



Montgomery County Public Schools Special Education Advisory Committee By-laws

Article I – Name

The name of this body shall be the Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC) for Montgomery County Public Schools (herein referred to as “the Committee”).

Article II – Purpose

Major responsibilities of the Committee some of which are addressed in the Regulations Governing Special Education Programs for Children with Disabilities in Virginia (January 25, 2010) are:

- a. Advise the local school division of needs in the education of children with disabilities;
- b. Participate in the development of priorities and strategies for meeting the identified needs of children with disabilities;
- c. Submit periodic reports and recommendations regarding the education of children with disabilities to the division superintendent for transmission to the local school board;
- d. Assist the local school division in interpreting plans to the community for meeting the special needs of children with disabilities for educational services;
- e. Review the policies and procedures for the provision of special education and related services prior to submission to the local school board;
- f. Participate in the review of the local school division’s annual plan, prior to submission to the Virginia Department of Education; and
- g. Provide a platform where concerned individuals can address general or systemic issues as opposed to specific concerns or resolutions about a particular child.

Article III – Membership

1. Number

Membership of the Committee shall be limited to 5-15 members recommended by the Committee to the Superintendent for appointment by the School Board.

2. Appointment of Members

Membership recommendations may be made by members of the Committee in consultation with the Director of Special Education and Special Education Leadership Team. Requests for membership by county residents or nominations for membership by county residents should be in the form of a letter with the application attached.

In making its recommendations, the Committee shall strive to maintain diversity by considering the geographical location of the prospective member's residence and the people with disabilities he/she represents.

The Committee Chair shall forward a list of nominees to the Superintendent for consideration of appointment by the School Board. The Superintendent and the School Board reserve the right to nominate any candidate they believe to be qualified.

3. Composition of Members

As addressed in the Regulations Governing Special Education Programs for Children with Disabilities in Virginia (January 25, 2010), the Members of the Committee shall consist of a majority of individuals (greater than 51%) that represents persons with disabilities or parents/guardians of persons with disabilities. The Committee shall also include one teacher.

Additional members may also include the following persons or representatives, with the possibility that a member may represent multiple persons or groups:

- a. Community civic organizations;
- b. Business or industry;
- c. Public agencies concerned with the care of persons with disabilities; and
- d. Other local advisory committees concerned with the education and training of students with disabilities.

4. Consultants

The Director of Special Education and Special Education Leadership Team may serve as consultants to the Committee. Others, as agreed upon by the Committee, may also serve as consultants. Consultants are non-voting members as stipulated by state regulations.

5. Term of Members

To assure the continuity of the Committee, all members of the Committee will serve for a 3-year term. A member may thereafter be reappointed for one (1) successive 3-year term. However, a member may be re-appointed if there are no potential members to serve. A term runs July 1st to June 30th.

6. Vacancies

Should vacancies occur because of low application numbers or the withdrawing of a Committee member, the Committee shall present a slate of names to the Chair for approval with consultation from the Director of Special Education. Nominees shall be recommended to the Superintendent for appointment by the School Board.

7. Absences

Members are required to attend at least 75% of all scheduled Committee meetings. Additionally, no members shall be absent from three consecutive scheduled Committee meetings. The Committee reserves the right to excuse any absence due to extraordinary circumstances.

8. Annual Notice of Membership

Public notice shall be published annually listing the names of Committee members and including a description of ways in which interested parties may express their views to the Committee.

Article IV – Officers and Membership Duties

1. Officers

The officers of the Committee shall consist of a Chair, a Vice-Chair and a Secretary.

2. Term of Officers

Officers shall be elected by a majority vote of the Committee at the last meeting of the school year provided a quorum is present. Officers shall serve a two-year term. No member shall serve in the same office for more than two (2) consecutive two-year terms. However, a member may be reappointed if there are no potential members waiting to serve. Officer terms shall run July 1st to June 30th.

