**The Florida Kindergarten Council, Inc.**

**Bylaws - Revised 2016**

**ARTICLE I — Name of the Organization**

**Section 1.**

The name of the organization shall be: The Florida Kindergarten Council, Inc.

**ARTICLE II — Purposes**

**Section 1.**

The purpose of Florida Kindergarten Council is to:

* Establish and maintain exemplary educational and ethical standards for the membership
* Accredit schools with early childhood programs which meet the published standards of the Florida Kindergarten Council
* Provide support services to member schools to include: professional development, shared resources, collaboration and accreditation guidelines
* Make membership information available to Florida independent schools with early childhood programs
* Disseminate and promote legislation, through the relationship with Florida Association of Academic Nonpublic Schools (FAANS), for the protection of school patrons and for the elevation of standards for Florida Kindergarten Council schools.

**ARTICLE III — Membership**

**Section 1.**

Any independent pre-primary school or division of a school in Florida which does not discriminate in admission or employment on the basis of race, religion, national or ethnic origin and which follows fair employment practices and meets the requirements of the Bylaws and general standards for accreditation of this association shall be eligible for membership.

**Section 2.0.**

Member schools must meet the following criteria:

a.) An independent pre-primary school or division of a school shall be defined as an academic school which may begin with programs for children 18 months old and must extend through five-year-old kindergarten.

b.) The school has a minimum of 25 children enrolled in the school.

c.) The school is not primarily supported by public funds.

d.) All programs of eligible schools must offer a consistent level of quality care and education.

**Section 2.1**

Schools with programs for children under 18 months of age and/or over grade 3 must state in all published material that Florida Kindergarten Council accreditation covers only those programs which include 18 months through grade 3.

**Section 2.2**

The school may not operate as a daycare center nor may it have the words "child care" or "daycare" either stated or implied in its official name.

**Section 3.**

Initial accreditation may be granted for schools: Operating for at least three years under the same ownership and director; and following the application and accreditation procedures outlined in the standards and bylaws of the Florida Kindergarten Council.

**Section 4.**

Schools presenting themselves for accreditation must pay all food, travel and lodging expenses for the visiting team.

**Section 5**.

All accredited members and provisional affiliates shall file an annual report. This report is due within thirty (30) days from the date a form is issued. Failure to submit the annual report shall result in withdrawal of accreditation.

**Section 6.**

Change of Ownership, Head, Program or Location:

Upon any of these changes, a school having accredited membership shall be re-evaluated within a period of six months to one year. It is the responsibility of the school to notify the Florida Kindergarten Council State Office in writing of any of the above changes.

**Section 7.**

An accredited member school must present itself for reaccreditation every five years. However, the Florida Kindergarten Council reserves the right to return and review at any time.

**Section 8.**

It is expected that schools accepting membership will send representatives to the Florida Kindergarten Council’s annual meeting, the annual conference and council-sponsored workshops.

**Section 9.**

Schools accredited by the Florida Kindergarten Council that also have programs extending beyond grade two must also be accredited by the Florida Council of Independent Schools (FCIS).

**ARTICLE IV — New School Candidacy**

**Section 1.**

Following an initial visitation, New School Candidacy is available to any independent school in the state that has been in existence less than three years. This does not convey the right to vote in meetings nor to publicize the school as being accredited by or affiliated with the Florida Kindergarten Council. A New School Candidate may be evaluated for membership after its third year of operation and must be evaluated for accredited membership by the end of its fourth year of operation; a school having New School Candidacy may continue that status into the fourth year while waiting for evaluation for accredited membership. During this period no publications from the school may include the name of the Florida Kindergarten Council.

**Section 2.**

To maintain New School Candidacy, a school must submit an annual report in the prescribed form and pay annual dues upon notice.

**ARTICLE V— Application for Membership**

**Section 1.**

Schools considering membership in and accreditation by the Florida Kindergarten Council should request information from the Florida Kindergarten Council State Office. After studying the membership requirements, schools who believe they meet the Florida Kindergarten Council standards should then request an application form, complete it, and return it to the Florida Kindergarten Council State Office with the appropriate application fee attached. A representative of the school must attend an orientation session for self-study preparation and the school must subsequently follow all evaluation procedures.

**Section 2.**

The executive board may admit to accredited membership or provisional affiliate status any school which meets the qualifications defined and designated in the bylaws and general standards of the Florida Kindergarten Council

**Section 3.**

The school may appeal to the executive board in writing within **thirty (30) days** for a review an action regarding membership application, or may initiate a second application for membership after one (1) year from the date of denial.

**ARTICLE VI**- **New School Candidates and Loss or Suspension of Membership,**

**Section 1.**

A school with accredited membership or provisional affiliate status may lose its standing if:

a. its annual dues shall remain unpaid for a period of ninety calendar days following the date of billing;

b. the school fails to file its annual report form provided by the council on the scheduled date or within thirty days of such scheduled date;

c. by the date referred to in "b." (above) or upon an evaluation by the evaluating Committee, it is shown that the school is not maintaining the minimum standards set by the Florida Kindergarten Council;

d. If the school at anytime fails to meet the eligibility requirements in Article III, Section 2.0. This requirement must be maintained throughout the period of the school’s accreditation.

