

Pembroke Special Education Parent Advisory Council

BYLAWS

Article I. Pembroke Special Education Parent Advisory Council

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

Article II. Authority

The Pembroke SEPAC is formed pursuant to the provisions of Section 3 of Chapter 71B of the Massachusetts General Laws.

Article III. Purpose of the Pembroke SEPAC

The mission of the Pembroke Special Education Parent Advisory Council (SEPAC) is to work toward the understanding of, respect for, support, and appropriate education for all children with disabilities in the Pembroke Public Schools community. Pembroke SEPAC will:

1. Advise the School Committee and Director of Student Services on matters that pertain to the education, health, and safety of students with disabilities by providing direct parent input, review, and feedback [603 CMR 28.07(4)].
2. Meet regularly with school officials, e.g. Director of Student Services, School Committee, etc., to advise and participate in the planning, development, and evaluation of the district's special education programs [603 CMR 28.07(4)]. This includes providing input into the development of policies, procedures, and trainings relating to the district's special education programs. In years where the district is participating in Coordinated

Program Reviews (CPR) or Mid-cycle Reviews (MCR) by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE), the SEPAC will look to provide input directly to DESE. The SEPAC will meet with school officials to discuss DESE's CPR and MCR findings and provide input about any required Corrective Action Plans prior to the district's submission of a Corrective Action Plan.

3. Promote a network of parents, guardians, educational surrogates, including but not limited to parents of children with disabilities, and provide a forum to share information and discuss matters regarding children with disabilities. This will include offering a network of support for parents including access to relevant information, training, and resources, and sharing timely information with the membership and the community in Pembroke, as well as the administration and the School Committee.

4. Promote communication and programs within the community to encourage understanding, acceptance and inclusion of children with disabilities, thereby encouraging an atmosphere of open communication, understanding and mutual respect among all students, parents, teachers, and the Pembroke community at large.

5. Provide informational forums to parents, educators, students and other professionals. This will include collaboration with parent/teacher groups, school councils, administrators, and other school and community organizations to promote the achievement of district goals and the SEPAC mission, and provide opportunities for parents and school personnel to participate in joint training to foster mutual understanding.

Article IV. Terms of Membership

Section One: General membership is open to all parents, guardians and educational surrogates of children with disabilities with or without an Individual Education Program (IEP) or 504 Plan

residing in Pembroke; all students aged 14-22 who receive special education services from Pembroke Public Schools; and all parents, guardians or educational surrogates of children whose education is the partial or entire responsibility of Pembroke Public Schools (603 CMR 28.10), whether being schooled in PPS, in an out-of-district placement, or in a home or hospital setting; or any other interested person. No official notice is required to join the Pembroke SEPAC, nor is there any requirement to pay dues.

Section Two: Voting membership is required to vote in annual officer elections and any other business that comes before any Pembroke SEPAC Meeting, as that term is defined in Article VIII. Voting membership is open to any general member who has attended at least 3 previous meetings of the Pembroke SEPAC during the past twelve (12) months before the date of the vote.

Article V. Officers

Section One: The Executive Board of the Pembroke SEPAC shall be comprised of a Chair, Secretary, Treasurer and Public Relations Officer .Officer positions may be shared with a co-chair. All Executive Board members shall be voting members of the SEPAC. Officers of the board are expected to attend the majority of meetings.

Whenever possible the board shall also consist of one representative from each school.

Section Two: Office and officer responsibilities of the Pembroke SEPAC are:

1. The Chair shall:

- a. Set and submit the agenda for each General Meeting
- b. Preside at all meetings of the SEPAC
- c. Recommend the organization of and monitor the function of any subcommittees
- d. Act as liaison with the Director of Student Services

- e. Prepare periodic reports regarding SEPAC activities and needs
- f. Present updates about the SEPAC to the school committee

2. The Secretary shall:

- a. Maintain a list of the voting members and a list of the general members
- b. Record and file Minutes of the Meetings of the Pembroke SEPAC and its subcommittees in accordance with the Massachusetts Public Records Law
- c. Maintain meeting attendance logs
- d.. Collect and review all correspondence of the SEPAC

3. The Treasurer shall:

- a. Keep a full and accurate account of receipts and expenditures in accordance with any budget adopted by the organization
- b. Arrange disbursements as authorized by the Executive Board or SEPAC.
Disbursement for non-budgeted items exceeding this amount must be approved by a majority vote of the members at the monthly SEPAC meeting
- c. Present a financial statement at all SEPAC meetings and at other times upon request
- d. Coordinate efforts to apply for grants, donations, reimbursements or any other funds for which the SEPAC may be eligible
- e. Act as the liaison with the town accountant and/or the Pembroke Public school's business manager as necessary

4. The Public Relations Officer shall:

- a. Coordinate publicity and promotion of all SEPAC events and other public

communications

- b. Manage the Facebook page and SEPAC website
- c. Act as the liaison with the Pembroke Public Schools technology administrator.
- d. Send SEPAC updates and information out to the membership as requested.
- e. Manage the SEPAC email acct.

5. School Representatives shall:

- a. Bring forward any questions, concerns or needs specific to the school they represent to the SEPAC board to be included on the meeting agenda.
- b. Communicate approved information and materials between their represented school and SEPAC

Article VI: Voting/Quorum

A quorum of no less than three (3) voting members must be present to constitute a meeting.

Article VII. Elections

Elections shall be the first order of business during the May meeting. Elections shall be decided by a simple majority vote of the voting membership, subject to the presence of at least five (5) voting members. New officers shall take office immediately following their election.

Nominations may be made by ballot or voice vote at the May meeting. All voting members are eligible to make nominations.

Officers of the SEPAC shall be voting members who are elected by the voting membership and whose term of office will run from the date of their election to the date of the next election of officers, approximately one year. If any office becomes vacant, an election for that office shall be held at the Board's discretion, no later than the next scheduled election. In the interim, the Board will absorb the duties of the vacant position.

Article VIII: Meetings

Meetings are defined as any SEPAC meeting, activities, or committee meeting at which a quorum is met and attendance is taken. The number of meetings to be held each year and the dates of those meetings shall be determined annually by the Executive Board. Advance notice of any and all meetings and elections will be published and/or posted with a minimum of 48 hours advance notice and comply with Massachusetts Open Meeting Law regulations. Minutes of all SEPAC meetings shall be recorded and posted in accordance with the Massachusetts Public Records Law.

Article IX: Subcommittees

Subcommittees shall be created as needed at the discretion of the Officers and shall report on activities to members at regular meetings.

Article X: Amendments

These by-laws may be amended by a simple majority of the voting members at a general meeting, but by-laws changes may not be voted upon in the same meeting as they are proposed.

Article XI: Procedures

Roberts Rules of Order are the guiding procedures for this organization