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**NORTHWEST EDUCATIONAL COUNCIL FOR  
STUDENT SUCCESS (NECSS)**

**POLICY AND PROCEDURES MANUAL**

# **NORTHWEST EDUCATIONAL COUNCIL FOR STUDENT SUCCESS POLICY AND PROCEDURES MANUAL**

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## **1.0 ARTICLE 1 – INTRODUCTION**

### **1.01 Rationale**

The Northwest Educational Council for Student Success (NECSS) was established through an Intergovernmental Agreement approved January 24, 1985. Subsequent revisions to the Intergovernmental Agreement were approved, and the current Intergovernmental Agreement is dated August 17, 2016. Its purpose is to foster partnership planning and efforts directed to improving the vocational education and services provided to area residents served by the NECSS Partnership in the most cost-effective manner.

The policies set forth in this document and approved by the NECSS Board are designed to foster this planning and effort.

### **1.02 Mission Statement**

NECSS Partnership members will develop programs, share talent and data, and leverage joint resources to ensure that every elementary, high school, and college graduate will have the opportunity to be prepared for a global society, 21<sup>st</sup> century careers, and postsecondary readiness/success.

### **1.03 Intergovernmental Cooperation Legal Status**

The Intergovernmental Cooperation Act provides that school districts may enter into contract with other school districts or public institutions of higher education to establish any type of educational program which local school districts may establish individually. Those school districts which enter into a joint agreement shall be empowered to employ a chief executive officer and other professional staff.

Authority for governance of the Partnership is derived from the Illinois Constitution and Statutes and the regulations of the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE).

The NECSS Board is the policy-making body of the Partnership and serves within the framework provided by terms of the Intergovernmental Agreement contract.

## **2.0 ARTICLE 2 – NECSS BOARD**

### **2.01 Membership and Organization**

The Board shall include the Chief Executive Officer from each member district and the NECSS chief executive officer. Up to two additional members shall be designated by each district's Chief Executive Officer. These (non-voting) additional members shall serve on the Coordinating Council as well. The NECSS chief executive officer shall serve as the Chair of the Board and preside over all NECSS Board meetings.

Meetings of the Board shall be held at a time and place agreed upon by the Board. A quorum shall consist of one member present from each of the member districts. Meetings will be held in accordance with the Illinois Open Meetings Act (5 ILCS 120/1 et seq.), (the "Act"), and with Robert's Rules of Order, 11<sup>th</sup> Edition, Newly Revised. Public notice of all meetings shall be given as provided in the Act.

Each district shall be entitled to one vote. The Chief Executive Officer of each district or designate will be the voting member. A majority of those voting shall be required to approve any action.

The contents of the Intergovernmental Agreement and any policies officially approved by the Board constitute the bylaws by which the system will be governed.

### **2.02 Functions of the NECSS Board**

1. Approve an annual operating budget for NECSS
2. Establish policies and procedures for operation of the Intergovernmental Agreement
3. Approve or authorize all financial transactions of NECSS based on the approved budget
4. Recommend revisions in any part of NECSS' operation which requires approval by member districts
5. Approve the form, content, and sequence of programs and services offered within the framework on the Intergovernmental Agreement
6. Recommend employment of all NECSS staff to one of the member districts
7. Approve all NECSS plans, proposals, grant applications, and reports to be submitted on behalf of NECSS
8. Approve the establishment of any standing NECSS committee
9. Develop policy that ensures equitable access for enrollment of students from the member districts in NECSS programs

10. Perform any other functions designated elsewhere in the Intergovernmental Agreement

### **2.03 Board Sub-Committees**

#### **Coordinating Council**

The Coordinating Council shall be a standing committee of the Board. Membership shall consist of one non-voting member of the Board from each participating district, the NECSS chief executive officer, and an additional staff member, as appropriate.

The Coordinating Council will be responsible for the following:

1. Coordinate and direct activities of NECSS on behalf of the Board
2. Make recommendations concerning NECSS staff, policy, and procedure to the Board
3. Review all reports and recommendations of committees prior to presentation to the Board
4. Prepare agendas and special reports for Board meetings
5. Interact with federal, state, and local officials as requested on behalf of the NECSS staff and/or Board
6. Monitor the operational budget and expenditures of NECSS
7. Maintain a coordinated recording system for all required federal and state data collection
8. Accept other responsibilities as assigned by the Board.

### **3.0 ARTICLE 3 – ADMINISTRATION**

#### **3.01 Administrative District**

1. Any member district shall be eligible for designation as the administrative agent for the system.
2. The Administrative District shall serve as the legal and fiscal agent for the system pursuant to state and federal laws, rules, regulations, and guidelines.
3. The Administrative District shall be recommended by the Board and approved by the Board of Education of each participating district.

#### **3.02 Duties of Administrative District**

The Administrative District shall be responsible for:

1. Paying any and all NECSS expenditures sanctioned and approved by the NECSS Board.
2. Maintaining an accounting system to document all revenue, income, and expenditures of NECSS.
3. Filing all appropriate reports and claims required by the State.

