

BYLAWS OF THE MISSOURI TASK FORCE ON BLIND STUDENT ACADEMIC AND VOCATIONAL PERFORMANCE

Adopted: March 8, 2000

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ARTICLE I: NAME AND LOCATION

Sec. 1. The name of this organization shall be the Task Force on Blind Student Academic and Vocational Performance (abbreviated as Blind Task Force [BTF]).

Sec. 2. The Task Force is established in the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE), Division of Special Education (DSE). The official location of the Blind Task Force will be the office of DSE.

ARTICLE II: PURPOSE

The purpose of the Blind Task Force shall be the development of goals and objectives to guide the improvement of special education, related services, vocational training, transition from school to work, rehabilitation services, independent living and employment outcomes for eligible blind or visually impaired students.

ARTICLE III: MEMBERSHIP

Sec. 1. CATEGORIES OF MEMBERSHIP. Appointment of members will ensure that the following categories and the designated number of each are represented on the Blind Task Force.

- a) Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (1)
- b) Missouri School for the Blind (1)
- c) Department of Social Services (DSS) (1)
- d) Consumer organizations (NFB/MCB) (1 from each)
- e) Teachers of the Visually Impaired (2)
- f) Public School Special Education Administrators (2)
- g) School Building Principals (2)
- h) Current students (3) (a student currently enrolled in public secondary school. If the student is completing a current term on the BTF, he/she could be attending a post-secondary school).
- i) Parents of blind or visually impaired students attending public school in Missouri (3)
- j) Employers (2)
- k) Institutions of Higher Education (1)
- l) Rehabilitation Council for the Blind (FSD) (1)
- m) Orientation and Mobility Specialist (1)

Sec. 2. VOTING MEMBERS. All members of the Blind Task Force or their designated substitute may vote on matters before the Blind Task Force. Notification of the use of designated substitute must be provided to the Chairperson prior to the opening of the meeting by the appointed member. No member shall cast a vote on a matter before the Blind Task Force in which he or she has a financial interest, or which might offer the appearance of impropriety.

Sec. 3. APPOINTMENT OF MEMBERS. Members shall be appointed by the Commissioner of Education, in cooperation with the Director, DSS.

Sec. 4. TERM OF MEMBERSHIP. Members shall serve for an initial term of three years, serving up to three consecutive terms. If after three consecutive terms, the member wishes to continue to serve and there is no proposed new member for a vacancy, the member may continue for a fourth consecutive term. Representatives of DESE, DSS, the Missouri School for the Blind, the State Rehabilitation Council for the Blind, and both consumer groups shall serve until a replacement is appointed by their organization.

Sec. 5. VACANCIES. A vacancy on the Blind Task Force shall be deemed to have occurred when a member is physically or mentally incapacitated, is absent from two (2) consecutive meetings without good cause, or gives notice of resignation in writing to the Chairperson giving this information. The Chairperson shall convey this by letter to the Commissioner of Education recommending that a vacancy be declared and requesting that a new appointment be made. The vacancy will be announced and nominations will be accepted. The Taskforce Executive Committee will review the nominees and make recommendations to the Commissioner.

Sec. 6. ABSENCE. A member shall be deemed to have demonstrated good cause for his or her absence from a meeting when he or she submits an acceptable explanation for such absence to the Chairperson. The Blind Task Force by affirmative vote shall be the arbiter should controversy arise.

Sec. 7. Student Attendance

Students may join the meeting via conferencing platform, designated by DESE, at a time agreed upon by the student and the Chairperson, no less than fourteen days prior to the meeting.

ARTICLE IV: MEETINGS

Sec. 1. MEETINGS. The Blind Task Force shall meet at least quarterly. The Chairperson shall fix the time and place of the meeting, and notice of such meetings shall be given to the members of the Blind Task Force by mail in preferred format or email twenty-one days prior to such meeting.

Sec. 2. SPECIAL MEETINGS. Special meetings may be called by the Chairperson upon written request of any seven members of the Blind Task Force, or after consulting with DESE and DSS.

