting applicants to fill vacant positions and with submitting a slate of candidates to the Board. Board membership will be attained by all candidates who receive more than a simple majority of the Board vote. When there are more candidates than vacancies, those vacancies will be filled by those candidates receiving the greatest number of votes. Standing and ex-officio membership vacancies shall be filled by the entity associated with said vacancy and not count against quorum while vacant.

Section 7 – Elections & Terms. The Board as identified in Article III, Section 2 shall be elected for staggered three-year terms. Board members shall elect individuals to replace members who have served their term. The Secretary will maintain a record of terms. No persons shall serve more than three consecutive three-year terms.

Section 8 - Resignations. Resignations shall be submitted in writing to the Chairperson of the Board at least 30 days prior to the date of intended departure.

Section 9 – Committees & Work Groups. In addition to participation at Board meetings, each member is expected to participate on a Committee or Work Group.

Article IV: Officers

Section 1 - Officers. The officers of this Board shall be a Chairperson, Treasurer, and Secretary, each of whom shall be elected by the members of the Board.

Section 2 - Election and Term of Office. Officers of the Board shall be elected biennially at the first regular meeting in September (of years when terms have/will expire). If the election of officers cannot be held at this meeting, such election shall be held as soon thereafter as is possible. Officers may serve no more than three consecutive two-year terms.

Section 3. - Chairperson. The Chairperson shall, when present, preside at all meetings; appoint committees; call special meetings; perform duties as prescribed by the membership; and, in general, perform all duties inherent to the office of a Chairperson. The Chairperson shall carry out all functions in consultation with other officers. The Chairperson shall ensure that the duties of any officer vacancy are fulfilled until a suitable replacement is installed. The Chairperson may participate as an ex-officio member of any standing committee.

Section 4 - Treasurer. In the absence of the Chairperson, or in the event of death, inability or refusal to act, the Treasurer shall perform the duties of the Chairperson and when so acting shall have all the powers of and be subject to all the restrictions upon the Chairperson. Working with the fiscal agent, the Treasurer shall have the responsibility for assuring that all deposits and properly authorized expenditures are made in a timely manner, using appropriate accounting practices. The Treasurer shall present financial reports to the Board as requested.

Section 5 - Secretary. The Secretary shall have the responsibility of ensuring that the Board's minutes are complete, accurate, and are circulated as prescribed. The Secretary, in the absence of the Chairperson and Treasurer, shall perform the duties of the Chairperson and when so acting shall have all the powers of and be subject to all the restrictions upon the Chairperson. The Secretary shall be responsible for the Nominating Committee and maintaining board membership.

Section 6 - Vacancies. A vacancy in any office because of death, resignation, removal, disqualification or other cause shall be filled by the members for the unexpired portion of the term. The Nominating Committee shall solicit nominations from the Board for officer vacancies and hold elections for the vacant positions(s) as quickly as possible after the vacancy occurs.

Article V: Meetings and Records

Section 1 - Meetings. Meetings shall be conducted pursuant to the open meetings and open records laws.

Section 2 - Regular Meetings. Regular formal meetings of this Board shall be held at least quarterly.

Section 3 - Special Meetings. Special meetings of the members may be called by the Chairperson and, at the request of three or more members of the Board, shall be called by the Chairperson.

Section 4 - Electronic Meetings. Meetings may be conducted by electronic means in compliance with Iowa Code Section 21.8.

Section 5 – Time and Place of Meetings. Regular formal meetings shall be held at a time agreeable to all members and in a location accessible to persons with disabilities.

Section 6 - Notice of Meetings. Public notice of regular and special meetings of the Board shall be required; notice for all meetings must be given not less than twenty-four (24) hours in advance of the meeting. A notice of the meeting shall be posted pursuant to Iowa Code Chapter 256i. Meeting notices can be found on the Board's website. Board agendas are developed by the Executive Committee and shall be reviewed by the Chair prior to being published. To request an agenda item for the Board, requests must be received by the Executive Committee at least 2 weeks prior to the Board meeting.

Section 7 - Quorum. A simple majority (50% plus 1) of current voting members shall constitute a quorum at any meeting.

Section 8 - Proxies. There shall be no vote by proxy.

Section 9 - Public Discussion. Time shall be made available during all regular formal meetings for open public discussion.

Section 10 - Order of Business. Business shall be conducted by modified consensus. The Board shall seek consensus and if consensus cannot be reached in a timely manner, the Board will use standard parliamentary procedures. In all situations, the vote of each member will be recorded.