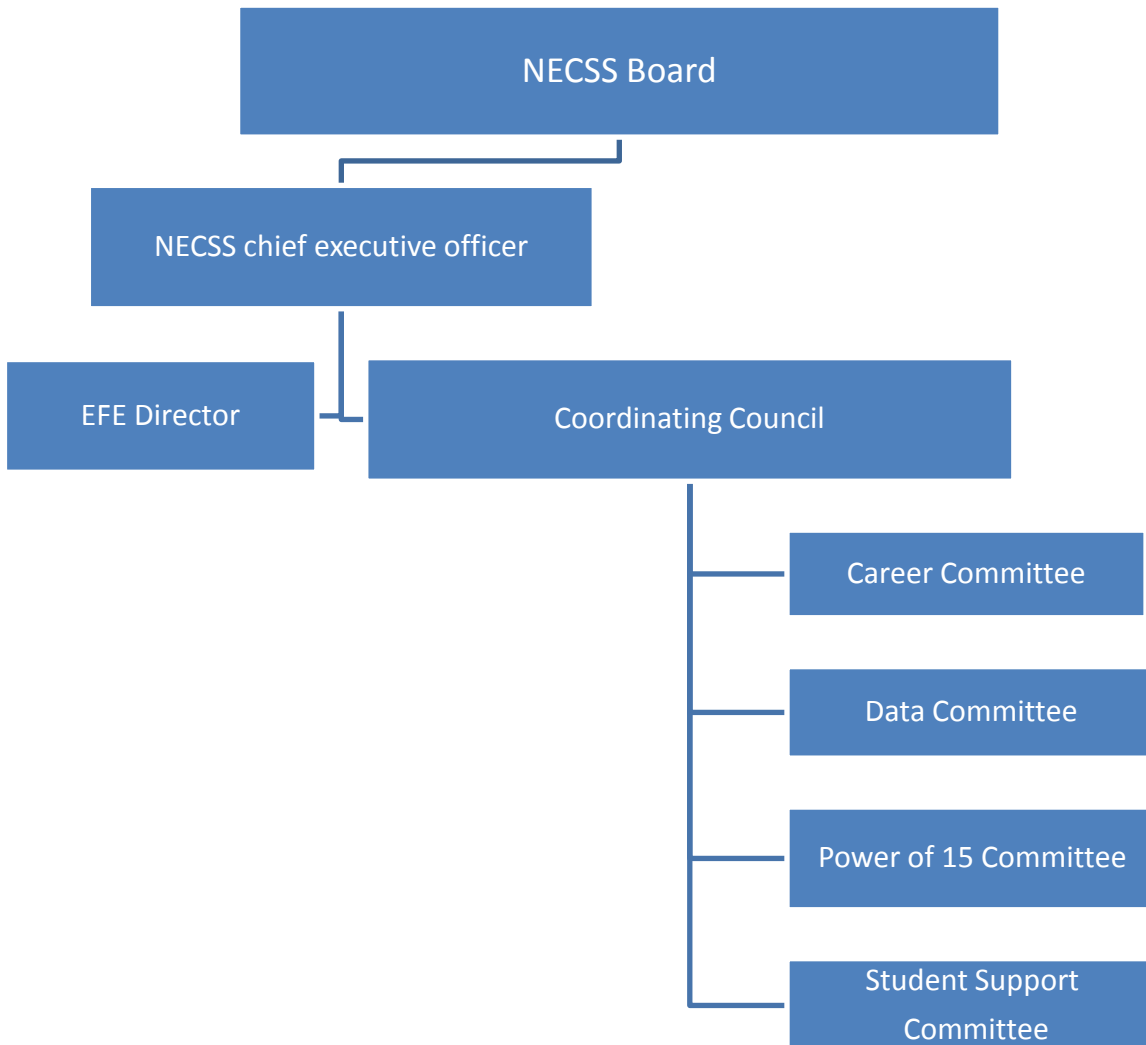
Responsibility of management of portions of NECSS programs and services may be delegated to any member district with consent of the Board and delegated district.

#### **3.03 Change of Administrative District**

Designation of the Administrative District shall be reviewed at least every three years. The Administrative District may be changed or altered on recommendation of the Board. The effective date of any change of designation of Administrative District shall be the beginning of the Intergovernmental Agreement's fiscal year. A vote to change the designation of the Administrative District must occur prior to March 31 in order to be effective for the upcoming fiscal year. A vote to change the Administrative District shall not be considered as an amendment to these bylaws and shall be subject only to the provisions of this section.

After a vote to change designation, the Board, with agreement of the Administrative District (existing and proposed), may agree to accelerate or postpone the effective date of the change.

### 3.04 Organizational Chart





### **3.05 Council Committees**

#### **Purpose**

Council Committees shall be established by the Board to focus on each area necessary for student success. These committees may include but not limited to:

- Career
- Data
- Power of 15
- Student Support

There will be two expert members from each participating district, the NECSS chief executive officer, and additional staff as appropriate.

The Council Committees of NECSS will implement its mission: NECSS partnership members will develop programs, share talent and data, and leverage joint resources to ensure that every elementary, high school, and college graduate will have the opportunity to be prepared for a global society, 21<sup>st</sup> century careers, and postsecondary readiness/success.

#### **Membership**

Members are selected by the Chief Executive Officers, or designated representatives from each member district, and will represent all constituencies necessary to satisfy federal and state system requirements. All members should:

- Show interest in improving the educational system
  - Represent the general opinion of the community, including business, industry, public services, and the professions
  - Have the necessary time to devote to teamwork
  - Not exploit the team for personal benefit.
1. Membership is for a suggested three-year term and may be renewed indefinitely based on mutual agreement of the member and NECSS.
  2. The Council Committee members elect the Chair for two-year terms.

