

Nashoba Regional School District Special Education Parent Advisory Council BY-LAWS

Article I: Name of Organization

The name of this self-governed organization shall be the Nashoba Regional School District Special Education Parent Advisory Council, hereinafter referred to as Nashoba SEPAC.

Article II: Statement of Purpose

The Nashob SEPAC receives its statutory authority from the Chapter 71B, Section 3 of the Massachusetts General Laws. This authority is also codified in the Code of Massachusetts Regulations (CMR), 603 CMR28.07(4).

Each school district shall create a districtwide parent advisory council offering membership to all parents of eligible students and other interested parties. The parent advisory council duties shall include but not be limited to: advising the district on matters that pertain 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. The parent advisory council shall establish by-laws regarding officers and operational procedures, and, in the course of its duties, the parent advisory council shall receive assistance from the district without charge, upon reasonable notice, and subject to the availability of staff and resources.

As such, the Nashoba SEPAC's duties include, but are not limited to:

- Advising the School Committee on matters that pertain to the education and safety of students with disabilities;
- Participating in the planning, development and evaluation of the District's special education programs
- Meeting regularly with school officials and facilitating communication between school administrators, educators and parents.

Article III: Mission

The mission of Nashoba SEPAC is to advocate for the understanding of, the respect for and the support of all children with special needs in the NRSD community. To that end, SEPAC will:

Work with the District, including the Director of Special Education and School Committee, to review, evaluate and recommend policies, procedures, training needs and resources related to services and programs for students with disabilities.

Promote a support network of parents of children with special needs and provide the forum to share knowledge.

Provide informational workshops open to parents, educators and all other interested parties to increase awareness of issues and best practices pertaining to students with disabilities.

Article III: Mission (con't.)

Promote communication and programs within the district schools and communities to encourage understanding, acceptance and inclusion by collaborating with PTO groups, School Councils and other school organizations.

Article IV: Terms of Membership

Section I

General membership is open to any interested person.

Section II

Voting membership is required to vote in annual officer elections and other business that comes before any Nashoba SEPAC meeting. All parents of children receiving special education services (IEP or 504 Plan) through NRSD are eligible voting members of Nashoba SEPAC.

Matters which require a vote to be taken include but are not limited to the following items:

- Elections as described in Article VI
- A change in the By-Laws
- A commitment of financial resources

Article V: Meetings

General meetings shall be held at least three times a year, from September through June. During the final meeting of the school year, the Chair shall take recommendations for the calendar of meetings for the following school year.

Minutes of all Nashoba SEPAC general business meetings shall be recorded and retained for public record.

Article VI: Elections

Once a year, either at the beginning or end of the school year, Nashoba SEPAC shall hold Elections for all Offices. 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 and hold office until the next annual election.

If any office becomes vacant, an election for that office shall be held at the next general meeting with a term to expire at the next annual election.

Any officer may resign by delivering a written notice of resignation by mail, in person, or by email to the Director of Special Education. Resignations shall be effective immediately.

Any voting member may request a referendum to remove an Officer from office. The request must be sent in writing to either the Chair or the Director of Special Education stating the cause for removal which shall be shared with voters. The Chair will add the referendum to the agenda for the next general meeting.

Article VII: Quorum

A quorum of no less than five voting members of Nashoba SEPAC must be present to constitute a general meeting.

Article VIII: Executive Board

Section I

The Executive Board of Nashoba SEPAC shall be comprised of a Chair and a Vice-Chair (or two equal Co-Chairs), a Representative from each of the three (3) towns within NRSD, a Social Media Coordinator, a Secretary and a Treasurer. All Executive Board members shall be voting members of Nashoba SEPAC, elected per the provisions in Article VI. Officers may, from time to time, delegate any of their duties to another officer.

Nashoba SEPAC will inform the school district of the outcome of the annual elections and the names and contact information of the new board no later than one month after annual elections are held.

Section II

Responsibilities of Nashoba SEPAC Board Members are as follows:

Chair (or Co-Chair sharing responsibilities equally):

- Set the agenda for each general meeting

- Preside at all meetings of SEPAC

- Meet regularly with the Special Education Director to discuss SEPAC needs, activities and parent feedback

- Co-ordinate public communications

- Represent and speak on behalf of SEPAC at School Committee meetings

- Make an annual presentation to the School Committee

Vice-Chair (or Co-Chair sharing responsibilities equally):

- Preside at meetings in the absence of the Chair

- Assist the Chair as appropriate and perform those responsibilities of the Chair at his/her request

Town Representative:

- Establish a SEPAC presence at the school(s) in the town represented

- Publicize SEPAC monthly meetings at the school(s) and community level

- Meet regularly with the school(s) PTO's and Councils

Social Media Coordinator:

- Monitor the *nashobasepac@gmail.com* account

- Maintain/monitor SEPAC Facebook page

- Maintain SEPAC membership email list

Secretary:

- Coordinate the recording, filing and posting of minutes of SEPAC meetings

- Post notices of SEPAC general meetings in accordance with Open Meeting Laws

- Count and record all vote results

Treasurer:

- Manage and account for funds collected, donated and spent for SEPAC

Article IX: Procedures

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

Article X: Definitions

For the purposes of this document only, the term "parent" is used to refer to parents as well as guardians.

Approved: March 22, 2018