



POLICY 2.1

COMMISSIONS ON ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOLS

The Bylaws of the Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools (Adopted and Effective A as of January 1, 2011) specify that there shall be three accrediting units of the Association. The units are the Commission on Higher Education to evaluate and accredit postsecondary institutions and programs, the Commission on Secondary Schools to evaluate and accredit institutions providing middle and secondary education, and the Commission on Elementary Schools to evaluate and accredit institutions providing middle, elementary, and/or early age education. The Bylaws outline the general functions of the Commissions and the membership and duties of the Commissions.

2.1.1.	<u>Authority, Roles, and Responsibilities of the Commissions on Elementary and Secondary Schools</u>
2.1.2.	<u>Membership of the Commissions on Elementary and Secondary Schools</u>
2.1.3.	<u>Election of Commissioners</u>
2.1.4.	<u>Terms of Office of Commissioners</u>
2.1.5.	<u>Maximum Allowable Years of Service on a Commission</u>
2.1.6.	<u>Continuing Eligibility to Serve as a Commissioner</u>
2.1.7.	<u>Commissioner Resignations and Vacancies</u>
2.1.8.	<u>Removal from the Office of Commissioner</u>
2.1.9.	<u>Filling Unexpired Terms of Commissioners</u>
2.1.10.	<u>Officers of the Commission</u>
2.1.11.	<u>Standing Committees of the Commission on Elementary Schools</u>
2.1.12.	<u>Standing Committees of the Commission on Secondary Schools</u>
2.1.13.	<u>Convening Committees</u>
2.1.14.	<u>Appointment of Commissioners to the Commission’s Committees</u>
2.1.15.	<u>Appointment of Chairs and Vice Chairs of the Commission’s Committees</u>
2.1.16.	<u>Terms of Office for Committee Chairs and Vice Chairs</u>
2.1.17.	<u>The Commissions’ Policies</u>
2.1.18.	<u>Operation of the Commissions</u>

2.1.1. Authority, Roles, and Responsibilities of the Commissions on Elementary and Secondary Schools

2.1.1.1. Section 602, Authority, of the MSA Bylaws grants authority to the Commission on Elementary Schools and the Commission on Secondary Schools for the following:

(a) *Accreditation*. By delegation of authority from the Association, each Commission shall:

(i) By accreditation, evaluation, consultation and in all other appropriate ways, promote the welfare and improvement of education, with special emphasis upon service to member and candidate institutions, but without limitation to these institutions.

(ii) Publish in writing or electronically lists of accredited and candidate educational institutions and programs in accordance with standards adopted by the Commission.

(iii) Adopt standards and changes thereto for the accreditation of educational institutions and programs, especially such modifications as will promote continued improvement in the effectiveness of member and candidate institutions and programs.

(iv) Cooperate in appropriate ways with similar bodies in other regional, national and international associations.

(v) Subject to law, lawful court order, or decision by the Commission or its Executive Committee, keep the records relating to the evaluation or accreditation of any present, prospective, or former accredited institution or candidate for accreditation confidential. Such records shall not be disclosed outside the Association without the prior written consent of the governing authority of the institution concerned or where a Commission has adopted provisions with respect thereto.

(vi) Other than the report of a visiting team and Commission minutes relating to an accreditation action by such Commission, no document relating to such

action shall be released to the institution itself without approval by the Commission its Executive Committee or its designee. The Commission and the Board of Trustees shall cooperate with respect to such matters when a matter of principle affecting another Commission of the Association may be involved.

(b) *Operations.* Subject to the authority of the Board of Trustees, each Commission shall have the authority to:

(i) Appoint a President of the Commission who shall be its chief administrative officer.

(ii) Appoint other professional staff officers and employees and determine all personnel matters relating thereto, including, without limitation, dismissal, promotion, payments of all kind (within the limitations of the Commission's annual budget), termination, and job description.

(iii) Conduct the nomination and election of Commission members at the annual meeting of the Commission or by proxy ballot in accordance with Business policies and procedures established by the Commission.

(iv) Elect annually a Chair and Vice Chair from the Commission membership. Officers are eligible for re-election up to a maximum of six years, provided they are elected to additional three-year terms as Commissioners in accordance with the procedures established by the Commission, but in no case shall the total length of service on the Commission exceed nine years of consecutive service.

(v) Elect annually other members of the Commission in accordance with the procedures established by the Commission who, together with the Chair and Vice Chair, shall comprise an Executive Committee which shall exercise the functions of the Commission between meetings thereof, and shall meet with its President of the Commission as frequently as may be required to carry out its responsibilities.

