

READY START NATCHITOCHEES EARLY CHILDHOOD NETWORK ADVISORY COUNCIL BYLAWS

ARTICLE I – NAME

This organization shall be known as the Ready Start Natchitoches Early Childhood Network Advisory Council (hereinafter referred to as “RSN Advisory Council”).

ARTICLE II – MISSION, VISION, AND PURPOSE

Mission By working together as a community, our children will grow, learn, and reach their full potential.

Vision Ensure our community understands and supports a system of high-quality and sustainable early childhood education to develop a foundation for lifelong learning.

The purpose of “RSN Advisory Council” is to facilitate and coordinate a comprehensive system of early childhood services for the benefit of all children and their families in the Natchitoches Parish, including but not necessarily limited to the following:

1. To continuously improve and address matters that impact the quality, accessibility, and affordability of early childhood opportunities, services, and support in the Natchitoches Parish community.
Driven by local data and context RSN Advisory Council will:
 - a. Develop cooperative plans with all funding sources and
 - b. Help secure and coordinate resources to assist in the implementation of creative solutions.
2. To educate and inform policy and the public at large to achieve the mission, vision, and purpose of RSN Advisory Council.
3. To cooperate with local, state and national organizations and agencies working with and for young children.

Article III – MEMBERSHIP AND VOTING PROVISIONS

SECTION 1 – MEMBERSHIP

A. Membership

The Advisory Council will be composed of appointees by Lead Member Agencies. Each Lead Agency shall appoint individuals to represent their interests as well as to cooperate with other Lead Agencies to assure optimum participation and representation. Lead Agencies remain permanent members of the Ready Start Natchitoches Advisory Board, and the individuals whom they designate shall serve at the discretion of the respective Lead Agency. To assure diverse ideas and representation, Council Seats shall be as follows:

Membership	Natchitoches Parish School Board (3-4 Seats) Natchitoches City Government/Licensed Type III Child Care (2-3 Seats) Northwestern State University Representatives / Child and Family Network (3-4 Seats) Chamber of Commerce/Private Sector (1-2 Seats) Save the Children Head Start (1-2 Seats) Community Representatives (As needed) Orchard Foundation (1-2 Seats)
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(Parish School Board/City Government Seats may be held by either Elected Officials or Knowledgeable Lead Agency Staff, and a list of Charter Representatives/Seats as of October of 2020 is listed in Attachment A.)

B. Service Term

Lead Agency seats are permanent as long as the Advisory Council is deemed effective. Individuals chosen as representatives serve at the discretion of the appointing agency. Failure to consistently attend meetings or to otherwise not participate will be discussed with other Lead Agency representatives who are responsible for reporting back to their respective Lead Agency for resolution.

SECTION 2: QUORUM

A quorum consists of a simple majority of the full Council membership. The Council may take official action only when a quorum is present. Meetings may be canceled if a quorum is not met but may also choose to meet to discuss non-voting items.

SECTION 3: VOTING

1. Each Council Representative is entitled to one vote on each matter submitted to a vote.
2. A vote of the majority of those members present at which there is a quorum is necessary to approve any action taken by the Council.
3. Voting will be taken by voice as required by the Louisiana Open Meeting law.
4. Voting by Proxy is not permitted.
5. Alternates may attend and vote at the direction of the respective Lead Agency, but not to exceed the number of total voting Lead Agency seats.

SECTION 5: LEAD AGENCIES

The Ready Start Natchitoches Early Childhood Network is a collaborative effort by many entities to help children reach their full potential. As such, the intent of this council is to make recommendations on behalf of all children that are fair and equitable. This lead agency system is designed for collaboration, communication, and to prevent duplication of services.

The Natchitoches Parish School Board shall be the Lead Agency for Department of Education Funding. Northwestern State University and the University Foundation shall be the Lead Agency for Department of Revenue and University Funding.

The City of Natchitoches shall be the Lead Agency for City Government and/or Grant Funding.

The Natchitoches Chamber of Commerce shall be the Lead Agency for Private Sector Funding.

Save The Children (US) Shall be the Lead Agency for Head Start Funding.

SECTION 6: RSN ADVISORY COUNCIL

- Represent community stakeholders through their participation on the Council;
- Make recommendations as an Advisory Council to each Lead Agency to inform policy, guide practice, and drive improvement of early care and education in Natchitoches Parish;
- Submit to Lead Agencies any recommended action items to be included prior to meetings;
- Review distributed agendas and materials prior to meetings to share in informed discussion, planning, and recommendations;
- Review draft minutes from prior meetings and submit revisions as needed;
- Keep up to date on policies and programs related to early care and education in Natchitoches Parish, Louisiana;
- Report updates and new opportunities from member's program or organization that affect early care and education;
- Provide recommendations to secure resources through philanthropic grants, corporate dollars, and local, state, and federal funding, as needed;
- Share information about the network and/or early care and education in Natchitoches Parish to member's networks/stakeholders/employees at least twice annually, and
- Actively participate in the creation, continued revision, and implementation of a strategic plan for Natchitoches Early Childhood Network

SECTION 7: RSN OFFICERS

A. CHAIRPERSON

A Chairperson shall be nominated and appointed by a majority vote of a Council meeting where quorum is present. The Chairperson is a full participating member of the Council and shall:

- Preside over all meetings of the RSN Council meetings;
- Provide leadership to Ready Start Natchitoches Advisory Council;
- Approve the agenda for each meeting;
- In the event of a tie, the Chair has an additional vote to break the tie;
- Seek consensus where appropriate;
- Encourage all attendees at the board meeting to contribute;
- Encourage/remind RSN members to share information about the network and/or early care and education in Natchitoches Parish to member's networks/stakeholders/employees at least twice annually);
- Assist RSN with reaching clear decisions;
- Be proactive in helping RSN deliver fundraising targets;
- Assure that the chair and membership of committees and work groups meet the requirements of the by-laws and appoint Council members as necessary, and
- Perform all duties incident to the position of Chairperson and all other duties as may be prescribed by the Council.

