

Special Education Advisory Committee
Alexandria City Public Schools
Bylaws
December XX, 2019

ARTICLE I: NAME

The name of this body shall be, "The Alexandria Special Education Advisory Committee," hereinafter designated as "SEAC" and/or "the committee."

ARTICLE II: PURPOSE AND AUTHORITY

The purpose of this committee, in accordance with and subject to guidelines and regulations of the authorities of the United States Government, the Commonwealth of Virginia Administrative Code; Virginia Department of Education; and Alexandria City School Board, shall be to provide advice and policy guidance concerning students with disabilities to members of the Alexandria City School Board through the Division Superintendent. (Reference 8 VAC 20-81-230 D.)

ARTICLE III: RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE COMMITTEE:

Committee members shall:

- A. Advise the school division of needs in the education of students with disabilities in the City of Alexandria;
- 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 including **a scope of work and an annual report** of committee activities to the Superintendent for transmission to the School Board;
- D. Assist the school division in interpreting plans to the community for meeting the educational needs of children with disabilities;
- E. Review local policies and procedures related to the provision of special education and related services, prior to submission to the School Board;
- F. Participate in the review of the Annual Special Education Plan of Alexandria City Public Schools.

ARTICLE IV: MEMBERSHIP

A. GUIDELINES AND COMPOSITION

- 1. Membership shall be consistent with the regulations and policies of the Virginia Department of Education and Alexandria City School Board, with a maximum number of 17 voting members;
- 2. A majority of the committee shall be Alexandria City parents of children with disabilities or individuals with disabilities;
- 3. The committee shall include one teacher who is a voting member;
- 4. Any additional school division personnel, including **the Staff Liaison**, one School Board Liaison and one School Principal, shall serve as non-voting consultants to the committee;

5. The Alexandria City School Board shall publicize all vacancies. Interested parties may apply for membership by submitting an online or printed application or by contacting the Clerk of the School Board.

B. MEMBER, OFFICER and LIAISON RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Members and officers shall serve without compensation and must be residents of the City of Alexandria, Virginia or staff of Alexandria City Public Schools;
2. Members shall attend regular meetings, participate in discussions and examine carefully and respectfully any issue that comes before the committee;
3. Members shall serve a two-year term and may be reappointed by the Alexandria City School Board for successive terms to a maximum of three consecutive, two-year terms and may reapply for appointment after not having served on the committee for two years;
4. Members and officers shall attend a minimum of 75% of all meetings. All absences must be approved by a SEAC Officer. Failure to meet this requirement will result in recommendation for dismissal by the committee leadership;
5. Members and officers unable to fulfill duties may resign from SEAC through written notice to the School Board;
6. SEAC meetings shall be held at a publicized location in the City of Alexandria at 7:00 PM on a weekday evening that is determined by the committee at the beginning of each academic year unless changed by a vote of three-quarters of the entire committee;
7. At the April or May meeting, the Chairs will appoint a subcommittee to consider nominations for the election of officers for the coming school year. **Within 30 days prior to the election, by email, the Chairs and-or nominating subcommittee Chair will solicit the entire committee for possible interest in officer positions or nominations.** As the last item of business at the last meeting of the year or the first meeting of the year, the School Board Liaison or an outgoing SEAC Officer shall preside over the election of said officers. ~~with nominations by the subcommittee, individual members or from the floor.~~ **Nominations for officer positions shall be from the subcommittee, individual members or from the floor.** By paper ballot, members shall elect by simple majority of the quorum present, the offices of Chair, Vice Chair and Co-Secretaries. ~~Members may volunteer or be appointed by the Chairs for a number of sub-committees. The committee determinations may be made at the last meeting of the year for the coming academic year or throughout the year as needs are determined. However, every two years a Chair for a Bylaws committee must be determined whether volunteer or by appointment. (Moved to #13 and revised.)~~

8. Members should strive to maintain good working knowledge of special education laws, policies and contemporary issues in special education;
9. Members will choose at least one SEAC subcommittee to serve on;
10. Officers shall serve a one-year term but cannot serve in the same post for more than two consecutive one-year terms. Past officers may run for election after not having served as an officer for two years;
11. Officers may be removed by the membership by a majority vote of the quorum present at a meeting. Any motion for officer removal must be put forth in public at a meeting and voted on at the subsequent meeting;
12. Members of the committee shall promptly notify SEAC **if there is a potential conflict of interest such as, interviewing, becoming a finalist for or accepting a job in ACPS, becoming a consultant to or vendor of ACPS or any of its employees, etc. At the first SEAC meeting of the year, the Chairs will ask each committee member to declare any potential conflicts of interests they may have or recently had.** The Chairs or Co-Secretaries shall work with the School Board Liaison to determine if there are any conflicts of interest for current members or for those who may be interested in applying to be members or be appointed by the Chairs for a number of subcommittees. **If it is determined there is a change in membership status (e.g., accepting a job in ACPS), the member may still choose to participate but as a non-voting consultant.**
13. **The subcommittee determinations may be made at the last meeting of the year for the coming academic year or throughout the year as needs are determined. However, every two-years a Chair of a Bylaws subcommittee must be determined whether by volunteer or by appointment;**