(vi) Assure periodic evaluation of the Commission's operations and performance through the use of appropriate internal and external constituencies and communities of interest.

(vii) Designate a nominating committee for the election of the Commissioners, with such rules as each such Commission shall determine from time to time.

(viii) Administer and have control over its own finances and its annual budget, including the accumulation of a segregated fund balance and the establishment of fees and annual dues.

(ix) Hold regional or other meetings at which action may be taken for proposal to the Board of Trustees for its determination at any annual, regular or special meeting thereof. Such business of the Commissions may be proposed to the membership of the affected Commission according to procedures that shall be established by the Commission and disseminated in advance to the appropriate membership.

(x) Hold regional or other meetings for the purpose of discussing issues of topical interest to the Commissions, consistent with Article I hereof.

(xi) Determine other aspects of its internal affairs, including, but not limited to, its operating rules and personnel matters.

(xii) Through its Commissioners, take any action required or permitted to be taken at any meeting of the Commissioners without a meeting, if all Commissioners consent thereto in writing and the writing or writings are filed with the minutes of proceedings of the Commission.

2.1.1.2. Section 603, Commission Membership, of the MSA By-laws establishes the parameters for membership on the Commissions.

(a) Each Commission shall have the authority to establish a membership adequate to carry out its purposes.

(b) Except as otherwise provided in these Bylaws, the members of a Commission shall serve a three-year term. Members shall be elected to a three-year term by a majority vote of a Commission's voting constituents and, thereafter, may be elected for one successive three-year term. In addition, a Commission, in accordance with procedures established by such Commission, may appoint a Commission member to fill a vacancy in its membership for the unexpired portion of the

term of the member who has been replaced. Where required by applicable law or regulations, at least one-seventh of the members shall be elected who do not currently hold professional positions in education and who are broadly representative of the public interest. The remaining members shall be currently active professional and administrative staff of member institutions and shall be elected with consideration to geographical and institutional distribution reflective of the Commission's constituents and other levels of educational institutions.

(c) Each Commission shall determine the circumstances in which its own Commissioners may be removed, whether for non-attendance or any other reason.

2.1.2. Membership of the Commissions on Elementary and Secondary Schools. By delegation from the Association, each Commission shall have the authority to establish a membership adequate to carry out its purposes. (*Article VI, -The Commissions and Accreditation, Section 603, Commission Membership.*)

2.1.2.1. The Commission on Elementary Schools and the Commission on Secondary Schools shall each consist of no fewer than sixteen and no more than twenty-one persons.

2.1.2.2. Not more than one member of each Commission shall be connected to the same institution.

2.1.2.3. The Commission on Elementary Schools shall consist of the following categories of members:

- a. Administrative, professional, and academic educators (18): These members shall be currently active professional, academic, and administrative members of the staff of a) member institutions and their central offices, b) state education departments, and/or c) higher education institutions. They shall be elected with consideration to geographical and institutional distribution reflective of the Commission's constituents and other levels of educational institutions, including postsecondary institutions. Of these members,
- b. At least one member must be a teacher or instructor in a MSA-CES-accredited institution.
- c. At least one member must have an expertise in early age education.

- d. At least one member must be an educator from a MSA-CES-accredited institution with education and/or experience in distance education.
- e. Public Members (3): At least one-seventh of the members shall be elected who do not currently hold professional positions in education and who are broadly representative of the public interest. Representatives of the public shall meet the following criteria:
 - 1) not currently employed in the field of education
 - 2) not an employee, member of the governing board, owner, or shareholder of, or consultant to, an institution or program that either is accredited by the agency or has applied for accreditation
 - 3) not a member of any trade association or membership organization related to, affiliated with, or associated with the accrediting agency
 - 4) not a spouse, parent, child, or sibling of an individual identified directly above.

2.1.2.4. The Commission on Secondary Schools shall consist of the following categories of members:

- a. Administrative, professional, and academic educators (18): These members shall be currently active professional, academic, and administrative members of the staff of a) member institutions and their central offices, b) state education departments, and/or c) higher education institutions. They shall be elected with consideration to geographical and institutional distribution reflective of the Commission's constituents and other levels of educational institutions, including postsecondary institutions. Of these members,
 - 1) At least two members must be career and technical educators, at least one of which is from a MSCSS-accredited institution with postsecondary, non-degree granting career and technology programs.
 - 2) At least one member must be a teacher or instructor in a MSCSS-accredited institution.
 - 3) At least one member must be an educator from a MSCSS-accredited institution with education and/or experience in distance education.
- b. Public Members (3): At least one-seventh of the members shall be elected who do not currently hold professional positions in education and who are broadly representative of the public interest. Representatives of the public shall meet the following criteria:
 - 1) not currently employed in the field of education

- 2) not an employee, member of the governing board, owner, or shareholder of, or consultant to, an institution or program that either is accredited by the agency or has applied for accreditation
- 3) not a member of any trade association or membership organization related to, affiliated with, or associated with the accrediting agency
- 4) not a spouse, parent, child, or sibling of an individual identified directly above.

