

Bylaws for the

Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC) for Minneapolis Public Schools

1. Purpose of Minneapolis Public Schools SEAC: SEAC is a district wide parent advisory committee that meets the requirements of Minnesota Statute 125A.24, directing that each school district convene and implement an advisory board pertaining to the needs of children receiving special education service in the district.
 - a. Vision of SEAC: Our vision is that all children, regardless of their abilities, will achieve an academic, functional and social education in the Minneapolis Public Schools from birth through the transition stage to maximize their life choices and opportunities.
 - b. Mission of SEAC: Our mission is:
 - i. To increase involvement and add the informed perspective of parents and families of children with disabilities in the making and implementation of district policies.
 - ii. To identify and promote the common concerns of special education and non-special education students alike.
 - iii. To fulfill the requirements of Minnesota Statute 125A.24
2. Operation of the SEAC
 - a. Roles and Responsibilities of Members:
 - i. Be an identified member and available to the school community to gather input and communicate about special education and SEAC activities in the district.
 - ii. Serve a term consisting of two (2) school years and not miss attendance at more than two consecutive scheduled meetings during the term.
 - iii. Participate as available and when requested in work groups, public forums, on committees and projects formed by the SEAC to address stated objectives.
 - iv. Use personal skills, knowledge and experiences for the greater good of special education and non-special education students alike.
 - v. Refrain from using SEAC membership to promote policies solely for individual benefit or to receive special consideration of individual needs.
 - vi. Participate respectfully, in a non-threatening, solution-seeking manner. Abide by the call of the Co-Chairs.
 - b. Participation:
 - i. Any person who shares an interest in furthering the mission of the SEAC may participate in its meeting by agreeing to follow the norms for members and by addressing only agenda items.
 - ii. Only members will be allowed to vote.
 - c. Membership:
 - i. Membership of the SEAC will consist of no more than:
 1. 17 Parent/Family voting members
 2. 2 Community non-voting members
 3. 1 Executive Director who is an ex-officio non-voting member
 4. 1 District Family Advocate who is a non-voting member.

- ii. Terms of membership:
 - 1. A term is two (2) school years with the term starting September 1 of the calendar year one and ending August 31 of the second following calendar year. A SEAC stated goal is that appointments be made so that about 50% of members terms expire in any given year.
 - 2. A member may re-apply and be selected to serve successive terms.

- iii. Selection and appointment of members:
 - 1. **Parent/Family Member:**
 - a. A Parent/Family member will have legal single, shared or foster care of enrolled child(ren) with disabilities.
 - b. Without defining quotas, the district and the SEAC will nevertheless strive for an Area Parent/Family membership having balanced geographical representation based Council, diverse categorical representation based on the district's defined disability categories and diverse cultural representation based on the district's student population demographics.
 - c. Applicants can submit their application to the Executive Director at any time either to be on a waiting list or to fill an existing vacancy. The Executive Director can propose an applicant's membership any time that vacancies exist, to fill an open remaining term or half-term. Applicants will be confirmed by a vote of the Leadership Team.
 - 2. **Community members:**
 - a. A Community Member will be chosen to provide expertise to the SEAC in fields such as law, medicine, education, organizational development, etc.
 - b. The Executive Director or Co-Chairs can propose a Community member applicant to be voted on by the Leadership Team.
 - 3. **Executive Director:** The Executive Director may be represented by a Director of Special Education Programs in a scheduled SEAC meeting by informing a Co-Chair.

- d. Leadership:
 - i. The SEAC will be led by Parent/Family members on a Leadership Team as follows:
 - 1. Co-Chair (2): Responsible for facilitating SEAC meetings, regular attendance at leadership team meetings to plan and address agenda concerns, preparation of the agenda at least one week prior to the next meeting to allow time for promulgation and other duties as assigned.
 - 2. Member at Large (3): Regular attendance at leadership team meetings to address agenda concerns, other duties as assigned.
 - 3. SEAC representative for DPAC (1): Attends monthly DPAC meetings as the SEAC representative, reports back to SEAC regarding meetings, gathers feedback from SEAC members regarding potential upcoming agenda items on the DPAC agenda. MUST be available to attend DPAC meetings at School district Headquarters on the second Monday of every month.
 - 4. SEAC representative for Title I (1): Attends monthly Title I meetings as the SEAC representative, reports back to SEAC regarding meetings, gathers feedback from SEAC members regarding potential upcoming agenda

items on the Title 1 Committee agenda. MUST be available to attend DPAC meetings at School district Headquarters on the second Thursday of every month.

- ii. Nominations for the leadership team may be made by any member, and members may self-nominate. Nominations will be confirmed by a vote of the membership

3. **Structure:**

- a. SEAC will conduct its business primarily during its annual published schedule of meetings. Leadership Team meetings will be at the call of the Co-Chair(s) or Executive Director.
- b. The SEAC can form work groups on an ad-hoc voluntary basis to address specific concerns requiring more time, focus or expertise than is available in its regularly scheduled meetings
- c. The SEAC can designate Parent/Family members to represent it or participate on other public committees. Policy positions communicated verbally or in the name of the SEAC must be reflected in the SEAC meeting minutes.
- d. The SEAC encourages non-voting participation from other district committees.

4. **Voting:**

- a. Understanding that the time available for meetings is limited, the SEAC will operate on the presumption that any required closure or decision on agenda items can occur either through discussion and consensus, or by voting whichever method a Co-Chair decides will achieve the best result for the nature of the specific agenda item.
- b. A Co-Chair may propose or consent to members' requests for a vote on items needing closure or decision that is not occurring through discussion and consensus. When a request for a vote is granted, a motion will be formulated, seconded and discussed prior to voting, which will be recorded.
- c. Voting can only take place at a scheduled meeting which seven (7) voting members attend in person.
- d. If any vote ends in a tie, the majority vote of Parent/Family Leadership Team members will break the tie

5. **Amendments to the By-Laws:** All amendments to the by-laws require that a discussion of the amendments be put on a regularly scheduled meeting agenda and a vote of the amendments be held at the next regularly scheduled meeting. Approval of amendments requires a majority vote. Approved changes become effective immediately.

6. **Conduct of SEAC Meeting:**

- a. Schedule: The Executive Director will consult with the Leadership Team and publish dates, times and schedule of venues for five (5) SEAC meetings before the beginning of

the school year. Five (5) additional SEAC and meetings for committees may be called by a Co-Chair.

- b. **Meetings:** As practicable, the Executive Director will provide a speaker phone and call-in facility for Meetings members and others who cannot attend meetings in person. However, any member who wants to vote on matters needing a vote must attend in person.
- c. A Co-Chair will call the meeting to order. A Co-Chair has responsibility to see that the agenda is accomplished. As such, a Co-Chair has discretion to limit agenda items or discussion based on remaining available time. The Co-Chair will provide leadership to maintain focus and decorum.
- d. A support person provided by the district will record minutes of the meeting, taking care to record consensus, majority and alternative points of view in discussions
- e. **Stipend:** Any member who attends a scheduled meeting in person may request payment of an amount to defray costs of dependent care and travel to the meeting. The Executive Director will set the per-meeting stipend.