

Woburn Special Education Parent/Family Advisory Council BYLAWS

Article I. Woburn Special Education Parent/Family Advisory Council

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

Article II. Authority

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

Article III. Purpose of the Woburn SEPAC

The mission of the Woburn Public School (WPS) Special Education Parent/Family Advisory Council (SEPAC) is to work towards the understanding of, respect for, support of, and appropriate education for all children with disabilities in the WPS community. Our work aims to incorporate equitable access and participation within the SEPAC across all backgrounds, languages, and disability types. To that end, the Woburn SEPAC will:

1. Advise the School Committee and Director of Special Education on matters that pertain to the education, health, and safety of students with disabilities by providing direct family input, review, and feedback [603 CMR 28:07(4)].
2. Meet regularly with school officials to advise and participate in the planning, development, and evaluation of the district's special education programs (in accordance with 603 CMR 28:07 (4)). This includes but is not excluded to providing input to the development of policy and procedures as well as parent, teacher, and community member training. Advising and participating shall include development and review of the Coordinated Program Reviews and Mid-cycle Reviews, and Corrective Action Plans (as appropriate), prior to submission to the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE).
3. Organize a network of parents, guardians, and 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 featuring access to relevant information, workshops, training, forums, and community resources, and sharing timely information with the membership and the community in Woburn, as well as WPS administration and the School Committee.
4. Promote communication between Woburn SEPAC members and community, state, and national organizations, local and state legislators, and other similar groups, with the goal of advancing policies and regulations that foster understanding, acceptance, and inclusion of children with disabilities

Article IV. Terms of Membership

General Membership shall be open to all parents, guardians, and educational surrogates of

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students with disabilities in the Woburn School District. While General Membership is limited to the above, the Woburn SEPAC welcomes participation from all caregivers and community members, including educators and allies, as non-voting members.

Voting Membership is required to vote in annual officer elections and any other business that comes before any Woburn SEPAC meeting. Voting membership is open to any general member who:

1. is a parent, guardian or educational surrogate of a student with disabilities residing in the Woburn School District with or without an Individualized Education Program (IEP) or 504 Plan, or is a parent, guardian or educational surrogate of a child whose education is the partial or entire responsibility of Woburn Public Schools (603 CMR 28:10), whether being schooled in WPS, in an out-of-district placement, or in a home or hospital setting; and
2. who has attended and signed in at least two (2) previous meetings of the Woburn SEPAC in their entirety during the past twelve (12) months before the date of the vote.

Article V. Officers

1. The Executive Board of the Woburn SEPAC shall be composed of a President, Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer. All Executive Board members shall be voting members of the SEPAC, elected per the provisions of Article VI. Officers may, from time to time, delegate any of their duties to another officer. If not all positions are filled, officers will share responsibilities as needed and will make their best effort towards fulfilling the mission of the Woburn SEPAC.
2. Office and officer responsibilities of the Woburn SEPAC are:
 - a. The President shall:
 - i. Set the agenda for each General Meeting
 - ii. Preside at all meetings of the Woburn SEPAC
 - iii. Recommend the organization of and monitor the function of subcommittees
 - iv. Appoint liaisons to Woburn's schools and the community
 - v. Act as liaison to Woburn Public School Administration
 - vi. Share periodic reports with the Administration regarding Woburn SEPAC activities and needs
 - vii. Present updates about the SEPAC to the school committee no less than twice annually
 - viii. Assist board members as appropriate and perform additional responsibilities as needed.
 - b. The Vice-President shall:

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- i. Coordinate all communication between Woburn SEPAC and its membership.
 - ii. Coordinate other public communications, including but not limited to assuring that meeting notices are properly posted, not including those that are the responsibility of the Secretary.
 - iii. Maintain a list of the voting members and a list of the general members.
 - iv. Receive reports from school and community liaisons.
 - v. Assist board members as appropriate and perform additional responsibilities as needed.
- c. The Secretary shall:
 - i. Record and post minutes of the meetings of the Woburn SEPAC and its subcommittees.
 - ii. Review and delegate all incoming correspondence of the Woburn SEPAC to the other board members.
 - iii. Assist board members as appropriate and perform additional responsibilities as needed.
- d. The Treasurer shall:
 - i. Keep a full and accurate account of receipts and expenditures in accordance with the budget adopted by the organization.
 - ii. Arrange disbursements as authorized by the Executive Board or SEPAC. Disbursement for non-budgeted items must be approved by a majority vote of the members at the monthly SEPAC meeting.
 - iii. Present a financial statement at all SEPAC meetings and at other times when requested.
 - iv. Coordinate efforts to apply for grants, donations, reimbursements or any other funds for which the SEPAC may be eligible.
 - v. Assist board members as appropriate and perform additional responsibilities as needed.

Article VI: Voting/Quorum

A quorum of no fewer than three (3) voting members must be present to constitute a meeting. For any meeting in which the bylaws are being reviewed or revised, all board members must be present. Participation through virtual or hybrid attendance shall count towards quorum requirements.

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Article VII. Elections

1. Elections shall be the first order of business during the monthly meeting following nominations, or at any meeting during the year if a Woburn SEPAC board member should choose to resign.
 - a. During odd-numbered years, elections will be held for the position of President.
 - b. During even-numbered years, elections will be held for all other Executive Board positions.
2. Elections shall be decided by a simple majority vote of the voting membership present at the meeting, subject to the presence of at least five (5) eligible voting members, whether they choose to vote or not.
3. New officers shall take office immediately following their election.
4. Nominations may be made by ballot or voice vote at a designated meeting or at the first meeting in which a Woburn SEPAC board member chooses to resign. All voting members are eligible to make nominations.
5. Officers of the Woburn 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 two (2) years.
6. 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.
7. If there is no elected officer on the current Executive Board who can absorb a critical duty, the Executive Board may assign a proxy for that position, selecting from the pool of voting members free of conflicts as detailed in Article IX, until such time as that role can be reabsorbed by the current Executive Board.

Article VIII: Meetings

1. 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.
2. Minutes of SEPAC meetings shall be recorded and posted to the Woburn SEPAC website when deemed appropriate by the Executive Board.
3. The Woburn SEPAC shall strive to offer hybrid access and provide accommodations upon request, including interpretation and assistive technology, as available.

Article IX: Conflict of Interest

Any member of the Executive Board who has a financial interest in, a conflict with (or appearance of a conflict with), or has any matter pending before:

1. the Woburn SEPAC,

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2. the Woburn Department of Special Education,
3. Woburn Public Schools,
4. any schools or organizations that do or could support a student from Woburn/a student receiving services through Woburn Public Schools,
5. the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, or
6. a similar group of such nature that it prevents or may prevent that member from acting on an issue in an impartial manner will:
7. excuse themselves from that portion of the meeting,
8. refrain from discussion of and voting on said item, and
9. refrain speaking with school administration on the issue in question until the issue is no longer a conflict of interest nor gives the appearance of a conflict, as determined by a simple majority vote of the voting membership present at the meeting.

Article X: Subcommittees

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

Article XI: Amendments

These by-laws must be amended in a meeting in which all Executive Board Members are present, changes must be accepted by a simple majority of the voting members at a general meeting. By-laws changes may not be voted upon in the same meeting as they are proposed.

Article XII: Procedures

The Woburn SEPAC may use simplified Robert's Rules of Order to ensure inclusive and efficient meetings as the guiding procedures for this organization.