

Suggested edits to Draft By-laws
from Cindy Hart, By-laws committee member

Cindy Hart: Below, I underlined the language I feel needs to be changed.
My proposed changes follow my initials (CH) and are in {RED AND ALL CAPS}. Explanations for my proposed changes are given in red lower-case text.

Jeff Zack (JZ): My comments in blue. Overall I believe the language below was reviewed and approved by Jennifer, so any changes need to be run by Jennifer again.

Jennifer Abbruzzese (JA): My comments are in green. The By-laws currently in effect were approved by SEAC on June 12, 2017 and by the School Board on June 22, 2017. As staff, I do not approve the language included in the By-laws; I merely review it to make sure it is in alignment with School Board policy.

Coral Childs (CC): comments are at the end in purple (some are also noted within text below)

Section B. MEMBER, OFFICER and LIAISON RESPONSIBILITIES

6. SEAC meetings shall be held at a publicized {CC: change “publicized” to “public”} location in the City of Alexandria at 7:00 PM {CH: DELETE; too specific} on a weekday evening {CC: The day and time should be determined by the committee.} 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;

Section B. MEMBER, OFFICER and LIAISON RESPONSIBILITIES

12. Members of the committee shall promptly notify SEAC if there is a potential conflict of interest such as interviewing {CH: DELETE; an unnecessary invasion of privacy – JZ: I do not agree, if someone is pursuing a job with ACPS, it is a COI }, becoming a finalist for or accepting a job in ACPS or becoming a consultant or vendor of ACPS or any of its employees, etc. {CH: DELETE; too broad; this would include accountants of teachers, etc. – JZ: I do not agree, if someone is an accountant for an ACPS employee, they should let the committee know, if the committee does not see it as a COI, then there is no issue. We need to have transparency to ensure no COI JA: The School Board does not determine what qualifies as potential Conflicts of Interest for volunteer, advisory committee members.} 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 {CH: REPLACE WITH: THE CHAIR; when everyone’s in charge, no one’s in charge – JZ: replace with co-chairs JA: School Board policy BCFB regarding By-laws for advisory committees stipulates that each advisory committee shall at a minimum elect a chair and vice-chair} 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. {CH: REPLACE WITH:
NOTE: VIRGINIA STATE REGULATIONS STIPULATE THAT LOCAL SCHOOL DIVISION PERSONNEL SHALL ONLY SERVE AS CONSULTANTS TO THE COMMITTEE (EXCEPT FOR ONE TEACHER WHO SERVES AS A MEMBER OF THE COMMITTEE). This statement is taken from the VDOE's Sample By-laws in their Guide for Local SEACs.}

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; {CH: DELETE; this describes co-chairs. SEAC has a Chair and Vice-Chair, as required by the School Board for all Advisory Committees. Additionally, neither the current Chair nor Vice-Chair agree with this description of duties and responsibilities, which was not in the by-laws when their terms began. – JZ: I do not agree, we should review the by-laws from 3 years ago (attached) and are currently in effect. These bylaws state co-chairs and it was approved by the board. The ultimate decision is up to the entire committee, not the co-chairs. What was Jennifer's take on this? JA: School Board policy BCFB regarding By-laws for advisory committees stipulates that each advisory committee shall at a minimum elect a chair and vice-chair. }

ARTICLE VI: MEETINGS AND COMMITTEE PROCEDURES:

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. {CH: ADD: *PUBLIC COMMENT SUBMITTED TO THE OFFICIAL SEAC EMAIL ADDRESS WILL BE READ AT THE SUBSEQUENT MEETING AFTER IN-PERSON PUBLIC COMMENT IS COMPLETE, IF TIME PERMITS. ALL PUBLIC COMMENTS, INCLUDING AFOREMENTIONED EMAILS, SHALL BECOME PART OF THE MEETING MINUTES.*} 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.

G. At least one meeting each year shall be designated to review ACPS and School Board budget priorities and departmental improvement plans. {JZ: Recommend we change it to "Office of Specialized Instruction departmental improvement plans" CH: CHANGE TO: *THE PROJECT PLANS OF THE OFFICE OF SPECIALIZED INSTRUCTION.* None of the ACPS Advisory committees review departmental improvement plans. SEAC needs to be careful not to commit its members to tasks requiring time and expertise it may not have. If at any time SEAC feels it needs to review departmental improvement plans, these will be available under the Virginia Freedom of Information Act. The Project Plans (also called Working Plans) of the Office of Specialized Instruction will provide SEAC a

roadmap of activities being undertaken.} SEAC will make recommendations to the School Board regarding the needs of students with disabilities and the proposed budget;

ADOPTION AND AMENDMENT OF BYLAWS

- 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 {CH: ADD: *PRESENT*; I think this word was inadvertently omitted. The current By-laws require a simple majority of members present to pass an amendment; the new requirement is three-fourths of members present (a quorum is always required for a vote). JA: When School Board wants to set a “higher bar” for passing something, they require a vote of 2/3 of quorum present. This typically applies to last-minute budget changes.}. The bylaws must be reviewed by the School Board every three years.

From Coral Childs:

1. Article III, B. Members, paragraph 6. I believe this entire paragraph is in the wrong place and should be under Article VI Meetings and Committee Procedures. In addition, the paragraph discusses meeting in a "publicized" location, it should also be a "public" location.

I also have some doubts about specifying the days and times when meetings should be held ("7 p.m. on a weekday evening"). The day and time should be determined by the committee.

2. Article III, B. Members, paragraph 7. I believe this entire paragraph is also in the wrong place and should be under Article V Voting Procedures. In addition, I'm not 100% sure about "by email". I understand that it is quick and easy to use email, but not all ACPS parents have access to email and this requirement may discourage them from participating in SEAC. We should try to be as inclusive as possible.

3. Article IV Membership, B. Member, Officers and Liaison Responsibilities. The word "member" is not needed in the title to section B. Just a note - I am not doing most of these things, Cindy is doing them as the chair.

4. Article VI Meetings and Committee Procedures, section C and section E are in conflict. Section C states that an attendee must request accommodations 1 week before the meeting but section E states that meetings are announced 3 business days in advance. If you don't know about the meeting until 3 days before it happens how can you request accommodations 1 week in advance?

Section H states that any gathering of 3 or members is a meeting, but does not include "meeting" electronically. It should.

Section I the last line needs indenting.