

STATE OF MISSISSIPPI

Office of the Governor



EXECUTIVE ORDER NO. 1028

Relating to the Designation of the Governor's State Early Childhood Advisory Council

WHEREAS, compelling research supports the lifelong importance of early childhood development; and

WHEREAS, sound economic evidence indicates that smart investments in early childhood education yield long term gains by improving the quality of the future workforce and creating significant cost savings for society; and

WHEREAS, the early development and education of young children is of critical importance to Mississippi's families and communities; and

WHEREAS, the State of Mississippi recognizes the importance of early childhood education and development programs and services for children from birth to school entry; and

WHEREAS, Mississippi has a need for coordination and collaboration among Federal, State, and local child care and early childhood education programs and initiatives to maximize resources; and

WHEREAS, Mississippi's families and children need a coordinated system of quality care and education with comprehensive supports to enable school success and lifelong learning; and

WHEREAS, the Federal Government, in the reauthorization of Head Start in Public Law 110-134 (Improving Head Start for School Readiness Act of 2007), has required states to have Advisory Councils dedicated to early education and care issues;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Haley Barbour, Governor of the State of Mississippi, by the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of this State do hereby:

- (A) Designate the existing State Early Childhood Advisory Council of Mississippi (herein referred to as the "Council") as the State Advisory Council on Early Childhood Education and Care for children from birth to school entry;
- (B) Locate the Council in the Office of the Governor to ensure access to the Governor and other key policy makers;
- (C) Designate leadership to coordinate the activities of the Council as described in PL110-134;
- (D) Appoint members to the Council in accordance with Public Law 110-134. Members of the Council shall include, to the extent possible—
 - (i) a representative of the Mississippi Department of Human Services;
 - (ii) a representative of the Mississippi Department of Education;
 - (iii) a representative of local educational agencies;
 - (iv) a representative of Mississippi Institutions of Higher Education;
 - (v) a representative of local providers of early childhood education and care services;

- (vi) a representative from Head Start agencies located in the State, including Indian Head Start programs and migrant and seasonal Head Start programs as available;
- (vii) the State Director of Head Start Collaboration;
- (viii) the Part C Coordinator and/or the Section 619 Coordinator of programs under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (20 U.S.C. 1419, 1431 et seq.);
- (ix) a representative of the Mississippi Department of Health;
- (x) a representative of the Mississippi Department of Mental Health; and
- (xi) representatives of other entities deemed relevant by the Governor;

(E) Direct the Council to build on the existing early care and education system and to develop a strong infrastructure supporting collaboration, coordination, and equitable access to quality services and supports;

(F) Direct the Council to carry out the duties and functions specified in Public Law 110-134, including:

- (i) periodically conducting a statewide needs assessment concerning the quality and availability of early childhood education and development programs and services for children from birth to school entry, including assessing the availability of high-quality pre-kindergarten services for low-income children in Mississippi;
- (ii) identifying opportunities for, and barriers to, collaboration and coordination among Federally-funded and State-funded child development, child care, and early childhood education programs and services, including collaboration and coordination among State agencies responsible for administering such programs;
- (iii) developing recommendations for increasing the overall participation of children in existing Federal, State, and local child care and early childhood education programs, including outreach to underrepresented and special populations;
- (iv) developing recommendations regarding the establishment of a unified data collection system for early childhood education and development programs and services throughout Mississippi;
- (v) developing recommendations regarding statewide professional development and career advancement plans for early childhood educators in Mississippi;
- (vi) assess the capacity and effectiveness of 2- and 4-year public and private institutions of higher education in Mississippi toward supporting the development of early childhood educators, including the extent to which such institutions have in place articulation agreements, professional development and career advancement plans, and practice or internships for students to spend time in a Head Start or prekindergarten program; and
- (vii) make recommendations for improvements in the State Early Learning Guidelines and undertake efforts to develop high quality comprehensive early learning standards, as appropriate.

(G) Direct the Council to hold public hearings and/or provide opportunities for public comment on the activities described above in accordance with Public Law 110-134; and

(H) Direct the Council to submit a statewide strategic report addressing Council activities to the State Director of Head Start Collaboration and the Governor, in accordance with Public Law 110-134; and

(I) Direct the Council to meet periodically to review the implementation of recommendations contained in the statewide strategic report and to address any changes in State and local needs, in accordance with Public Law 110-134.

I authorize and direct you, upon receipt of this Order, to take notice and be governed accordingly.



IN TESTIMONY WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Great Seal of the State of Mississippi to be affixed.

DONE at the Capitol in the City of Jackson, this, the 15th day of October in the year of our Lord two thousand nine, and of the Independence of the United States of America, the two hundred and thirty-fourth.

HALEY BARBOUR
GOVERNOR

BY THE GOVERNOR:

SECRETARY OF STATE