2.1.2.5. Commissioners shall be selected based on the following qualifications:

- a. Demonstrated interest, understanding, and involvement in the accreditation activities of the Commission
- b. Ability and willingness to contribute knowledge and expertise to the Commission's work
- c. Commitment to attending a new Commissioner Orientation session
- d. Commitment to thorough preparation for and regular attendance at Commission meetings
- e. Be willing to certify that they have no perceived or actual conflict of interest in the institutions on which they will deliberate.
- f. Be willing to certify that all documents and information will be treated in a confidential manner.

2.1.3. Election of Commissioners. The members of the Commissions shall be divided into three classes, each consisting of seven Commissioners. Annually, a Commission's voting constituents shall elect a class to a three-year term by majority vote. A Commission's voting constituents shall consist of all accredited and candidate institutions in good standing. Each institution is entitled to one vote.

2.1.3.1. Prospective Commissioners shall be nominated by the Commission's Nominating/Executive Committee and approved by the full Commission at a Commission meeting.

2.1.3.2. Elections shall take place immediately following the meeting at which the nominations are approved.

2.1.3.3. The vote shall take place via mail or online ballot.

- 2.1.4. Terms of Office of Commissioners. Members of a Commission shall be elected for a three-year term by a majority vote of the Commission's voting constituents and, thereafter, may be reelected for one, successive three-year term. Terms of office shall begin on July 1 and end on June 30.
- 2.1.5. Maximum Allowable Years of Service on a Commission. The maximum consecutive length of service on a Commission is two, three-year terms. However, a Commissioner may serve a maximum of three additional years (for a total of nine years) to complete a term as an Officer or member of the Executive/Nominating Committee. After serving two successive three-year terms or two successive three-year terms and a maximum of three additional years as an Officer or member of the Executive/Nominating Committee, a Commissioner is ineligible for election as a Commissioner for a period of one year.
- 2.1.6. Continuing Eligibility to Serve as a Commissioner. If the professional assignment of a Commissioner changes during his/her term, the Commission's Nominating/Executive Committee shall determine whether the Commissioner may continue to serve as a Commissioner. The Nominating/Executive Committee's determination shall be reported to the full Commission and to the Commissioner in question.
- 2.1.7. Commissioner Resignations and Vacancies. Any Commissioner may resign at any time effective upon giving written notice to the Chair of the Commission on which s/he serves, unless the notice specifies a later time for the effective date of such resignation. If the resignation is effective at a future time, a successor may be designated before such time to take office when the resignation becomes effective. Resignation as a Commissioner shall also constitute resignation as a member of all committees of the Commission.
- 2.1.8. Removal from the Office of Commissioner. Any Commissioner may be removed from office by a majority of the voting members of a Commission, upon recommendation of the Commission's Executive/Nominating Committee, without assignment of cause except in the case of a Commissioner who also is an officer of the Commission and may be removed only in accordance with Policy
- 2.1.8.1. A vote to remove a Commissioner from a Commission shall be by majority of the Commissioners present and eligible to vote. The Commissioner whose removal is being considered may not participate in the vote concerning

his or her removal. In the event that any Commissioner shall be so removed, a new Commissioner shall be selected to replace such Commissioner at the same time in accordance with the provisions of Policy 2.2.9. Removal as a Commissioner shall also constitute removal as a member of all committees of the Commission.

2.1.8.2. A Commissioner may be removed from office for failure to attend three consecutive Commission meetings.

2.1.9. Filling Unexpired Terms of Commissioners. When a Commissioner does not complete his/her term of office by reason of death, resignation, removal, or otherwise, a Commission's Executive/Nominating Committee shall, after gathering input from the full Commission, nominate a replacement for approval and election by a majority vote of the Commission.

2.1.9.1. A Commissioner elected to fill a vacated term with less than one and one-half the years remaining in the term shall be eligible for reelection to one additional, successive term. A Commissioner elected to fill a vacated term with one and one-half or more years remaining in the term shall be eligible for election to two additional, successive terms.