3. Vacancies

In the event an office becomes vacant, the chair shall appoint a replacement for the unexpired term. Vacancy in the office of Chair shall be filled by the Vice-Chair for the unexpired term.

4. Duties

The duties of the officers and members shall be as follows:

Chair

- a. Serve as chief executive of the Committee with the powers and duties usually belonging to such a position;
- b. Call and preside at meetings of the Committee;
- c. Serve as ex-officio member of all subcommittees;
- d. Ensure that the annual report is submitted to the school board;
- e. Assure representation of the Committee at functions as requested by the Committee or others;
- f. Participate in orientation activities for new members;
- g. Appoint Committee chairs; and
- h. Serve on other school advisory committees in order to facilitate collaboration regarding global issues.

Vice-Chair

- a. Shall chair the planning subcommittee (goal setting and programs)
- b. Serve in the place of, and with the authority of, the chair in case of the chair's absence; and
- c. Discharge any duties delegated to him/her by the chair.

Secretary

- a. Keep minutes of the Committee meetings;
- b. See that the minutes are made available to Committee members in a timely fashion; and
- c. Keep a record of member attendance and notify chair of any absence issues.

Members

- a. Attend regularly scheduled local SEAC meetings;
- b. Represent the constituency or group of which they are a part;
- c. Maintain good working knowledge of special education law;
- d. Share one's knowledge and skills;
- e. Participate in the work of the SEAC, including serving on subcommittees when required;

- f. Assist in identifying and mentoring new members;
- g. Focus on systems change; and
- h. Work collaboratively with other SEAC members and school division personnel.

Article V – Subcommittees

Subcommittees, standing or special, shall be appointed by the Chair as deemed necessary to carry out the work of the Committee. Standing subcommittees appointed by the Chair shall have a minimum of three (3) Committee members and one (1) ex officio member.

Article VI – Meetings

1. Frequency of regular meetings

Unless otherwise approved by the Committee, the Committee shall meet no less than 4 times a year. One (1) meeting annually shall be designated to review the Annual Special Education Plan and Application for Federal Flow-Through Funds. This meeting shall be held prior to the Superintendent's submission of the final documents to the School Board. There shall be a meeting in the spring, known as the Annual Meeting, which shall be for the purpose of electing officers, recognition of members rotating off the Committee, approval of the Committee's Annual Report to the School Board, annual sub-committee reports, and approval of a slate of nominees by the Committee for referral to the Superintendent and School Board.

2. Notice

Notice of regular meetings, along with the minutes from the previous meeting and any information necessary for member review before the meeting, shall be sent to each member at least one week prior to the scheduled meeting date except in unforeseen circumstances.

3. Open Meetings

All regular meetings of the Committee shall be open to the public. Two weeks public notice shall be given.

4. Public Comment

Each regular Committee meeting will begin with up to a 15-minute period for public comment. This time will be designated to allow members of the community the opportunity to voice global concerns and matters of interest before the Committee and other attendees. There is a three minute per person time limit for Public Comment, although this limit may be increased at the Chair's discretion. The Vice-Chair will maintain a list of issues raised during public comment periods for use in future planning activities. Members of the Public attending Committee meetings are not permitted to comment outside the Public Comment forum.

Article VII – Quorum

A quorum shall be defined as a minimum of 50% of Committee members plus 1 committee member.

Article VIII – Amendments

These By-laws should be reviewed no later than three (3) years from the previous amendment. These By-laws may be amended at any regular meeting by not less than two-thirds of the total active Committee. A copy of the proposed amendment(s) shall be submitted in writing at a regular meeting of the Committee, prior to the vote.

Article IX – Rules of Order

Robert's Rules of Order, revised, shall govern the conduct of the Committee's meetings and other procedural matters, to the extent that such rules are applicable and not inconsistent with the provisions of these bylaws.

By-laws Adopted: June 14, 2021

Chair: Wm T Highfield