**Section 2.**

An accredited school which does not meet Florida Kindergarten Council bylaws and standards upon visitation will be subject to one of the following actions:

a. may be accredited with the status "accredited warned", not to exceed three (3) years.

b. may be placed on probation to be re-evaluated within one calendar year, and, if still deficient, be dropped from membership;

c. may be dropped from membership. A written appeal may be submitted to the executive board for a review of this action within four (4) weeks. Notice of disaccreditation will be made at the end of this appeal period.

**ARTICLE VII — Governance**

**Section 1. Board of Directors**

**(a) Board of Directors and Terms:** (i) The Board of Directors shall consist of the present officers, the immediate past president and ten (10) members with the option to expand the Board to include up to twenty (20) Directors. (ii) The Directors shall be elected by a majority vote of member schools in attendance at annual meetings and shall serve for a period of three (3) years. Except for officers, Directors may serve for a maximum of two successive terms. Except in the case of a Director who has been elected an officer, one year must elapse before a Director, completing two successive terms, is eligible for election to another term on the Board.

**(b) Duties of the Board:** The Board of Directors shall manage the business and affairs of the Council and shall serve as the legislative body of the Council. Any decisions of the Board of Directors may become a matter for reconsideration by the full membership at the annual meeting or at any special meeting.

(i) The Board of Directors may develop rules of procedure, in addition to these Bylaws, which shall serve to guide the organization in the pursuance of its proper duties. Such rules and guidelines, if adopted, may include, but not be limited to: (i) a summary of the duties and responsibilities of all persons or groups working within the organizational structure of the Council, (ii) guidelines for orientation and evaluation of such persons; (iii) procedures for receiving and determining whether to address external complaints about member schools; and (iv) expectations regarding the working relationships which shall exist between individual persons and groups associated with the Council.

(ii) The Board of Directors shall prepare, or cause to be prepared for its understanding and approval, statements of policy, or policy declarations, which shall serve to provide the framework for its decision-making responsibility on all matters affecting the operations of the Council.

(iii) The Board of Directors shall have the power to create and terminate such committees/task forces as it may, from time to time, deem advisable for the efficient operation of the Council. If and when such committees/task forces are created, the Board of Directors shall define the scope of their work and activities. The Board of Directors shall also approve the creation and termination of such departments as may be required to achieve the objectives/program of work of the Council.

**ARTICLE VIII — Meetings and Voting**

**Section 1.**

A regular membership meeting shall be held annually.

**Section 2.**

Only members in good standing shall be considered in the quorum count.

**Section 3.**

Each member school shall designate its official representative.

**Section 4.**

Each member school shall have one vote which shall be cast by its official representative or by written authorization.

**Section 5.**

Only members in good standing shall be eligible to hold office or to vote.

**Section 6.**

All members will be available to serve on committees and will be expected to attend meetings regularly.

**ARTICLE IX — The Fiscal Year Dues**

**Section 1.**

The fiscal year shall be from January 1 to December 31.

**Section 2.**

The annual dues for members shall be determined by a majority vote of the accredited members.

**Section 3.**

Payment of annual dues shall be requisite to voting in the annual meeting

**Section 4.**

Payment is required within ninety days of billing.

**Section 5.**

Schools initially accredited and approved for membership at the board meeting prior to the annual board meetings shall be billed for the full amount of annual dues. Schools initially accredited at any other board meetings shall be billed for one-half stated annual dues.

**ARTICLE X — Duties of Officers**

**Section 1.**

The president shall act as presiding officer at all business meetings, shall maintain order, shall enforce all rules, shall have authority to appoint standing committees, and shall notify members of the time and place of meetings.

**Section 2.**

The vice-president shall act in the absence of the president and serve as the evaluation chairman and in turn appoint chairpersons for the visitation teams.

**Section 3.**

The secretary shall take attendance and keep the minutes of the meetings. He/she shall send to the president a copy of the minutes of each general meeting and each executive board meeting within fourteen (14) days after each meeting for distribution to the Board of Directors.

**Section 4.**

The treasurer shall be custodian of funds and shall keep the necessary financial records. He/she shall keep the funds in a national bank. The books shall be subject to annual audit/review by the executive board.

**ARTICLE XI — Special Meetings**

**Section 1.**

Special meetings may be called by the president or the Board of Directors. All members shall have at least seventy-two (72) hours notice of such meetings.

**ARTICLE XII — Amendments**

**Section 1.**

These bylaws may be amended at any regular membership meeting by a two-thirds vote of the members present, provided that the proposed amendment shall have been submitted in writing to the membership at least thirty (30) days prior to the meeting at which the vote is taken.