14. Duties of the officers shall be as follows:

i. Chair/ Vice-Chair,

1. **The Chair/Vice-Chair duties are identical and they share equally in the duties and responsibilities of leadership;**
2. Preside over monthly SEAC meetings;
3. Develop and present schedules and agendas for SEAC meetings;
4. Coordinate and communicate goals, objectives, decisions, recommendations, comments and concerns of the committee to the School Board Liaison and the Alexandria City School Board;
5. Each year, present to the School Board through the Superintendent a SEAC approved Annual Report of activities and recommendations by the committee;
6. Through the Superintendent submit for approval to the School Board the SEAC approved annual Scope of Work;

7. Chair/Vice-Chair shall provide to the Clerk of the School Board the agenda of SEAC meetings at least 3 days in advance.

ii. Co- Secretaries -

1. Record minutes and attendance at monthly SEAC meetings;
2. Present minutes, distribute agendas and/or reports to members prior to the meeting or voting;
3. Maintain copies of committee correspondence;
4. Submit final minutes and supporting documentation, including committee reports and action follow-up reports from previous meetings to the Clerk of the School Board for posting to the public record;
5. Serve in place and with authority of either the Chair or Vice Chair, in their absence;
6. Other duties, as assigned.

iii. Chair Emeritus - Past SEAC Chairs still serving as active members of the committee may, when designated or appointed by the current elected Chair/Vice-Chair, stand in for the Chair/Vice-Chair **in various specific capacities or initiatives.**

ARTICLE V: VOTING PROCEDURES

- A. All votes will be in public. Committee votes called during official meetings shall be conducted by hand or **voice by** with simple majority of the quorum present. Voting for the annual election of officers shall be conducted at the last or first meeting of the year by paper ballot only, with either the School Board Liaison or outgoing SEAC officer presiding over the vote count.

ARTICLE VI: MEETINGS AND COMMITTEE PROCEDURES:

- A. SEAC's operating calendar year is from September through June, with a minimum quarterly meeting requirement **and with an option for an August meeting, if necessary.**
- B. Meetings are open to the public and any member of the public may address the committee during the Public Comment portion of the agenda. The **time** allotted to each individual speaker shall be three minutes and each organization shall be five minutes. **SEAC will strive to allot the first 15 minutes of each meeting for public comment but reserves the right to shorten the time.** Members of the public shall be reminded that recommendations by the committee are advisory only, and that all final decisions rest solely with the Alexandria City School Board.
- C. Accommodations for persons with special needs and/or interpreter services will be provided through the Executive Director of Specialized Instruction. Requests must be submitted at least one week prior to the meeting.

- D. No meeting shall be conducted through telephonic, video, electronic or other communication means where the members are not physically assembled to discuss or transact public business; (Virginia Freedom of Information Act§ 2.2-3711.35)
- E. All committee and subcommittee meeting dates and agenda items must be reported to the School Board and publicly announced through the Clerk of the School Board at least three business 3 days in advance of the meeting for meeting notice and three days for the agenda;
- F. One meeting shall be designated to review the updated annual Special Education Plan and Application for Federal Flow-Through Funds;
- G. At least one meeting each year shall be designated to review ACPS and School Board budget priorities and departmental improvement plans. SEAC will make recommendations to the School Board regarding the needs of students with disabilities and the proposed budget;
- H. Any gathering of three committee members where business is discussed constitutes a meeting. However, a quorum of the committee membership is required to be present for any votes to be held.
- I. SEAC shall to the extent possible comply with the rules of procedure in accordance with the most current Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised, to the extent that such rules are applicable and not inconsistent with these bylaws or any superseding regulations.

ARTICLE VII

ADOPTION AND AMENDMENT OF BYLAWS

- A. Any proposed amendment(s) to these bylaws shall be submitted to the committee for consideration no less than fourteen calendar days prior to any public meeting;
- B. Once approved, the bylaws and/or amendments continue in effect until amended or cancelled by a simple majority of a quorum present and approved by the School Board;
- C. The bylaws and/or amendments remain subject to and shall be amended to comply with changes in laws, regulations and policies of IDEA (2004, 2006, 2011), the Code of Virginia, the Virginia Administrative Code, the Virginia Department of Education and the Alexandria City School Board.

D. These bylaws shall be reviewed annually by SEAC. **Any amendments to the bylaws must be passed by a three-fourths vote of the committee members.** The bylaws must be reviewed by the School Board every three years.

E. The Alexandria **City** School Board may make exceptions to these practices and procedures as it deems appropriate.

Approved by Alexandria City Public Schools Special Education Advisory Committee on this date:

Cindy Hart, Chair SEAC, 2019- 2020

Michael Behrmann, Vice-Chair SEAC, 2019 -2020

Sandra Strachan-Vieira, Chair Bylaws Sub-Committee, 2019 -2020

DRAFT