## **Responsibilities**

The Council Committees are responsible for the following:

- Advise NECSS administration in planning, marketing, implementing, and evaluating a college and career readiness system building efforts;
- Help provide communication among all NECSS stakeholders;
- Aid in the continuous review of the content and organization of the general instructional program to see that it correlates with the occupational needs and core standards of the community, area, or state;
- Engage best practices in the following eight areas, and develop a plan to integrate them into a system of college and career readiness for all learners in the northwest suburban area.
  1. Curriculum Alignment and Integration
  2. Portable Credentials
  3. Career Development/Pathways
  4. Work-Based Learning
  5. Linkages to Postsecondary
  6. Postsecondary Readiness
  7. Student Re-Engagement
  8. Shared Data
- Appoint community and business representatives to assist with college and career readiness planning and development
- Assist in long-term planning toward system building.

### **3.06 Other Committees**

#### **1. Advisory Committees**

##### Membership

Membership may be drawn at the direction of the Coordinating Council and may include secondary and postsecondary delegates and other key representatives from business and industry as needed.

##### Responsibilities

The Advisory Committees are responsible for the following:

- Advise NECSS administration in planning, marketing, implementing, and evaluating college and career readiness programs;
- Assist in the development of community, business, and education partnerships to carry out the shared responsibility for preparing students for college, careers, and citizenship;
- Help provide communication between NECSS member school districts and the communities they serve;
- Assist in the development and recommendation of an adequate financial support program; and
- Provide direction and leadership in programs developed and implemented to meet college and career readiness needs.

#### **2. Specific Ad Hoc Committees**

As needed, the NECSS chief executive officer or Coordinating Council may recommend the establishment of ad hoc committees to examine college and career readiness development and issues of the region.

- An ad hoc committee will consist of representatives from each member district, business, and community representatives.
- At the completion of its task, the committee will be disbanded.
- If a specific ad hoc committee recommends a change of status from ad hoc to standing, that recommendation will require Board approval.

### **3.07 Personnel**

#### **Personnel Policies**

- NECSS employees are hired by the Board, become employees of NECSS, are paid from NECSS funds on recommendation from the Board, and perform centralized NECSS functions which benefit all member districts
- The fringe benefits for NECSS employees are determined by the Board
- Sick leave and vacation benefits, if earned in a member district, are carried forward when and if the Fiscal Agent changes
- Vacation days must be used within the fiscal year unless the Board approves an extension
- Retirement benefits will be determined by the Board
- The Board shall annually review the performance of the NECSS chief executive officer

## **NECSS Chief Executive Officer Job Description**

The NECSS chief executive officer shall be hired by the Board, become an employee of one of the member districts, report to the Board, and have the following specific responsibilities.

### a. General Administration

1. Preside over meetings of the Board and the Coordinating Council
2. Attend NECSS committee meetings
3. Attend initial dual credit meetings
4. Work with the Coordinating Council to plan for NECSS operation
5. Coordinate the development and management of the regional plan, reports, proposals, and claims required by federal, state, or local entities or the Board
6. Promote the alignment of academic programs across high school and college districts to improve college readiness and completion for all students with a focus on underperforming student groups
7. Develop annual goals for NECSS to be approved by the Board
8. Communicate with the appropriate federal, state, and local entities to ensure full utilization of appropriate support as well as compliance with applicable guidelines and regulations
9. Create a culture of innovation, accountability, and transparency
10. Supervise and evaluate all NECSS staff and consultants who are hired by NECSS or authorized by a member district to work under the NECSS chief executive officer
11. Maintain appropriate records for NECSS

### b. Fiscal

1. Identify funding sources and leverage resources for innovative projects
2. Prepare budgets and reports as required
3. Review NECSS records with auditor

c. Programs and Services

1. Coordinate shared course enrollments and procedures
2. Assist in the coordination, articulation, implementation, evaluation, and integration of career education and workforce development
3. Organize and work with program taskforces to develop and implement programs
4. Work with representatives of elementary schools, private schools, other colleges, and business and industry to articulate regional career development activities and related services
5. Coordinate marketing and information dissemination efforts for regional programs and general operational components of NECSS
6. Additional responsibilities as designated by the Board.

## **Education for Employment (EFE) System Director Job Description**

The System Director is responsible for organizing, coordinating and implementing services and activities established by member school districts and the community college in order to promote and maintain sequential, effective and high-tech career and technical education programs. The System Director will also be responsible for leading the region in the design and implementation of regional activities and administering career and technical education grants such as the Carl Perkins Grant and the Career and Technical Education Improvement (CTEI) Grant.

### **Responsibilities**

Job responsibilities include, but will not be limited to the following:

- Assist the NECSS chief executive officer in implementing NECSS strategic directions/plans/goals
- Provide the NECSS Council and Board with information and reports. Recommend action as necessary
- Maintain channel of communication with ISBE, the school districts, and Harper College through the appropriate departments and divisions regarding all pertinent rules, regulations and funding requirements
- Administer Career and Technical Education programs, grants, and special projects as assigned
- Plan, conduct, and coordinate Partnership career events as established by committees and the Board
- Provide guidance, technical assistance and resources needed for regional planning and curriculum development
- Provide guidance and technical assistance for Career Advisors and support selection of Career Advisors as well
- Work with schools to align any additional local CTE courses to state courses to maximize funding
- Review all CIP, course and credit assignments in the ISCS system for each school with our region
- Re-evaluate courses at the schools to ensure the correct courses and content are being taught per state guidelines
- Review ISBE reports aligning CTE teachers with CTE courses to meet grant requirements for funding
- Supervise daily operation of NECSS in the absence of the chief executive officer
- Promote participation by partners in CTE professional development and conferences and provide support as available
- Provide leadership to NECSS committees as assigned
- Other duties as assigned by the chief executive officer and in compliance with ISBE

## **Administrative Assistant/Bookkeeper Job Description**

Provide support for the NECSS chief executive officer and System Director in carrying out responsibilities and grant management in an Education for Employment (EFE) system. Work directly with NECSS chief executive officer to coordinate office activities and region-wide programs. Variety of duties that support the implementation of the Partnership's development of innovative educational and career programs and Board approved strategic initiatives.