2.1.10. Officers of the Commission. Both the Commission on Elementary Schools and the Commission on Secondary Schools shall elect the following officers of their respective Commission: Chair, Past Chair, and Chair Elect. Movement from the office of Chair Elect to Chair and from Chair to Past Chair shall be automatic. Officers shall not be eligible to succeed themselves in the same position.

2.1.10.1. Chair: The Chair shall assume the following responsibilities:

- a. preside over all meetings of the Commission
- b. carry out the policies established by the Commission
- c. carry out actions taken by the Commission
- d. serve on the MSA Board of Trustees
- e. serve as an ex officio member with voting rights of the Finance Committee and Policy and Planning Committees
- f. serve as the Chair of the Executive Committee
- g. together with the Chair Elect and Past Chair, appoint the standing committees and designate the chair and vice chair of each committee

- 2.1.10.2. Chair Elect: The Chair Elect shall assume the following responsibilities:
- a. act in the place of the Chair in the event of the Chair’s absence or inability to carry out the duties described in 2.2.10.1. above
 - b. serve as a member of the Executive Committee
 - c. serve as an ex officio member with voting rights on the Finance Committee and Policy and Planning Committees
 - d. serve on the MSA Board of Trustees at the first available vacancy

- 2.1.10.3. Past Chair: The Past Chair shall assume the following responsibilities:
- a. serve as a mentor and guide to the Chair, as requested
 - b. work with the President of the Commissions to provide a comprehensive orientation session to new Commissioners
 - c. serve as the Chair of the Appeals Committee (if needed) and resolve grievance appeals regarding Commission action
 - d. serve as a member of the Executive Committee
 - e. serve as an ex officio member with voting rights on the Membership and Accreditation Committee

2.1.10.4. Selection of the Chair Elect: The Chair Elect shall be nominated by the Commission’s Nominating/Executive Committee and approved by the Commission. The election shall take place via secret written ballot. The Chair Elect shall be elected by a simple plurality of all ballots cast. Current officers may vote for the Chair Elect.

2.1.10.5. Term of Office for Officers: The Chair Elect shall be elected by the Commission to serve a term of two years. At the end of the two-year term, s/he shall move to the position of Chair. At the end of the Chair’s two-year term, s/he shall move into the position of Past Chair for a term of two years.

2.1.10.6. Resignation of Officers of the Commission. Any officer may resign at any time upon written notice to the appropriate Commission.

2.1.10.7. Removal of Officers of the Commission. The Commission may remove any officer with cause at any time. For purposes of this Policy, “cause” shall mean: (1) the willful and continued failure or refusal by such officer to perform his or her duties and responsibilities; (2) the willful misconduct by such officer which is demonstrably and materially injurious to the Commission, monetarily or otherwise, or which results or is intended to result in personal gain or

enrichment at the expense of the Commission; (3) such officer's conviction of or plea of no contest to a felony or crime involving moral turpitude; or (4) such other circumstances specified in any agreement between such officer and the Commission.

2.1.10.8. Vacancy in Officer Positions. A vacancy occurring in the office of an officer of a Commission by death, resignation, removal, or otherwise shall be filled as follows:

- a. In the event of a vacancy in the position of Chair, the Chair Elect shall automatically assume the position of Chair, and the Commission's Nominating/Executive Committee shall nominate a new Chair Elect for election by the Commission. The Chair Elect then shall be eligible to serve the remainder of the Chair Elect's term and his/her normal term as Chair.
- b. In the event of a vacancy in the position of Chair Elect, the Commission's Nominating/Executive Committee shall nominate a new Chair Elect for election by the Commission. The new Chair Elect shall serve the remainder of the Chair Elect's term.
- c. In the event of a vacancy in the Past Chair position, the Commission's Nominating/Executive Committee shall determine whether and/or how the Past Chair's duties shall be fulfilled.