Sec. 3. QUORUM. No business of the Blind Task Force shall take place without a quorum present. A quorum shall be constituted by those present rather than on a percent of the membership.

ARTICLE V: OFFICERS

Sec. 1. OFFICERS. The officers of this Blind Task Force shall be the Chairperson, Vice Chair and the Secretary. Officers shall be elected by the members of the Blind Task Force at the final scheduled meeting of each calendar year by majority vote of those present and voting. If there are more than two candidates for any office and a majority vote is not cast for any one candidate, the name of the candidate receiving the lowest number of votes shall be removed from the ballot and additional ballots shall be cast accordingly until a candidate receives a majority of the votes cast.

Sec. 2. TERMS OF OFFICE. All officers shall serve a term of one year. If a vacancy occurs in any elective office, other than Secretary, the next succeeding officer in elected line shall ascent to the vacated position. If a vacancy occurs in the term in the office of Secretary, the Chairperson shall appoint a successor to serve the balance of the unexpired term.

Sec. 3. DUTIES.

a) Chairperson. The Chairperson shall:

1. Preside at all meetings of the Blind Task Force.
2. Be responsible for implementation of procedures to effectuate the projects and policies of the Blind Task Force.
3. Exercise supervision over the appointment of and activities assigned to the Blind Task Force committees and procure written reports from each committee.
4. Perform such other duties and functions as may be specifically directed by the Blind Task Force.
5. Keep the Vice Chair currently advised of all activities of the Blind Task Force.

b) Vice Chair. The Vice Chair shall:

1. Preside at Blind Task Force meetings in the absence of the Chairperson.
2. Perform such administrative functions as may be directed by the Chairperson in facilitating and coordinating the activities of Blind Task Force committees.
3. Act as an ex-officio member of the Blind Task Force Committees.

c) Secretary. The Secretary of the Blind Task Force shall:

1. Supervise and maintain all Blind Task Force records including, but not limited to, the minutes and roll of members.
2. Maintain minutes of all meetings of the membership.

ARTICLE VI: COMMITTEES

Sec. 1. CLASSIFICATION. The classes of committees of the Blind Task Force shall be:

- a) Standing Committees created for the investigation, study or implementation of matters relating to the general purposes, business and objects of the Blind Task Force of a continuous and recurring character. Included at this time are:
 1. Academic and Vocational Services Committee
 2. Children's Vision Summit Committee
 3. Rules Committee
 4. Student Achievement Committee

- b) Ad-Hoc Committees created by the Chairperson to investigate, study and implement matters relating to specific purposes, business and objects of the Blind Task Force of an immediate or non-recurring character. The term of such committee shall end at the conclusion of their final report to the Blind Task Force.

Sec. 2. APPOINTMENT. Unless otherwise stated in the provision creating a committee, appointment of chairpersons and members of a committee shall be made by the Chairperson, who is authorized also to appoint successors.

Sec. 3. MEETINGS. Each committee shall meet upon call of its Chairperson.

ARTICLE VII: RULES OF PROCEDURE

In all proceedings of the Blind Task Force, Roberts Rules of Order (latest edition) shall be followed where not in conflict with the provisions of the Bylaws of the Blind Task Force.

ARTICLE VIII: ADOPTION

These Bylaws shall be adopted as the rules governing the business and affairs of the Blind Task Force when, after an appropriate motion has been made and seconded, such motion receives the affirmative votes of two-thirds (2/3) of the members of the Blind Task Force eligible to vote at a meeting duly called and held.

ARTICLE IX: AMENDMENTS TO BYLAWS

The Bylaws may be altered, adopted, amended or rescinded only by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the members present and voting at any meeting of the Blind Task Force of any calendar year; provided, however, that notice of the proposed action of adoption, amendment or rescission shall have been given by the Chairperson or the proponent of the proposed action to the members of the Blind Task Force either by mail or by e-mail posted not less than twenty-one days prior to such meeting.