### **Responsibilities**

Job responsibilities include, but will not be limited to the following:

- Oversee efficient daily operations of the Partnership in the absence of the chief executive officer and EFE.
- Work directly with chief executive officer and EFE in implementation and development of Partnership activities including grant management, monthly reports, and meeting preparations.
- Assist with compiling and entering budget data in state and federal systems.
- Complete yearly Budget Summary and Estimated Disbursement/Expenditures and submit to ISBE.
- Maintain revenue and expenditure records for EFE system
  - Evaluate monthly expense reports submitted by districts for accuracy and verification of required documentation for grant compliance
  - Complete Order-to-Pay forms and payment of all bills
  - Compile APECS reports and maintain database of monthly revenue/expenses for NECSS office, D211, D214, D220, and Elementary districts in both CTEI and Perkins grants
- Prepare all required documents and assist with fiscal audit of Partnership
- Serve as secretary for NECSS Board meetings
  - Prepare and distribute required documents to Board members
  - Record and prepare official minutes
  - Publish required Board meeting data in newspaper
  - Maintain permanent records for all Board meetings
- Attend and prepare notes for NECSS Committee meetings
  - Career Committee
  - Coordinating Council Committee
- Maintain meeting documents for: Data Committee, Power of 15 Committee, and Student Support Committee
- Assist EFE
  - Preparation of yearly budget
  - Maintain Career Advisors hours/attendance reports
  - Coordination of Elementary grant
- Update NECSS website
- Additional responsibilities as assigned by the chief executive officer and EFE



### **Partnership Staff, Temporary Staff, and Consultants**

NECSS staff, part-time staff, and consultants may be contracted by the NECSS chief executive officer with prior approval by the Board. A rate of payment is determined and approved by the Board.

### **3.08 Curriculum Decision-Making Process and Sequence**

- Coordinating Council reviews input from taskforces, makes recommendations on it, and submits it to the Board
- The Board reviews recommendations from the Coordinating Council and approves program decisions
- Appropriate members of each participating district make recommendations for district participation through established district curriculum approval processes.

### **3.09 Calendar and Schedule**

The Board will conduct an annual review of calendars and schedules of member districts. Any concerns or recommendations will be reported to the Chief Administrator of each member district for consideration.

### **3.10 NECSS Plan for Career and Technical Education and Services**

A NECSS plan for career and technical programs and services to be offered through the Partnership will be developed by the NECSS staff with input from key staff members in each member district. Deadlines for completion of such plans will be established by the Board with consideration for State Board deadlines. Such plans will be approved by the NECSS Board.

### **3.11 Shared Course Enrollment**

Enrollment of students in high school credit courses coordinated by NECSS shall be through the student's home school. Such enrollment data shall be compiled by NECSS and communicated to the offering district in time to facilitate staffing and other necessary planning by the offering district.

Students enrolled in courses which offer both high school and college credit must meet the requirements of both schools to receive credit.

### **3.12 Student Services**

Each participating district shall continue to be the primary provider of student services for students enrolled in their district. A major goal of NECSS is to enhance student services through development of partnerships to improve existing services and to provide additional services which can be jointly provided more effectively or efficiently.

### **3.13 Decision-Making Succession**

In the absence of the NECSS chief executive officer, decisions which need to be made by an administrator should be referred to the Board member of the Administrative District.

### **3.14 Partnership Attorney**

An attorney may be selected by the Board to serve as legal advisor to the Board and the chief executive officer. The attorney shall be employed on a retainer to be determined in advance or such other fee arrangement as the Board and attorney determine is appropriate. The attorney shall:

- Be available for telephone consultation as requested by the NECSS chief executive officer or Chief Executive Officer of the Administrative District
- Approve, prepare, or supervise the preparation of all legal papers and instruments executed by the officers of the Board and perform such other legal duties as the Board may request
- Render written opinion on any legal question when requested by the NECSS chief executive officer or NECSS Board
- Represent NECSS in all litigation in which NECSS may be a party, or in which it may have an interest when requested by the Board.

## **4.0 ARTICLE 4 – PROGRAMS**

### **4.01 Program Development**

New programs for development may be recommended by any member district or any NECSS committee.

A taskforce may be established by the NECSS chief executive officer or Coordinating Council to develop recommendations for the establishment and/or coordination of programs. Resulting recommendations will be submitted to NECSS Coordinating Council for review. Final recommendations will be presented to the Board for approval.

Regional career readiness programs will be articulated with work experience and college studies.

NECSS Career Readiness programs will focus on:

1. Career development and work-based learning for all students
2. Occupationally-specific education and work experiences for high school, college and adult learners based on labor market information
3. Integrated and articulated curriculum that combines school and workplace
4. Using work-based learning to re-engage at-risk students and other who have left education without the skills and knowledge needed for successful careers.