Section 11 - Conflict of Interest. A member who believes they have a conflict of interest on a matter before the Board shall state the reason for the conflict of interest and refrain from participating in decision making. Board members must declare any and all conflicts of interest including perceived conflicts of interest. Any member that has a conflict of interest shall abstain from decision making. Board members shall govern themselves accordingly during the discussion/debate of the issue in which they have a conflict of interest (real or perceived).

Annually, Board members will sign an agreement to abide by the conflict of interest policy. Specific conflict of interest for an agenda item will be disclosed at each meeting.

Section 12 - Voting. A majority of votes cast at any meeting at which a quorum is present shall be decisive of any motion or election.

Upon request, voting will be by roll call and will be recorded by yeas, nays, or abstentions. Every member of the Board, except the Chairperson, is required to cast a vote upon each motion. In case of a tie vote, the Chairperson will cast the deciding vote.

Section 13 – Records. Records of all Board, Committee, and Work Group meetings are on file in the Empowerment office. All public records are subject to Iowa’s Open Records Law. Current meeting minutes can be found on the Board’s website.

Article VI: Responsibilities and Authority

Section 1 - Fiscal Management. The Board will designate a public agency of this State, as defined in Section 28E.2, to be the fiscal agent for grant money and other monies administered by the Board.

The fiscal agent will administer Early Childhood Iowa grant monies available from the State to the Empowerment Board as provided by law and any other monies made available from federal, state, local, and private sources.

Section 2 - Annual Report. The officers shall be responsible for the preparation of the annual report. This report shall include, but is not limited to, all state required performance measures, the effectiveness of the grant program and the Board’s effectiveness in achieving state and locally determined goals.

Article VII: Standing Committees

The following committees have been approved by the Board to carry out responsibilities of the Empowerment legislation.

Section 1 – Chairs of Standing Committees: Chairs of all standing committees shall be members of the Board and shall be determined by each committee.

Section 2 – Executive Committee: The Committee shall be comprised of the officers of the Board, the immediate past chair (if unable to serve, an immediate past officer may be selected), and the representative of the fiscal agent. The Committee shall be responsible for giving guidance to the Board in setting the Board’s direction. The Committee shall assure staff support and oversight and, with staff, assure compliance with operating policies and procedures. The Committee oversees all Board finances including the Early Childhood Iowa Grants and other funds received by the Board, and maintains fiscal accountability.

Section 3 – Nominating Committee: The Committee shall consist of three members. The members will be the Secretary of the Board and two Board members. One of the Committee members will be a past or present consumer of Board services. The Committee shall be recruited by the Secretary, appointed by the Executive Committee and approved by the Board each year. The Nominating Committee will coordinate and oversee the recruitment and election of new Board members and officers; coordinate and oversee any special election of Board members that may be required; and develop and/or compile materials needed for the recruitment and election of Board members and officers.

Section 4 – Public Awareness and Community Education: The Committee shall be comprised of Board members and other interested citizens. The Committee shall be responsible for informing and educating the public about Empowerment programs, services, and special events; developing and distributing materials that highlight Empowerment goals, programs, services and accomplishments; and assisting staff and other committees and work groups with the development of materials and distribution of information.

Section 5 - Other Committees and Community Work Groups: The Board may establish such standing or ad hoc committees and work groups as the Board believes will help to carry out its responsibilities. The chair will be determined by each committee or work group. Each committee, work group, and advisory group will have representation from the Board. The Board may also establish advisory groups which, at the discretion of the Board, may be given voting or ex-officio representation on the Board. The Board may designate an advisory council consisting of persons employed by or otherwise paid to represent an entity listed in Article III Section 2 or other provider of service. All committees, work groups, and advisory groups will report to the Board, which will retain final and complete authority.

Article VIII: Appeal Process

A written appeal process is on file in the Empowerment office.

Article IX: Amendments

These by-laws may be altered, amended, or repealed, and new by-laws adopted by an affirmative vote of not less than two-thirds of the members of the Board present. All grammatical, numerical references, content, or other verbiage that is changed in any Article shall be automatically updated throughout the other Articles to ensure consistency and accuracy of content. Any proposed change needs to be submitted in writing to all members 14 days prior to a vote at a regular meeting or at any special meeting called for that purpose.

Chairperson

Adopted: 02/25/99

Amended: 10/07/99 01/03/02 07/10/03 03/04/04 07/01/04 09/07/06

01/10/08 10/02/08 01/08/09 12/03/09 12/16/10 10/20/11 10/18/12

11/29/12 07/18/13 10/19/17