2.1.11. Standing Committees of the Commission on Elementary Schools. The Standing Committees of the Commission on Elementary Schools ensure effective and efficient discharge of the Commission's responsibilities. The Committees may not set policy or take any actions reserved for a Commission, except as otherwise approved by the Commission. Their primary function is to gather and review information for discussion and to make recommendations for action by the full Commission. The Committees allow for a fuller exploration of issues than is provided when all Commissioners are expected to become expert and knowledgeable on all topics. The Commission's four standing subcommittees are:

2.1.11.1. Executive/Nomination Committee. The Executive/Nomination Committee shall be comprised of the:

- a. Chair of the Commission
- b. Chair Elect of the Commission
- c. Past Chair of the Commission
- d. Chair of the Commission's Membership and Accreditation Committee

- e. Chair of the Commission’s Finance Committee
- f. Chair of the Commission’s Policy and Planning Committee
- g. Co-Chair of the MSA-CESS (PK-12) Membership and Accreditation Committee

2.1.11.a. If any member of the Middle States Association’s Board of Trustees representing the Commission on Elementary Schools is not a current member of the Commission, the Trustee may, at the discretion of the Executive Committee and if s/he wishes, serve as a non-voting at large member of the Elementary Commission’s Executive Committee for the duration of his/her term on the Board of Trustees.

2.1.11.b. The President of the Commissions shall serve as an ex officio member of the Executive/Nominating Committee without voting rights.

2.1.11.c. The responsibilities of the Executive/Nomination Committee include:

- 1) Ensure that the Commission acts in a responsive and responsible manner;
- 2) In concert with the Executive/Nomination Committee of the other Commission—
 - a) Conduct an annual evaluation of the President based on feedback from members of both Commissions;
 - b) Review and recommend the President’s salary, benefits, and contract to both Commissions;
 - c) Lead the Commission in annual goal-setting and self-evaluation of its performance.
 - d) Serve as the Nominating Committee to recommend nominees for Commission officers, Commissioner replacements, and Board of Trustee members for approval by the Commission;
 - e) Ensure that the interests of the Commission are effectively represented at MSA Board of Trustees meetings;
 - f) In emergency situations or as otherwise authorized by the Commission, act on behalf of the full Commission between regular Commission meetings; and
 - g) Distribute minutes of meetings to all Commission members within one month of the meeting.

2.1.11.2. Finance Committee. The Finance Committee, working in concert with the President of the Commissions, ensures the sound financial condition of the Commission and is charged with the following responsibilities:

- a) Review the annual budget proposed by the President before it is recommended to the full Commission for discussion and approval;
- b) Review quarterly budget reports provided by the Association Office and President;
- c) Review recommendations by the President and make a recommendation to the full Commission regarding dues and fees charged by the Commission;
- d) Review recommendations by the President and make a recommendation to the full Commission regarding changes the salary ranges for the Commission's staff;
- e) Review recommendations by the President and make a recommendation to the Policy and Development Committee regarding financial policies;
- f) Review the annual audit performed by the Association's auditors;
- g) Approve policies regarding the Commission's investments;
- h) Conduct special projects related to the financial position of the Commission as proposed by the President and the Commission;
- i) Conduct research and analysis of potential new ventures and new revenue sources for the Commission; and
- j) Distribute minutes of meetings to all Commission members within one month of the meeting.

2.1.11.3. Policy and Planning Committee: The Policy and Planning Committee, working in concert with the President, ensures that the policy-making and strategic planning responsibilities of the Commission are carried out in an effective manner and is charged with the following responsibilities:

- a) Review new policies recommended by the President and recommend actions on proposed new policies to the Commission;
- b) Conduct a regular review the Commission's policies to ensure that they are up-to-date, relevant, and appropriate to the mission of the Commission and recommend actions on proposed reviewed/revised policies to the Commission;
- c) Oversee the development of the Commission's strategic plan. Recommend approval of the strategic plan and revisions to the plan by the Commission;

- d) Monitor the progress in achieving the Commission's strategic goals in cooperation with the President and the full Commission;
- e) Conduct research and analysis of potential new membership types and new services for the Commission's member institutions;
- f) Monitor the implications of federal and state legislation on accreditation; and
- g) Distribute minutes of meetings to all Commission members within one month of the meeting.

2.1.11.4. Membership and Accreditation Committee. The Membership and Accreditation Committee, working in concert with the President and the full Commission, ensures that the accreditation responsibilities of the Commission are carried out in a thorough, appropriate, and effective manner and is charged with the following responsibilities:

- a) Review all accreditation actions recommended by the Commission's visiting teams, staff, and advisory committees and recommend accreditation actions to the Commission;
- b) Review proposed new and revised self-study and accreditation protocols recommended by the President and recommend actions to the Commission on proposed new/revised protocols;
- c) Review self-study and accreditation protocols and policies of agencies with which the Commission has a cooperative agreement and recommend actions to the Commission on proposed cooperative agreements;
- d) In cooperation with the other Commission—
 - 1) Conduct a formal review of the Commission's Standards for Accreditation at least every five years.;
 - 2) Ensure the review of standards includes input from members of visiting teams, advisory committees, accredited and candidate institutions, and other appropriate sources; and
 - 3) Recommend to the Commission actions regarding new or revised Standards for Accreditation;
- e) Approve appointments of readers and members of advisory committees. Report to the full Commission changes to readers and advisory committee memberships; and
- f) Distribute minutes of meetings to all Commission members within one month of the meeting.