Each member district shall determine the eligibility of its own resident students for programs provided through NECSS.

Programs included in NECSS should include the following elements:

1. An outcome-oriented curriculum
2. Acceptance as a regional program by all member districts
3. A program sequence leading to occupational competence.

#### **4.02 Program Approval**

1. All NECSS programs and services will be determined by the Board upon recommendation of the Coordinating Council. The need for such programs will be verified by a review of employment needs and current programs available. Each district will determine its level of participation in each approved program or service.
2. Approved programs will be included in the regional plan and submitted to the State for approval.
3. Each district will develop a procedure for its approval of NECSS programs and services.
4. Courses approved to serve students from two or more member districts shall be referred to as shared courses. Courses approved to serve students from only one member district shall be referred to as local courses.
5. The right of any member district or combination of districts to provide any career course or program independently without approval by the NECSS Board shall not be prohibited.

#### **4.03 Program Management**

1. Instructional programs and services under NECSS will be delivered to students through regional programs, which will be operated by participating districts and/or other contracted agencies. The Board will delegate management responsibilities for various portions of the NECSS program to specific member districts. Responsibilities of the managing districts will include:
  - a. Staffing
  - b. Curriculum development
  - c. Program coordination
  - d. Instructional evaluation
  - e. Management of facility equipment and supplies
  - f. Insurance and maintenance of equipment housed in the member district.
2. NECSS taskforces and the Coordinating Council periodically will review the effectiveness of each program and make appropriate recommendations for improvement to the Board.

#### **4.04 Monitoring Student Progress**

The grading system used in each course which is part of a program coordinated by NECSS will be determined by the high school district administering the course. In cases where such policy is in conflict with that of a student's home district, the issue will be presented to Coordinating Council for resolution.

#### **4.05 Field Trips**

1. Field trip policy for all trips taken as part of a high school credit course which is offered by a participating high school will be the same as that set by the school through which the course is administered. In addition, this procedure will be followed by all students from other high schools participating in the course.
2. Each district having students participating in the trip must be notified of the trip date, time, and place at least three weeks prior to the trip.
3. Parent authorization notices must be obtained for all students who take the trip.
4. An authorized instructor or Career Advisor must accompany the students on the entire trip and ride with them in the transportation provided.
5. When possible, field trips should be confined to the time normally allotted for the class.
6. Field trip policy for the administration of field trips as part of high school credit courses taught at Harper College and coordinated by NECSS is as follows:
  - All trips must be approved by the respective school district prior to the beginning of the course.
  - Each district having students participating in the trip must be notified of the trip date, time, and place at least three weeks prior to the trip.
  - The instructor or Career Advisor must accompany the students on the entire trip and ride with them on the transportation provided.

#### **4.06 CTE Student Organizations**

NECSS encourages Career and Technical Education (CTE) student organizations composed of the students enrolled in the program.

## **5.0 ARTICLE 5 – COMMUNITY RELATIONS**

### **5.01 Rationale**

It is the intent of the Northwest Educational Council for Student Success and its staff to assist in communicating to the public the work and activities emphasizing career-oriented programs and services coordinated by the regional system. Target groups for such communications are: students, their parents, employers, and educators working with NECSS.

### **5.02 Community Involvement**

Effective educational improvement is accomplished when lay citizens and professional educators work together. Community input will be sought through surveys, involvement of representatives on taskforces, and personal contact.

### **5.03 Public Communications**

To achieve public communication goals, the Board authorizes the NECSS chief executive officer to:

1. Prepare or guide the preparation of informational materials, including newsletters, articles for periodicals, press releases, pamphlets and other material, and to maintain liaison with media and public relations organizations for improved dissemination of regional system information.
2. Organize or assist in development of speaking engagements with community, parent, professional, and other organizations.

All publications and news items distributed by NECSS shall be approved the chief executive officer before distribution or release to the press.

All NECSS materials to be distributed by a member district shall be approved by an authorized district representative. This authority can also be delegated by the chief executive officer to partner experts, as needed.

## **6.0 ARTICLE 6 - STUDENTS**

Policy governing the participation of students in NECSS programs and activities is predominately that of the school and district through which the student is enrolled. However, in instances where students attend classes or activities administered by another district, they will be expected to comply with the policies of the offering district.

In instances where there is conflict in policy, it will be reported to the NECSS chief executive officer and resolved by the Coordinating Council.

### **6.01 Attendance**

Student entry and withdrawal from all Harper College courses shall be the responsibility of the student's home district.

Student attendance in a Harper College program shall be regulated by their home school calendar except in instances where a special calendar has been developed to coordinate the attendance of students from more than one district. Any conflicts arising from attendance problems resulting from students from one school attending another school should be brought to the NECSS chief executive officer for resolution.

It shall be the responsibility of the student's home district to determine whether a student's absence shall be excused.

### **6.02 Grading and Reporting**

Deadlines and procedures for determining grades and submitting them to each student's home school shall be established by NECSS and made available annually by the chief executive officer.

Notification to parents of student progress and achievement is the responsibility of each student's home school.

### **6.03 Student Records**

Permanent student records shall be maintained and distributed by the student's home school in compliance with state and federal law.

Student information may be shared with teachers and/or staff of another district in which the student is attending a class or activity coordinated by NECSS.



#### **6.04 Enrollment**

Enrollment of students in high school credit courses coordinated by NECSS shall be through the student's home school. Such enrollment data shall be compiled by NECSS and communicated to the offering district in time to facilitate staffing and other necessary planning by the offering district.

