

Southampton County Public Schools
Special Education Advisory Committee By-Laws

Article I – Name

The name of the body shall be the Special Education Advisory Committee SEAC) for Southampton County Public Schools (herein referred to as “the Committee”).

Article II –Purpose

Major responsibilities of the Committee which are addressed in the Regulations Governing Special Education Programs for Children with Disabilities in Virginia (Effective January 25, 2010) are as follows:

1. Advise the local school division of needs in education of children with disabilities;
2. Participate in the development of priorities and strategies for meeting the identified needs of children with disabilities;
3. Assist the local school division in interpreting plans to the community for meeting the special needs of children with disabilities for educational services;
4. Review the policies and procedures for the provision of special education and related services prior to submission to the local school board; and
5. Participate in the review of the local school division’s annual plan.

Article III –Membership

I. Number

Membership of the Committee shall be limited to 12 members recommended by the Committee to the superintendent for appointment by the School Board. The majority of the committee must be parents of children with disabilities or individuals with disabilities. The committee must also include one teacher. Other membership may include representatives from public or private agencies or community members.

II. Appointment of Members

There shall be a standing membership subcommittee consisting of elected active members of the Committee. The vice chair shall serve as the chair of the membership subcommittee.

Prospective parent members must submit to the chair of the Committee, through the director of special education, a letter outlining their desire and qualifications to serve on the Committee. In making its recommendations, the membership subcommittee shall strive to maintain diversity by considering the geographical location of the prospective parent member's residence, the area of disability he/she represents, their child's age, and the prospective parent member's gender and ethnicity. Prior to nomination, persons will be advised by the vice chair of membership responsibilities. The membership subcommittee shall forward by July 1 a slate to the superintendent for consideration of appointment by the school board. The superintendent and the school board reserve the right to nominate any candidate they believe to be qualified. The school board shall appoint new members to the Committee at a summer

meeting. Letters shall be sent by the Office of Special Education in August to all new appointees and those nominated, but not appointed. Applications from nominees not appointed shall remain on file for a period of two years.

III. Active Members

Members of the Committee shall include, but not be limited to, the following persons or representatives of groups, with the possibility that a member may be representative of more than one type of person or group:

- a. Persons with disabilities;
- b. Parents/guardians of persons with disabilities; and
- c. One teacher.

Additional membership may include:

- d. Community civic organizations;
- e. Business or industry;
- f. Public agencies concerned with the care of persons with disabilities; and
- g. Other local advisory committees concerned with the education and training of students with disabilities.

IV. Consultants

The Director of special education, or designee, shall serve as consultants to the Committee.

Note: 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).

V. Term of Active Members

Active members shall be appointed by the school board in the summer for three-year terms. To assure the continuity of the Committee, a maximum of 4 members shall rotate off the Committee each year. A member may thereafter be reappointed for one successive three-year full term before rotating off the Committee if he/she submits a letter of intent to the chair of the membership subcommittee by March of the third year of their term. After serving two successive full terms, a member may not be reappointed until one year has elapsed. The term of members shall end on August 1.

VI. Vacancies

Should vacancies occur because of low application numbers or the withdrawal of an active Committee member, the membership subcommittee shall present a slate of names to the Committee for approval. Nominees shall be recommended to the superintendent for appointment by the school board no later than October 30.

VII. Absences

Members are required to attend all meetings in a school year with no more than two absences. With the fourth unexcused absence, the person will no longer be a member of the Committee.

A record of attendance shall be kept by the vice chair of membership who shall report periodically to the chair of the Committee.

Article IV –Officers

1. The officers of the Committee shall consist of a chair, a vice-chair of membership, a vice-chair of planning and a secretary.
2. A nominating subcommittee, consisting of three active members appointed by the chair, will present a slate of proposed officers at the April meeting. Additional nominations may be made by the membership during the May meeting with the consent of the nominees;
3. Offices shall be elected by a majority vote of the Committee at the last meeting of the school year (May) provided a quorum is present. Officers shall serve a one-year term. No member shall serve in the same office for more than two consecutive one-year terms;
4. In the event an office becomes vacant, the chair shall appoint a replacement for the unexpired term. Vacancy in the office of chair shall be filled by one of the vice chairs for the unexpired term;
5. The term of officers begins in July of the year they are elected and ends at the end of June of the following year; and
6. The duties of the officers shall be as follows:

- a. Chair

- a. Serve as chair executive of the Committee with the powers and duties usually belonging to such position
- b. Call and preside at meetings of the Committee;
- c. Serve as ex-officio member of all subcommittees;
- d. Ensure that the annual report is submitted to the school board;
- e. Participate in orientation activities for new members; and
- f. Appoint committee chairs.

- b. Vice Chairs

Vice Chair of Planning

- a. Shall chair the planning subcommittee (goal setting and programs)
- b. Serve in place of, and with the authority of, the chair in case of the chair's absence; and
- c. Discharge any duties delegated to him/her by the chair.

Vice Chair of Membership

- a. Shall chair the membership subcommittee;
- b. Discharge any duties delegated to him/her by the chair; and
- c. Keep a record of member attendance.

Secretary

- a. Keep minutes of the Committee meetings; and
- b. See that the minutes are made available to Committee members in a timely fashion.

Article V -- Subcommittees

Subcommittees, standing or special, shall be appointed by the chair or deemed necessary to carry out the work of the Committee. Each active member is required to serve on at least one subcommittee. Standing subcommittees shall consist of three or more members.

Article VI – Meetings

Frequency of regular meetings

Unless otherwise ordered by the chair, the Committee shall meet no less than four times, generally on a Tuesday between September and June. A calendar of meeting topics and places for the year shall be drawn up by the vice chair of planning and then submitted to the director of special education by August 1 of each year. One meeting annually shall be designated to review the Annual Special Education Plan and Application for Federal Flow-Through Funds prior to the superintendent's submission of the final documents to the school board. The regular meeting in May shall be known as the Annual Meeting and shall be for the purpose of electing officers, recognition of members rotating off the Committee, annual subcommittee reports, and approval of a slate of nominees by the Committee for referral to the superintendent and school board.

Notice

Notice of regular meetings, along with the minutes from the previous meeting and any information necessary for member review before the meeting shall be sent to each member at least one week prior to the scheduled meeting date except in unforeseen circumstances.

Open Meetings

All regular meetings of the Committee shall be open to the public. Two weeks' public notice shall be given.

Public Comment

A 5- minute public comment period will begin each of the regular meetings. The public comment period will be designated to allow members of the community the opportunity to voice global concerns and matters of interest before the Committee and staff members. In accordance with Committee guidelines, the chair will respond within 48 hours to persons making public comments. The vice-chair of planning will maintain a list of issues raised during public comment periods for use in future planning activities.

Article VII – Quorum

Minimum of 7 active shall constitute a quorum (with 12 members).

Article VIII – Amendments

These by-laws may be amended at any regular meeting by not less than two-thirds of the total active membership of the Committee. A copy of the proposed amendment(s) shall be submitted in writing at the previous regular meeting of the Committee.

Article IX – Rules of Order

The chair will preside at the meetings. The Committee may come to a consensus, vote, or use Robert's Rules of Order, revised, to govern the conduct of the Committee's meetings and other procedural matters, to the extent that such rules are applicable and not inconsistent with the provisions of these bylaws.

Adopted: _____

Chair _____