2.1.12. Standing Committees of the Commission on Secondary Schools. The Standing Committees of the Commission on Secondary Schools ensure effective and efficient discharge of the Commission’s responsibilities. The Committees may not set policy or take any actions reserved for a Commission, except as otherwise approved by the Commission. Their primary function is to gather and review information for discussion and to make recommendations for action by the full Commission. The Committees allow for a fuller exploration of issues than is provided when all Commissioners are expected to become expert and knowledgeable on all topics. The Commission’s four standing subcommittees are:

2.1.12.1. Executive/Nomination Committee. The Executive/Nomination Committee shall be comprised of the:

- Chair of the Commission
- Chair Elect of the Commission
- Past Chair of the Commission
- Chair of the Commission’s Finance Committee
- Chair of the Commission’s Policy and Planning Committee
- Co-Chair of the MSA-CESS (PK-12) Membership and Accreditation Committee

2.1.12.a. If any member of the Middle States Association’s Board of Trustees representing the Commission on Secondary Schools is not a current member of the Commission, the Trustee the Trustee may, at the discretion of the Executive Committee and if s/he wishes, serve as a non-voting at large member of the Secondary Commission’s Executive Committee for the duration of his/her term on the Board of Trustees.

2.1.12.1.b. The President of the Commissions shall serve as an ex officio member of the Executive/Nominating Committee without voting rights.

2.1.12.1.c. The responsibilities of the Executive/Nomination Committee include:

- 1) Ensure that the Commission acts in a responsive and responsible manner;
- 2) In concert with the Executive/Nomination Committee of the other Commission—
 - a) Conduct an annual evaluation of the President based on feedback from members of both Commissions;

- b) Review and recommend the President's salary, benefits, and contract to both Commissions;
- c) Lead the Commission in annual goal-setting and self-evaluation of its performance.
- d) Serve as the Nominating Committee to recommend nominees for Commission officers, Commissioner replacements, and Board of Trustee members for approval by the Commission;
- e) Ensure that the interests of the Commission are effectively represented at MSA Board of Trustees meetings;
- f) In emergency situations or as otherwise authorized by the Commission, act on behalf of the full Commission between regular Commission meetings; and
- g) Distribute minutes of meetings to all Commission members within one month of the meeting.

2.1.12.2. Finance Committee. The Finance Committee, working in concert with the President of the Commissions, ensures the sound financial condition of the Commission and is charged with the following responsibilities:

- a) Review the annual budget proposed by the President before it is recommended to the full Commission for discussion and approval;
- b) Review monthly budget reports provided by the Association Office and President;
- c) Review recommendations by the President and make a recommendation to the full Commission regarding dues and fees charged by the Commission;
- d) Review recommendations by the President and make a recommendation to the full Commission regarding changes the salary ranges for the Commission's staff;
- e) Review recommendations by the President and make a recommendation to the Policy and Development Committee regarding financial policies;
- f) Review the annual audit performed by the Association's auditors;
- g) Approve policies regarding the Commission's investments;
- h) Conduct special projects related to the financial position of the Commission as proposed by the President and the Commission;
- i) Conduct research and analysis of potential new ventures and new revenue sources for the Commission; and
- j) Distribute minutes of meetings to all Commission members within one month of the meeting.

2.1.12.3. Policy and Strategic Development Committee: The Policy and Planning Committee, working in concert with the President, ensures that the policy-making and strategic planning responsibilities of the Commission are carried out in an effective manner and is charged with the following responsibilities:

- a) Review new policies recommended by the President and recommend actions on proposed new policies to the Commission;
- b) Conduct a regular review the Commission's policies to ensure that they are up-to-date, relevant, and appropriate to the mission of the Commission and recommend actions on proposed reviewed/revised policies to the Commission;
- c) Oversee the development of the Commission's strategic plan. Recommend approval of the strategic plan and revisions to the plan by the Commission;
- d) Monitor the progress in achieving the Commission's strategic goals in cooperation with the President and the full Commission;
- e) Conduct research and analysis of potential new membership types and new services for the Commission's member institutions;
- f) Monitor the implications of federal and state legislation on accreditation; and
- g) Distribute minutes of meetings to all Commission members within one month of the meeting.