Students enrolled in courses which offer both high school and college credit must meet the requirements of both schools to receive credit.

#### **6.05 Equal Educational Opportunities**

Equal educational opportunities shall be available for all students without limitations based upon sex, ethnic or racial background, religious beliefs, physical and mental handicaps, or economic and social conditions.

#### **6.06 Provisions for Private School Students**

To be eligible for participation in a NECSS program, a private or parochial school student must first document legal residence within one of the member districts. To be enrolled, eligible private or parochial school students must register for the program as a part-time student at the public school district within which they reside. The public school district then becomes responsible for tuition and other approved costs and the beneficiary or reimbursement resulting from the private school student's participation.

Under these arrangements, the private or parochial school assumes no responsibility for any portion of administrative or other NECSS costs.

#### **6.07 Accidents and Injuries**

Monitoring the instructional environment provided for each program shall be the responsibility of the district administering the program. Policies and procedures which will help to reduce accidents shall be developed and enforced by the district administering the program.

## **7.0 ARTICLE 7 – BUSINESS AFFAIRS**

### **7.01 Sites and Equipment**

#### **1. Program Sites and Equipment**

The Board will determine sites for regional programs considering quality, maximum accessibility, and efficiency as major factors in the selection process.

Recommendations concerning the location of NECSS courses, which are not to be offered in each member district, may be made to the Board by the NECSS chief executive officer, the Coordinating Council, or Chief School Administrator of a member district.

Member districts may elect to utilize applicable provisions of the School Code including, but not limited to, Section 10-22, 31a, 17-2.4, and 19-30 to acquire, establish, remodel and/or maintain sites, equipment, and buildings for NECSS programs.

#### **2. Office Site and Equipment**

The Board shall designate an official office for the regional system. Office furnishings and equipment may be loaned or donated by a member district or budgeted as part of the NECSS administrative budget.

### **7.02 Finance**

#### **1. Administrative District**

The Administrative District will assume responsibility for implementation of approved financial arrangements and procedures for receiving and disbursing all income credited to NECSS. The Administrative District is authorized to cover approved administrative costs prior to receipt of income by borrowing necessary amounts at prevailing interest rates.

#### **2. Administrative Costs**

Administrative costs will include the salary and benefits of the NECSS chief executive officer and the cost of any additional NECSS staff, supplies, printing, and other costs associated with the operation of the NECSS administrative functions which have been approved and budgeted by the Board.

All such costs will be paid by the Administrative District from NECSS funds and/or funds generated by a prorated assessment to all member districts. Revenues and expenditures will be managed as follows:

- A. Any funds received through special grants and designated for NECSS administrative costs shall be used by the Administrative District for such costs.
- B. Any remaining administrative costs shall be covered out of program reimbursement funds received by NECSS using the prorating factor outlined in D.
- C. If reimbursement funds are insufficient to meet administrative expenses or other expenses approved by the Board, member districts will be specially assessed to pay the deficiency using the method for prorating outlined in D.
- D. During June each year, member districts shall be billed for a prorated share of the administrative budget for the next fiscal year. Payment will be made during July to the Administrative District. The prorating factor for administrative costs shall be actual enrollment in the high school districts and full-time equivalents in the college as of the 6<sup>th</sup> day of attendance for first semester of the previous year. At this same time, a percentage of the NECSS chief executive officer's salary will be paid by the member districts to cover non-CTE related coordination.

### 3. **Consultants**

The NECSS chief executive officer may contract with consultants to provide services to NECSS and its member districts. All contracts will be in writing and completed prior to the delivering of services. Consultant fees and reimbursable expenses will be set at the time of contracting the by the NECSS chief executive officer. Reimbursable expenses may include:

- Lodging for those living outside the Chicago area
- Meals and incidentals for the day(s) of consultation not to exceed the per diem rate of the Administrative District
- Transportation – travel by air at coach advanced fare rate; round trip cost of cab or other public transportation; those who drive will be reimbursed at mileage rate established by the Administrative District
- Material costs, if approved at time of contract, and receipts provided.

Consultant fees and reimbursable expenses (with required receipts) will be paid after all services are provided.

#### 4. **Equipment and Facilities Financing**

Member districts may request state or federal reimbursement through NECSS for the purchase of capital outlay equipment used for NECSS shared programs or portions of NECSS shared programs they offer. Any non-reimbursed portion of the cost of equipment will be paid by the district sponsoring the shared program.

Other special arrangements may be made through special agreement of the NECSS Board for providing equipment and/or facilities for NECSS programs, services, and administration.

All such requests will be approved by the Board prior to submission to the state for NECSS reimbursement.

#### 5. **NECSS Tuition Costs**

All tuition cost shall be established for each course to be offered as part of an approved shared program. Such tuition shall be approved by the Board, upon recommendation of the Coordinating Council, and shall reflect actual program costs.

#### 6. **Methods of Payment**

Each member district shall pay NECSS such sums of money due as tuition costs for their district's students participating in joint courses.

Bill will be sent to member districts by NECSS according to the following schedule:

- By October for fall term enrollments
- By March for spring term enrollments
- By July for summer term enrollments

Tuition charges will be determined using enrollment figures as of the end of the second week of each term.

Payment shall be made by each district within forty-five (45) days of receipt of the bill.

