



Barnstable Special Education Parent Advisory Council BY-LAWS

The authority of a district-wide Special Education Parent Advisory Council (SEPAC) is derived pursuant to Mass. General Laws Chapter 71B, Section 3 and 603 CMR 28.07(4)

Article I: NAME OF ORGANIZATION

The name of this self-governed organization shall be the Barnstable Special Education Parent Advisory Council, also known as Barnstable SEPAC.

Article II: PURPOSE

The SEPAC's duties include, but are not limited to:

- Advise the school committee on matters that pertain to the education and safety of students with disabilities.
- Meet regularly with school officials to participate in the planning, development, and evaluation of the school committee's special education programs.

The purpose of the SEPAC is also to provide information and support to parents/guardians of children with disabilities, and to embrace and promote the Vision and Core Values of the Barnstable Public School District:

Vision:

"Provide a common, standards-based educational program that will enable EVERY student to achieve rigorous performance standards in order to graduate college and career ready."

Core Values:

1. All children have the right to every opportunity to achieve their full potential.
2. Each person deserves to be treated with dignity and respect.
3. Integrity and personal responsibility are the hallmarks of our daily interactions.

To that end, we will:

- Provide and promote a network for all parents/guardians of students with special educational needs and a forum for sharing ideas and information. These special educational needs are to include all students on IEPs, 504s, or as-yet unidentified students.
- Seek and share information about programs and resources that may be available within the community.
- Promote communication between parents/guardians and local, state, and national organizations that can provide support for children with disabilities and their parents.
- Provide and promote educational opportunities for parents/guardians to learn about additional ways to support their child and to advocate and communicate more effectively with school personnel.
- Collect data from parents/guardians regarding their students' educational and social experiences within the school system.
- Work collaboratively with the school district to improve educational outcomes for students with disabilities.

- Communicate regularly with the Director of Special Education and/or the Superintendent/School Committee to discuss concerns of parents/guardians and activities of SEPAC.

Article III: TERMS OF MEMBERSHIP:

General membership shall be open to the public. Voting membership shall be limited to parents/guardians of children with disabilities who reside in the town of Barnstable or who attend Barnstable Public Schools and who have attended at least one general SEPAC meeting annually (academic year). Students with disabilities is defined as those students who receive any special education services (may/may not be on IEP or 504).

- Voting members' names and contact information will be maintained and retained by the SEPAC and will be kept confidential.
- Voting membership is required to vote in elections and other business that comes before any SEPAC meeting.

Article IV: OFFICERS

The volunteer slate of officers for the Barnstable SEPAC will include: President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer, and four members at-large. The combined group of officers shall be known as the “Executive Board.”

- All officers may delegate duties
- Should a vacancy occur during the school year or a volunteer comes forward for a vacant position, officers may be appointed by the Executive Board to serve until the next annual election.
- Executive Board will consist of all officers either duly elected or appointed for a one-year term.

OFFICER RESPONSIBILITIES, TO BEGIN UPON ELECTION, ARE:

PRESIDENT

- Set the agenda for each general meeting.
- Preside at all meetings of the SEPAC.
- Recommend the organization and monitoring of committees.
- Act as liaison(s) with the Director of Special Education, the Superintendent and other school officials.
- Help to co-ordinate related school and public communications.
- Prepare periodic reports for the school district/Mass. DESE, etc., regarding SEPAC activities, as needed.
- Provide election results to the school district, MassPAC, the DESE, Cape Cod SEPACs and other local interested parties, including the media.

VICE PRESIDENT

- Preside at meetings in the absence of the President, or at the request of the President.
- Assist the President as appropriate and perform those responsibilities of the President at his/her request.
- Coordinate public communications.

SECRETARY

- Coordinate the recording and filing of minutes of SEPAC and its committees.
- Collect and review correspondence of the SEPAC.
- Prepare periodic reports.
- Assist in developing SEPAC presence on the web.

TREASURER

- Manage and account for/prepare reports for funds collected, donated and spent for/by SEPAC.
- Coordinate efforts to apply for grants, donations, reimbursements or any other funds for which SEPAC may be eligible.
- Coordinate fundraising activities, if any.

MEMBERS AT-LARGE (4)

- Assist with the promotion of communication with parents as regarding SEPAC matters.
- Assist with the coordination of all efforts pertaining to SEPAC.

QUORUM

A quorum of no less than 1 voting member in addition to the Executive Board members must be present to constitute a meeting.

Article V: ELECTIONS/VOTES

- Nominations shall be made annually, preferably at the March meeting. Nominations may be made by any voting member of the organization, including the Executive Board.
- Elections shall be held annually, preferably at the April meeting, and will be decided by a simple majority vote of Voting Membership in attendance, subject to the presence of a quorum. (No absentee votes.)
- Matters which require a vote to be taken of the Voting Membership include, but are not limited to, the following items (requiring 30-day notification):
 - A change in the By-laws
 - Elections

Article VI: MEETINGS

Meetings are defined as any SEPAC communication with respect to any matter within the SEPAC's jurisdiction.

- General Meetings shall be determined annually by the Executive Board and are scheduled monthly, from September through June.
- Meetings are held at one of the Barnstable Public School buildings as published on the meeting schedule.
- Notice of all general meeting dates and elections shall be offered for publication in the local press in advance, at Town Hall or Town website, on the Barnstable Public School website, Channel 22 and/or on flyers distributed through the schools at least 48 hours in advance and in compliance with the MA Open Meeting Law regulations.
- Additional general meetings may be held as necessary at other locations and published on the Barnstable SEPAC website.
- Executive Board meetings may be scheduled June through August to meet the needs of the SEPAC.

Article VII: COMMITTEES

Committees shall be created as needed by the President.

Article VIII: AMENDMENTS TO BY-LAWS

These by-laws may be amended by a simple majority of the Voting Membership at a General Meeting, but may not be voted upon in the same meeting as they are proposed.

Respectfully submitted by:

By-Laws Committee:

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