2.1.12.4. Membership and Accreditation Committee. The Membership and Accreditation Committee, working in concert with the President and the full Commission, ensures that the accreditation responsibilities of the Commission are carried out in a thorough, appropriate, and effective manner and is charged with the following responsibilities:

- a) Review all accreditation actions recommended by the Commission's visiting teams, staff, and advisory committees and recommend accreditation actions to the Commission;
- b) Review proposed new and revised self-study and accreditation protocols recommended by the President and recommend actions to the Commission on proposed new/revised protocols;
- c) Review self-study and accreditation protocols and policies of agencies with which the Commission has a cooperative agreement and recommend actions to the Commission on proposed cooperative agreements;
- d) In cooperation with the other Commission –

- 4) Conduct a formal review of the Commission's Standards for Accreditation at least every five years.;
 - 5) Ensure the review of standards includes input from members of visiting teams, advisory committees, accredited and candidate institutions, and other appropriate sources; and
 - 6) Recommend to the Commission actions regarding new or revised Standards for Accreditation;
- e) Approve appointments of readers and members of advisory committees. Report to the full Commission changes to readers and advisory committee memberships; and
 - f) Distribute minutes of meetings to all Commission members within one month of the meeting.

At least one member of the Commission on Secondary Schools' Membership and Accreditation Committee shall be from a MSCSS-accredited institution offering postsecondary, non-degree granting, career and technology programs.

2.1.13. Convening Committees. Standing committees of the Commission may be convened at the request of the President, the Chair of the Commission, and/or the Chair of a standing committee.

2.1.14. Appointment of Commissioners to the Commission's Committees.

2.1.14.1. Annually, at the Commissions' spring meetings, each Commission's Executive/Nominating Committee will ask Commissioners to designate their choice of committee assignment(s) for the next year (July to June). Commissioners may request to remain on the same committee(s) or request to change their committee assignment(s).

2.1.14.2. Based on the Commissioners' requests, the Chair of the Commission will make appointments to committees for the next year by June 30. The Chair will take the following into consideration when making these appointments:

- a) The requests and qualifications of the Commissioners
- b) The needs of the Commission
- c) New Commissioners. The Chair will appoint newly elected Commissioners to a committee(s) for the first year of their term as Commissioner on one of the following bases:
 - 1) Fill the committee assignment of the Commissioner s/he is replacing

- 2) The qualifications of the Commissioner that meet the needs of specific committee(s), and or
- 3) The overall needs of the Commission.

2.1.15. Appointment of Chairs and Vice Chairs of the Commission's Committees.

Annually, at each Commission's spring meeting, a Commission's Executive/Nomination Committee will ask Commissioners who have served as a Commissioner at least one year to indicate if they desire to be appointed as the chair or vice chair of a specific Commission committee for which there is a vacancy.

2.1.15.1. A vacancy for a committee chair or vice chair position may occur when one or more of the following occurs:

- a) The current chair/vice chair's term as a Commissioner has expired, and
 - 1) The chair/vice chair is not eligible for election to another term, or
 - 2) The chair/vice chair chooses not to stand for election to another terms as Commissioner, or
 - 3) The Executive/Nomination Committee does not nominate the chair/vice chair to stand for another term as Commissioner
- b) The current chair/vice chair resigns from the Commission before his/her terms as chair/vice chair expires; or
- c) The current chair/vice chair's term of service as chair/vice chair of a committee expires; or
- d) The current chair/vice chair resigns from the position of chair/vice chair before his/her terms as chair/vice chair of a committee expires.

2.1.15.2. When a vacancy for the chair or vice chair of a committee occurs, the Chair of the Commission will appoint a new chair/vice chair. The Chair will take the following into consideration when making these appointments:

- a) The requests and qualifications of the Commissioners
- b) The needs of the Commission

2.1.16. Terms of Office for Committee Chairs and Vice Chairs.

2.1.16.1. The term of office for the Chair of a committee shall be two years. The Chair of the Commission may appoint a Commissioner as Chair of a committee for one additional term.

2.1.16.2. The term of office for the Vice Chair of a committee shall be for two years. The Chair may appoint a Commissioner as Vice Chair of a committee for one additional term.