B. CO-CHAIRPERSON

RSN Advisory Council shall nominate and appoint a Co-Chairperson in a meeting where quorum is present. The Co-Chairperson is a full participating member of the Council who shall:

- a. In the Chairperson's absence, perform the duties of the Chairperson;
- b. Keep attendance records;
- c. Record and distribute minutes for regular business minutes;

- d. Work with RSN Chairperson and Natchitoches Parish Lead Agency to coordinate, collect, and distribute RSN information to the council and stakeholders, and
- e. Communicate with RSN regarding group activities and progress.

C. Committees

The Council will create and dissolve standing, and temporary committees as deemed necessary. The Chairperson shall appoint persons to chair and serve on those committees, including persons who are not Advisory Board Members. All such appointments must be approved by the Council.

SECTION 6: ORDER OF MEETINGS

The Chair shall set the rules and procedures for engaging in discussion and receiving items during the meeting to ensure Committee business is conducted in an orderly and efficient fashion. However, Chair will keep formalities to a minimum which will allow RSN Advisory Council to focus more on strategic planning, fundraising, etc.

ARTICLE IV – MEETINGS

SECTION 1 – LOCATION

All meetings of the RSN Advisory Council shall be held in Natchitoches at a location specified by the Natchitoches Parish Lead Agency in consultation with the Chair and may include electronic platforms so long as Louisiana Public Meeting Law requirements are met.

SECTION 2 – DATE AND TIME OF MEETINGS

Prior to July 1st of each year, the RSN Advisory Council shall approve a meeting calendar for the year, ending June 30th of the following year. Meeting dates and times may be amended or canceled at the discretion of the Chair and in consultation with the members of the RSN Advisory Council and Natchitoches Parish Lead Agency.

Natchitoches Parish School Board shall provide public notice of each meeting stating the time, place, and agenda. Meeting agendas shall be set by the Chair in consultation with staff of the Natchitoches Parish Lead Agencies.

SECTION 3 – MEETINGS

A. Open Meetings

All meetings shall be conducted as open meeting in accordance with the Louisiana Open Meeting Law.

B. Regular Meetings

Regular meetings shall be held in accordance with the annual meeting calendar, as approved by the RSN Advisory Council.

C. Special Meetings

If necessary, special meetings of the RSN Advisory Council shall be called by the Chair. Business transacted at all special meetings shall be confined to the purposes stated in the notice. Special meetings are under the same Open Meeting Law requirements in terms of notice and agenda.

SECTION 4 – SUBMISSION OF AGENDA ITEMS

Items to be considered for placement on RSN Advisory Council meeting agenda shall be submitted in writing to the Lead Agency no less than one (1) week prior to the meeting at which the item is to be discussed.

ARTICLE V – AMENDMENTS TO THE BYLAWS

The RSN Advisory Council may propose amendments to update the bylaws on an annual basis, as necessary and appropriate and such amendments shall be adopted and effective immediately upon approval of a two-thirds majority vote of the RSN Advisory Council present at the meeting. Amendments to the bylaws at any other time throughout the year shall be proposed and adopted in the following manner:

SECTION 1 – NOTICE

Amendments may be proposed by any RSN Advisory Council member. A copy of the proposed amendment(s) shall be submitted to the Chair at least two (2) weeks prior to any meeting at which the proposed amendment(s) is to be considered.

SECTION 2 – FORMAT

Proposals to amend existing bylaws shall contain the full text to be amended. New words shall be underlined and the words to be deleted shall be struck through. All proposals received in the appropriate format shall be considered at the following meeting.

SECTION 3 – ADOPTION

An amendment(s) shall be adopted if it receives a two-thirds majority vote of the RSN Advisory Council membership present at a meeting with quorum.

SECTION 4 – INCLUSION

The amendment(s) shall become effective immediately upon approval.

ATTACHMENT A

READY START NATCHITOCHEs ADVISORY BOARD MEMBERS 03/21

Voting Members

Name	Advisory Subgroup
Cloyd Benjamin, Jr.	COMMUNITY
Rebekah Simpson	ORCHARD FOUNDATION
Laura Lyles	CHAMBER/A+ COALITION
Mayor Ronnie Williams, Jr	CITY GOVT
Amy Metoyer-Roberson	CITY GOVT
Tan'Keia Palmer	NPSB
Cassandra Anderson	NPSB
Melissa White	NPSB
Julee' Wright	NPSB
Dr. Katrina Jordan	NSU
Nancy Alexander	NSU
Van Erickson	NSU/A+ COALITION
Dr Kimberly McAlister	NSU/A+ COALITION
David Dollar	STCUS HEAD START
Chriscella Metoyer	STCUS HEAD START