## 7. Use and Distribution of Income

Revenue received by NECSS shall be distributed to member districts as follows:

- All reimbursement designated for equipment shall be distributed to the district through which such equipment was purchased.
- Revenue designated specifically for NECSS administrative costs shall be used by the Administrative District to cover such costs.
- The Board shall have the authority to designate the use of NECSS income, not previously designated for a particular use, as it deems appropriate.
- All revenue not used for NECSS administrative costs or for other NECSS costs approved by the Board shall be paid to member districts based upon the total units of credit or equivalent semester hours generated by their students.

## 8. Charges to Non-Members

Charges to non-member school districts, individuals, and other governmental bodies for educational and training services provided by NECSS shall be established by the Board. In no case shall such charges be less than those made by member districts.

## 9. Accounting Procedures

- Member districts shall record all payments to NECSS pursuant to state and federal laws, rules, regulations, and guidelines.
- The Administrative District shall record all monies received from participating districts pursuant to state and federal laws, rules, regulations, and guidelines.
- All member boards shall fully assume their respective financial obligations, without the imposition of financial responsibility on any other district. Each member district shall promptly commit the district to the timely payment of its cost with respect to any other legal financial obligation.
- Contribution from private businesses, governmental, and foundation sources for the benefit of NECSS shall be made to the Administrative District with the use of the contribution subject to guidelines established by the Board.

- Accounting procedures shall conform to all applicable rules and regulations of the Illinois State Board of Education and the U.S. Department of Education.
- The Administrative District shall maintain accounts of NECSS' operational expenses and shall make these available to participating districts.
- A minimum of one audit per year shall be conducted in accordance with Section 3-15.1 of the School Code of Illinois, as amended.

#### 10. **Interest on NECSS Fund Investment**

The NECSS Board will determine the use of interest earned on NECSS fund investment.

#### 7.03 **Tuition and Fees**

Tuition for students to attend a regional system course:

- Should be adequate to cover the extra costs incurred by the offering district as a result of accepting enrollments from other districts;
- Should not differ from district to district;
- Should be based on a rate recommended annually by the Coordinating Council and approved by the Board.

Any fees in addition to the established tuition will be determined by the offering district and publicized to all participating districts and students prior to the first day of class. The student's home district shall be responsible for collecting any outstanding student fees.

#### 7.04 **Reimbursement Claims**

- Reimbursement claims are submitted by NECSS for its member districts.
- Average daily attendance reimbursement will be collected by the district through which the student enrolls.
- Reimbursement for transportation will be collected by the member district providing the transportation.

## **7.05 Approval of NECSS Expenses**

The NECSS chief executive officer will provide the Board with an expenditure report for approval.

Where the Board cannot otherwise first approve payment, the Administrative District is authorized to pay, prior to regular Board meetings, the following types of bills approved for payment by the chief executive officer:

- Bills that carry an early payment discount.
- Bills for items, projects, and contracts specifically approved by the Board.
- Payrolls, pensions, withholding deductions, consultant fees and expenses, staff stipends, and designated state and federal flow-through reimbursements to member districts.
- Bills for goods and services for which a vendor requires prepayment.

All purchase order and requests for disbursement shall be signed by the NECSS chief executive officer and processed within the guidelines of the Administrative District.

## **7.06 Use of Credit and Procurement Cards**

The NECSS chief executive officer and employees designated by the chief executive officer are authorized to use NECSS credit and procurement cards to simplify the acquisition, receipt, and payment of purchases and travel expenses incurred on NECSS' behalf. Credit and procurements cards shall only be used for those expenses that are for NECSS' benefit and serve a valid and proper public purpose. They shall not be used for personal purchases. Cardholders are responsible for exercising due diligence and judgment and for acting in NECSS' best interests.

The NECSS chief executive officer or designee shall manage the use of NECSS' credit and procurement cards by employees. It is the Board's responsibility, through the audit and approval process, to determine whether NECSS credit and procurement card use by NECSS is appropriate.

In addition to the other limitations contained in this and other Board policies, NECSS credit and procurement cards are governed by the following restrictions:

- 1) Credit and/or procurement cards may only be used to pay certain job-related expenses or to make purchases on behalf of NECSS or for

purposes that would otherwise be addressed through a conventional revolving fund.

- 2) The NECSS chief executive officer or designee shall instruct the issuing bank to block the card's use for unapproved merchants.
- 3) The NECSS chief executive officer shall limit the amount each cardholder may charge in a single purchase or within a given month and inform the issuing bank of these limitations.
- 4) The NECSS chief executive officer or designee must approve the use of a NECSS credit or procurement card whenever such use is by telephone, fax, and the Internet. Permission shall be withheld when the use violates any NECSS policy, is from a vendor whose reputation has not been verified, or would more expensive than if another available payment method were used.
- 5) The consequences for unauthorized purchases include, but are not limited to, reimbursing NECSS for the purchase amount, loss of cardholding privileges, and, if made by an employee, discipline up to and including discharge.
- 6) All cardholders must sign a statement affirming that they are familiar with this policy.
- 7) The NECSS chief executive officer shall implement a process whereby all purchases using a NECSS credit or procurement card are reviewed and approved by someone other than the cardholder or someone under the cardholder's supervision.
- 8) Cardholders must submit the original, itemized receipt to document all purchases.
- 9) No individual may use a NECSS credit or procurement card to make purchases in a manner contrary to State law, including, but not limited to, the bidding and other purchasing requirements in 105 ILCS 5/10-20.21, or any NECSS policy.
- 10) The NECSS chief executive officer or designee shall account for any financial or material reward or rebate offered by the company or institution issuing the NECSS credit or procurement card and shall ensure that it is used for NECSS's benefit.