2.1.16.3. The terms of the Chair and Vice Chair of a committee shall not be co-terminus.

2.1.17. The Commissions' Policies. To the extent possible and practical, the policies adopted by the Commission on Elementary Schools and by the Commission on Secondary Schools shall set forth the same policies and procedures. However, a separate Policy Handbook will be kept for each Commission. All policies shall serve to promote democratic and responsible governance of the Commission and constitute the principles by which the Commission and its President exercise leadership.

2.1.17.1. Policies adopted by the Commission on Elementary Schools and Commission on Secondary Schools shall be written and coded and be maintained by the President.

2.1.17.2. The Policies of the Commission on Elementary Schools and the Policies of the Commission on Secondary Schools shall be made available to Commissioners, accredited and candidate institutions, and other interested parties on the Commissions' website.

2.1.17.3. Recommendations for new policies or revisions to current policies may be made by accredited and candidate institutions, the Commissions' staff, the Commissions' readers, members of the Commissions' advisory committees, and Commissioners. All recommendations must be submitted to the Policy and Planning Committee of the Commission on Elementary Schools and the Policy and Strategic Development of the Commission on Secondary Schools for review and recommendation for action by the Commissions.

2.1.17.4. Review of the Commission's Policies.

a. The Policy and Planning Committee of the Commission on Elementary Schools and the Policy and Strategic Development Committee of the Commission on Secondary School shall plan and conduct a formal and complete review of the

Commissions' policies at least once every five years. The purpose of the review is to ensure that policies adequately meet the needs of the Middle States Association and the Commissions on Elementary and Secondary Schools.

b. The Policy and Planning Committee of the Commission on Elementary Schools and the Policy and Strategic Development Committee of the Commission on Secondary School shall conduct a review of a portion of the Commissions' policies at each meeting of the Commissions.

2.1.17.5. Authority to Create or Revise Policies for Federal Petition Purposes. The President and the Commission on Secondary Schools' Executive/Nomination Committee shall have the authority to make minor, non-substantive changes to the Commission's policies when such changes are required for the Commission on Secondary Schools to maintain its recognition by the U.S. Secretary of Education or one of the civil authorities in the regions served by the Commission. Such changes shall be reported to the Commission, in writing, at the next regularly scheduled Commission meetings.

2.1.18. Operation of the Commissions.

2.1.18.1. Commissions' Meetings: The Commissions shall schedule and conduct a minimum of two meetings per year that are open only to Commissioners, the Commissions' staff, and invited guests. Members of the Middle States Association's Board of Trustees and officers of the Middle States Association may attend Commission meetings upon prior notice to the President of the Commissions at least 15 days in advance of a meeting.

2.1.18.2. Quorum: At all meetings of the Commissions, the presence of a majority of the currently elected Commissioners shall a quorum to transact business. Any act of a majority present at a meeting at which there is a quorum shall be the act of the full Commission, except as may be otherwise required by law, by the Commission's policies, or the Association's Bylaws.

2.1.18.3. Proxies Not Allowed for Commission Meetings. Only Commissioners in physical attendance are eligible to vote at Commission meetings. Voting by proxy is not permitted.

2.1.18.4. Telephone Meetings Permitted.

- a) Members of a Commission may participate in committee and/or special purpose meetings via a conference telephone call , videoconferencing, or similar communications modalities by means of which all persons participating in the meeting can hear each other. Such participation shall constitute the presence of a Commissioner at such meeting.
- b) Participation by any means other than being physically present at the location at which a meeting is held is not permitted for Commission meetings unless said meeting is called as a teleconference meeting, in which all members are using phones or similar communications equipment.

2.1.18.5. Mail/E-mail Ballots. The Commission make take official actions by mail or signed e-mail ballot if all members of a Commission consent to such action.

2.1.18.6. Presiding Official. Meetings of each Commission shall be presided over by the Chair of the Commission, or, in the Chair’s absence, by the Vice Chair/Chair Elect, or, in the Vice Chair/Chair Elect’s absence, the Past Chair or other member of a Commission’s Executive/Nomination Committee.

2.1.16.7. Parliamentary Authority. Meetings of the Commissions shall be conducted in accordance with parliamentary procedures as delineated in *Robert’s Rules of Order, Newly Revised*.

2.1.19. Compensation. Officers and members of the Commissions shall not be compensated for any service related to the Commissions' business, except for reimbursement of travel and lodging expenses related to Commission business.

Action	Date	Notes
Initial Adoption by MSA-CSS	April 15, 2011	
Initial Adoption by MSA-CES	October 28, 2011	
Revisions	April 4, 2014	Addition of 2.11.11.a and 2.11.12.a

Action	Date	Notes