



## **COMMITTEES OF THE COMMISSIONS**

**Section 1: 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. In some instances, Committees are combined with the counterpart Commission on Secondary Schools Committee for the purposes of joint sessions. The Commission's four standing subcommittees are:

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 Finance Committee
  - e. Chair of the Commission's Policy and Planning Committee
  - f. Chair of the Commission's Membership and Accreditation Committee
  - g. Co-Chair of the MSA-CESS (PK-12) Membership and Accreditation Committee
- 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.
  - The President of the Commissions shall serve as an ex officio member of the Executive/Nominating Committee without voting rights.
  - 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.

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 Planning 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.

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.

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 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.

**Section 2: 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. In some instances, Committees are combined with the counterpart Commission on Elementary Schools Committee for the purposes of joint sessions. The Commission’s four standing subcommittees are:

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 Finance Committee
  - e. Chair of the Commission’s Policy and Planning Committee
  - f. Co-Chair of the MSA-CESS (PK-12) Membership and Accreditation Committee
- 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 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.
  - The President of the Commissions shall serve as an ex officio member of the Executive/Nominating Committee without voting rights.
  - 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.

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 to 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.

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 of 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.

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.

### **Section3: PK-12 Membership and Accreditation Committee**

The Bylaws of the Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools (Adopted and Effective January 1, 2011) specify that there shall be three accrediting units within the Association. In addition, the Bylaws provide for a joint committee of the Commissions on Secondary and Elementary Schools [hereafter referred to as "the Commissions"] to act on behalf of Commissions to evaluate and recommend accreditation actions to the Commissions institutions providing PK through grade 12 education and institutions in Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, and institutions located outside the United States. (*Article VI --The Commissions and Accreditation*).

Purposes of the MSA-CESS (PK-12) Membership and Accreditation Committee. The purposes of the MSA-CESS (PK-12) Membership and Accreditation Committee of the Commissions on Elementary and Secondary Schools are to:

- a. recommend to the Commissions on Elementary and Secondary Schools policies that govern the cooperative activities of the Commissions regarding the institutions within its jurisdiction; and
- b. recommend to the Commissions accreditation actions for institutions within its jurisdiction.

Authority. The MSA-CESS Membership and Accreditation Committee derives and maintains its authority to conduct accreditation activities with the consent and approval of the Commission on Elementary Schools (MSACES) and the Commission on Secondary Schools (MSACSS).

Jurisdiction. The Commission on Elementary Schools and the Commission on Secondary Schools assign to the MSA-CESS (PK-12) Membership and Accreditation Committee the jurisdiction of any PK – 12 institution that includes one or more articulated elementary and secondary sub-units. Also included under the jurisdiction of the MSA-CESS (PK-12) Membership and Accreditation Committee are institutions in the ascending/descending grades protocol that include grades served by both Commissions, school systems, Educational Service Agencies, Learning Services Providers, and institutions located in Puerto Rico, the U.S. Virgin Islands, and outside the United States. Accreditation actions shall be taken by both the Commission on Secondary Schools and the Commission on Elementary Schools.

Membership of the MSA-CESS (PK-12) Membership and Accreditation Committee. The MSA-CESS (PK-12) Membership and Accreditation Committee shall consist of six Commissioners—three from each Commission. Two Commissioners, one from each Commission, shall serve as Co-Chairs of MSA-CESS (PK-12) Membership and Accreditation Committee. The Chairs of the Commission on Elementary Schools and the Commission on Secondary Schools shall be responsible for ensuring the full MSA-CESS (PK-12) Membership and Accreditation Committee membership. The Associate Director for MSA-CESS (PK-12) accreditation serves as the staff liaison for both Commissions. The Chairs of the Commissions, the President of the Commissions, and the Associate Director for MSA-CESS (PK-12) accreditation are *ex officio* members of the MSA-CESS (PK-12) Membership and Accreditation Committee.

Meetings. There shall be a minimum of two meetings of the Committee each academic year (usually in conjunction with the fall and spring meetings of the Commissions). Additional meetings may be convened at the call of the Associate Director for MSA-CESS (PK-12) accreditation or one/both of the Co-Chairs of the MSA-CESS (PK-12) Membership and Accreditation Committee.

Award of Accreditation. Accreditation of institutions accredited through the MSA-CESS (PK-12) Membership and Accreditation Committee is awarded by a majority vote of each Commission upon the recommendation of the MSA-CESS (PK-12) Membership and Accreditation Committee.

Policies for the MSA-CESS (PK-12) Membership and Accreditation Committee. The MSA-CESS (PK-12) Membership and Accreditation Committee operates in compliance with the policies of the Commissions on Elementary and Secondary Schools.

Date of Accreditation. An institution's date of accreditation following the granting of accreditation by both Commissions shall be December 1 for actions taken at fall Commission meetings and May 1 for actions taken at spring Commission meetings.

MSA-CESS (PK-12) Membership and Accreditation Committee Budget. The budget for MSA-CESS (PK-12) Membership and Accreditation Committee shall be incorporated in the budgets of the Commission on Elementary Schools and the Commission on Secondary Schools.

Advisory Committee Review. The reports of MSA-CESS (PK-12) Membership and Accreditation Committee visiting teams shall be reviewed by the appropriate readers or advisory committees prior to recommendations' being made to the MSA-CESS (PK-12) Membership and Accreditation Committee.

Dues and Fees Income from MSA-CESS Membership and Accreditation Committee Accreditation Institutions. Fifty percent of all fees and dues revenues realized from institutions within the MSA-CESS (PK-12) Membership and Accreditation Committee's accreditation jurisdiction are distributed to each Commission.

#### **Section 4: Appointments to Committees**

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

- 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).
- 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.

##### 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.
- 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.
- 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

Terms of Office for Committee Chairs and Vice Chairs.

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

**Section 5: 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.