## **7.07 Transportation**

### **1. Transportation of Students**

Transportation of students shall be the responsibility of each member school district and will not be the responsibility of NECSS.

Member districts may enter into separate agreements to facilitate the economical and efficient transportation of students. The administration of any such transportation agreements would be separate from the administrative component of NECSS.

### **2. Regional Travel Policy**

NECSS will reimburse member districts for travel and related expenses (tolls, parking, lodging, and meals) which are approved by the district's Coordinating Council member and meet one of the program or staff development goals of NECSS.

NECSS staff and consultants will be reimbursed for travel expenses according to the following guidelines:

- 1) Travel shall be by the most economical mode of transportation available considering travel time, costs, and work requirements and shall be at the least costly, reasonable available alternative. The mileage rates of the Administrative District shall be used for vehicle travel. Related expenses (tolls, taxis, parking, etc.) will be at actual cost, and submission for reimbursement must meet the guidelines of the Administrative District.
- 2) Lodging rates will be reimbursed at what is actual and normal for the location at the time of obtaining reservations. Receipts are required for reimbursement.
- 3) Meal costs will be reimbursable within the guidelines of the Administrative District.

## **7.08 Payroll Procedures**

Payroll shall be prepared in a timely manner as directed by the NECSS chief executive officer and the Administrative District for payment in accordance with their payroll schedule. Initial employment forms and changes of payroll status shall be generated by the NECSS chief executive officer and submitted within the guidelines of the Administrative District.

The salary and benefits of the NECSS chief executive officer shall be set annually by the Board. The college and/or district which pays the chief executive officer's salary and benefits shall then be reimbursed by NECSS.

Payments to staff members of member districts for authorized NECSS activities shall be made by the member district to which they are assigned. The member district shall then be reimbursed by NECSS.

#### **7.09 Records Maintenance**

The Administrative District shall be responsible for maintaining the accounts and supporting documents of NECSS in auditable form. The district shall prepare, or cause to be prepared, all fiscal reports and keep necessary records to control adequately the financial transaction of the system and prepare financial statements.

The NECSS chief executive officer shall file all fiscal reports with county, state, or federal agencies, as required.

The NECSS chief executive officer is charged with the responsibility of keeping an accurate record of all receipts and expenditures of the system funds as required by the Board. The NECSS chief executive officer shall make such reports to and for the Board as it may require.

#### **7.10 Budget**

The Board shall cause to be prepared and shall adopt an annual budget in accordance with Section 17.1 of the School Code of the State of Illinois.

A tentative budget shall be prepared by the NECSS chief executive officer and presented at a regular meeting of the Board. The final copy of the budget shall be adopted by the Board no later than September 1 of each year.

#### **7.11 Payment of Bills**

NECSS bills shall be paid in accordance with established policies and procedures of the Administrative District.

#### **7.12 Inventory**

The NECSS Education for Employment (EFE) Director shall maintain a current inventory of all regional equipment. Inventory and records on instructional

equipment purchased by member districts with state funds obtained through NECSS is the responsibility of the purchasing district. Such records shall be available to the NECSS's EFE on request.

**7.13 Audit**

All system financial records shall be audited annually, as soon after June 30 as practical, by a Certified Public Accountant licensed to practice in the State of Illinois and selected by the Board. The audit will comply with all applicable state and federal requirements.

The NECSS chief executive officer shall report the findings of the audit to the Board at its regularly scheduled meeting.

**7.14 Food Related Expenses**

The NECSS chief executive officer will ensure that approval for food-related expenses is in keeping with the ISBE Employee Travel Guidelines to assist in accomplishing the mission and activities of NECSS. This policy supersedes any fiscal agency policies. Alcoholic beverage expenses are not permitted. Food related costs for students as part of their regular in-class functions are not permitted.

## **8.0 ARTICLE 8 - GIFTS, GRANTS, AND BEQUESTS**

The NECSS chief executive officer may accept, on behalf of NECSS, any bequest, gift of money, or property consistent with the standards for a gift which is deemed to be suitable, and to utilize such money or property so designated.

To be acceptable, a gift must:

- 1) Have a purpose consistent with those of NECSS
- 2) Not begin a program which the Board would be unwilling to take over when gift or grant funds are exhausted
- 3) Not bring undesirable or hidden costs to NECSS
- 4) Place no restrictions on the program
- 5) Not be inappropriate for, or harmful to students
- 6) Not endorse any business or product
- 7) Not be in conflict with any provision of the School Code or public law.

Any proposed gifts not meeting these criteria must be approved by the Board prior to acceptance.

All gifts, grants, and bequests shall become property of NECSS.

## **9.0 ARTICLE 9 – ADOPTION, AMENDMENT, OR SUSPENSION OF POLICIES**

Policies approved by the Board will remain in effect until amended or suspended by the Board.

In the event of an emergency not covered by established policy, the NECSS chief executive officer may act in accordance with best judgment. Policy decisions having major significance for NECSS will be subsequently presented to the Board for review.

The operation of any section(s) of Board policy not established by law or contract may be temporarily suspended by a majority vote of member districts at a regular or special meeting.

Policy decisions, whether changes in present policy or additions to established policy, will be presented and discussed at a Board meeting. Each member shall be furnished with a copy of same, which shall be voted on at the next regular meeting.