

SPECIAL EDUCATION PARENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE
For
SPECIAL EDUCATION
NORTHWEST EDUCATION SERVICES
BY LAWS

I. PURPOSE OF ORGANIZATION

The purpose of the Special Education Parent Advisory Committee (SEPAC) is to participate in the development of the Northwest Education Services (North Ed) plan or any modification of the plan for the delivery of special education programs and services as required by R 340.1833. The parent advisory committee may provide advisory input on any matters that the committee deems appropriate to the improvement of special education services within the North Ed. The SEPAC is authorized by and functions under administrative rule R340.1383 of the Michigan Administrative Rules for Special Education.

II. DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Special Education Parent Advisory Committee

- A. The SEPAC shall participate with the North Ed and its local school districts in the development of the North Ed's special education plan or any modifications to the plan.
- B. The SEPAC shall meet, at a minimum, on an annual basis each fiscal year for the purpose of reviewing the plan in whole or in part.
- C. The SEPAC Chairperson, or their delegate, is authorized to sign the North Ed's Special Education Plan. The Chair or their designee is authorized to sign for any and all changes in the Special Education Plan. The SEPAC, by vote of its membership, can have the Chair, or their designee file an objection to the Special Education Plan.
- D. The SEPAC Chairperson shall be notified of all deviation requests made by the North Ed, the local districts, or other districts whose

requests affects persons with a disability residing within the North Ed. Other SEPAC members shall be made aware of all deviation requests either in writing or by presentation at SEPAC meetings. No specific action is required by the SEPAC as a result of receiving copies of all deviation requests.

- E. The SEPAC shall attempt to be knowledgeable advocates for all persons with disabilities within the North Ed by:
 - a. Being a representative of the desires and needs of the persons with disabilities and their families.
 - b. Becoming aware of special education programs and services, their purpose, structure, and funding.
 - c. Actively promoting the welfare of the persons with disabilities through parent and public education.
 - d. Being open to hear the concerns expressed by persons with disabilities, the parents of the persons with disabilities, and other concerned individuals.
 - e. Regularly reporting SEPAC activities to the North Ed and the local school districts.
 - f. Following the guidelines for SEPAC members. (see separate document – SEPAC Guidelines)

2. Northwest Education Services (North Ed)

- A. North Ed shall provide for the organizational structure of the Special Education Parent Advisory committee as required by the administrative rules in the Michigan Special Education Code (MARSE) R 340.1838 Parent Advisory Committee.
- B. North Ed shall provide administrative assistance to the SEPAC.
- C. North Ed shall provide adequate fiscal and staff resources to the SEPAC in order to make the SEPAC efficient and effective in operation.
- D. Assistant Superintendent shall solicit at least 1 nomination from each Public School Academy.

III. **MEMBERSHIP**

1. Qualification and Selection R340.1838

- A. The Special Education Parent Advisory Committee shall be appointed by the Intermediate School District Board.
- B. The SEPAC and its officers shall consist only of parents of students with disabilities with at least 1 parent from each constituent local school district and public school academy unless no parent agrees to serve on the parent advisory committee to represent the constituent local school district or public school academy.
- C. Each constituent local school district board of education and each public school academy board of directors shall nominate at least 1 parent.
- D. North Ed may nominate additional members not to exceed 33 1/3 percent of the total SEPAC membership.
- E. North Ed board of education shall make every attempt to assure that all types of impairments and all identifiable organizations of parents of students with disabilities within the intermediate school district are represented on the SEPAC.

2. Term

- A. Each member appointed to the SEPAC will serve a 1 year term.
- B. Each member of SEPAC can be re-nominated.

IV. MEETINGS AND ATTENDANCE

1. Meetings

- A. The SEPAC shall meet at least quarterly each fiscal year for purpose of reviewing the North Ed special education plan in whole or in part.
- B. The SEPAC shall hold an organizational meeting each year to review guidelines and determine a time and place for its regularly scheduled meetings for the upcoming fiscal year.

Such meetings shall be held as early as May 1 but no later September 30.

V. VOTING

1. Only official SEPAC members are eligible to vote.
2. A vote will be carried by the majority of those present at a duly called meeting, including for the purposes of amending the bylaws (see Article VIII).

VI. OFFICERS

1. Chairperson

- A. The Chairperson shall be elected by the members of the SEPAC annually for a one year term.
- B. The Chairperson shall preside over meetings of the SEPAC.
- C. The Chairperson in conjunction with the ISD advisors shall be responsible so that written agendas are prepared and sent to members at least one week in advance of regular meetings.
- E. The Chairperson may appoint temporary or single use committees as deemed appropriate.
- F. The Chairperson shall sign the TBAISD's special education plan or modifications when authorized to do so by vote of the SEPAC.

2. Vice-Chairperson

- A. The Vice-Chairperson shall be elected by the members of the SEPAC annually for a one year term.
- B. The Vice-Chairperson shall assist the Chairperson.
- C. The Vice-Chairperson shall preside at meetings in the absence of the Chairperson.
- D. The Vice-Chairperson shall be authorized to act on behalf of the Chairperson when specifically authorized by the vote of the SEPAC.

3. Secretary

- A. The Secretary shall be elected by the members of the SEPAC annually for a one year term.
- B. The Secretary shall take attendance at meetings of the SEPAC.
- C. The Secretary shall be responsible for minutes to be taken at meetings of the SEPAC with copies provided to the SEPAC members at their next meeting for their approval.
- D. The Secretary shall handle matters of correspondence and work with the public relations person.
- E. The Secretary shall arrange for another member to handle the duties of Secretary in case of absence from a meeting.

4. Office of Public Relations Person

- A. The Public Relations Person shall be elected by the members of the SEPAC annually for a one year term.
- B. The Public Relations Person shall be responsible to keep files of pertinent information, clippings, etc.
- C. The Public Relations Person shall be responsible for providing appropriate information regarding the SEPAC to the news media and other appropriate groups.

5. Other Officers

- A. The SEPAC may elect other officers for a one year term as deemed appropriate by the SEPAC.

6. No person shall hold more than one office at a time.

VII ELECTIONS

- 1. Each Officer shall be elected annually.
- 2. Election shall take place at the May meeting of the SEPAC in each year, or should there be no meeting in May, election shall take place at the meeting which most closely precedes May.
- 3. New Officers will assume their duties June 1 of each year.

4. Vacancy shall be filled by election at the next meeting following the resignation or ineligibility of an Officer.

VIII BYLAW AMENDMENTS

1. These bylaws may be amended by the majority action of the Official SEPAC members at any duly called meetings.

Kw/SEPAC/Bylaws – 3/2014
edited to reflect name change - CF 11/2022