

**Carlisle Public Schools
Special Education Parent Advisory Council
By-laws**

Article I: Name

The name of this organization shall be the Carlisle Public Schools Special Education Parent Advisory Council, also known as the Carlisle SEPAC.

Article II: Establishing Authority

The Carlisle SEPAC is a district-wide parent advisory council established in accordance with Chapter 71B, Section 3 of the Massachusetts General Laws and as codified in the Code of Massachusetts Regulations (CMR), 603 CMR 28.07(4).

Article III: Purpose

The mission of the Carlisle SEPAC is to work for the understanding of, respect for and support of all children with special needs in the community. The Carlisle SEPAC's duties include, but are not limited to, the following activities:

- Advising the School Administration and School Committee on matters pertaining to the education and safety of students with disabilities.
- Meeting regularly with school officials to participate in the planning, development, and evaluation of the school district's special education programs.
- Assisting the School Administration in coordinating the presentation of at least one workshop annually within the school district on the rights of students and their parents and guardians under state and federal special education laws.
- Promoting a support network of parents of children with special needs and providing the forum to share information.
- Promoting communication between the Carlisle SEPAC members and local, State and National organizations, councils and groups.
- Promoting communication and programs within the community to encourage understanding, acceptance and inclusion of children with special needs.
- Providing educational/informational forums to parents, educators, students and professionals.

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Article IV: Membership

Section One: Definition

As used in these by-laws, the word “member” means general members, voting members or both, as the context indicates.

Section Two: General membership

General membership shall be open to any parents/guardians with children attending Carlisle Public Schools.

Section Three: Voting membership

Voting membership shall be limited to any general member who fulfills the following requirements:

- Is a parent or guardian of a student with special needs residing in or attending school in Carlisle with or without an Individual Education Plan (IEP) or Section 504 Plan, **and**
- Has attended at least one meeting of the Carlisle SEPAC during the past twelve months.

Article V: Executive Board

Section One: Members

The Executive Board of the Carlisle SEPAC shall be comprised of a Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary, Publicist and Treasurer. All Executive Board members shall be voting members of the Carlisle SEPAC, elected per the provisions of Article VI. Officers, from time to time, may delegate any of their duties to another officer.

Section Two: Duties

The duties of the Executive Board shall include the following tasks:

Chair

- Set the agenda for each general meeting.
- Preside at all meetings of the Carlisle SEPAC.
- Recommend the organization and monitor the function of committees and subcommittees and appoint committee members.
- Act as liaison between parents of students with disabilities or suspected disabilities and the Director of Student Services (DSS).
- Prepare periodic reports for the DSS regarding Carlisle SEPAC activities and needs.
- Represent and speak on behalf of the Carlisle SEPAC at meetings of the School Committee.
- Make an annual presentation to the School Committee.
- Assign additional tasks to Executive Board members as the need arises.

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Vice Chair

- Preside at meetings in the absence of the Chair or at the request of the Chair.
- Coordinate public communications (if needed), not including those communications that are the Publicist's.
- Assist the Chair as appropriate and perform those responsibilities of the Chair at his/her request.

Secretary

- Coordinate the recording, filing and posting of minutes of the Carlisle SEPAC and its committees.

Publicist

- Coordinate all communication between the Carlisle SEPAC and its membership.
- Maintain a list of the voting members and a list of general members.
- Publicize all meetings.
- Update the Carlisle SEPAC website.
- Manage the Carlisle SEPAC social media sites.

Treasurer

- Keep a full and accurate account of receipts and expenditures in accordance with the budget adopted by the organization.
- Arrange disbursements as authorized by the Executive Board or Carlisle SEPAC. Disbursement for non-budgeted items must be approved by the Executive Board and is limited to \$50.00. Disbursement for non-budgeted items exceeding this amount must be approved by a majority vote of the members at the monthly Carlisle SEPAC meeting.
- Present a financial statement at all Carlisle SEPAC meetings and at other times when requested.
- Coordinate efforts to raise funds and apply for grants, donations, reimbursements or any other funds for which the Carlisle SEPAC may be eligible.

Article VI: Voting/Quorum

A quorum of no less than three voting members must be present to hold elections or vote on Carlisle SEPAC-related matters.

Article VII: Elections

Officers of the Carlisle SEPAC are elected by the voting membership and hold office until the next annual meeting. Elections shall occur annually by simple majority at the May meeting. All voting members are eligible to make nominations. If any Executive Board member's position becomes vacant, an election for that office shall be held either during a special meeting or at the next monthly meeting (provided notice is posted in both cases). The newly elected officer's term will expire at the May elections.

Elections shall be decided by a simple majority vote of the voting membership, subject to the presence of a quorum. New officers shall take office immediately following their election.

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Any officer may resign by delivering a written notice of resignation by mail, in person or by email to the Chair. If the Chair resigns, the Chair will deliver written notice to the Vice Chair. The Chair/Vice Chair will forward the written notice to the DSS within three days. Resignation shall be effective immediately upon such delivery unless the resignation is slated to be effective at another time. An officer may be removed with or without cause by vote of the voting members.

The newly elected Carlisle SEPAC Chair will inform the school district of the outcome of the annual elections and the names, addresses and phone numbers of the new board no more than fourteen days following the election.

Article VIII: Meetings

Meetings are defined as any Carlisle SEPAC meeting, activities, or committee meeting. 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/posted with a minimum of 48 hours advance notice and will comply with the MA Open Meeting Law regulations.

Minutes of all Carlisle SEPAC meetings shall be recorded and posted in accordance with the MA Public Records law.

The Carlisle SEPAC shall hold an Annual Meeting of the voting members each year for the purpose of electing officers and to vote on any matters as shall be specified in the notice of such meeting.

Article XI: Conflict of Interest

Any member of the Executive Board who has a financial, personal, or official interest in, or conflict (or appearance of a conflict) with any matter pending before the Carlisle SEPAC, of such nature that it prevents or may prevent that member from acting on the matter in an impartial manner, will voluntarily excuse him/herself and will vacate his seat and refrain from discussing and voting on said item.

Article X: Amendments

These by-laws may be amended by a simple majority of the voting members at a general meeting, but by-law changes may not be voted upon in the same meeting as they are proposed, unless a quorum (as described in Article VI) votes unanimously to approve the change.

Article XI: Procedures

Roberts Rules of Order are the default procedures for this organization.

Approved: (Date) October 7, 2014