

**DRAFT**

**By-Laws of the Norwell Special Education Parent Advisory Council**

**Article I: Name of Organization**

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

**Article II: Purpose of the SEPAC**

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

- promote a network of parents of children with special needs and provide the forum to share information
- advise the ~~Director of Student Services~~ Administrator of Special Education and School Committee on operations and development of special education programs, parent and teacher training needs, and help develop policy
- promote communications between SEPAC members, local, State and National organizations, councils and groups
- promote communication and programs within the community to encourage understanding, acceptance and inclusion

**Article III: Terms of Membership**

General membership shall be open to all Norwell parents/guardians of children with special needs and other interested parties. The ~~Director of Student Services~~ Administrator of Special Education, special education staff and classroom teachers may attend meetings but without voting privileges.

Voting membership shall be:

- any general member who is a parent/guardian of a child with special needs residing in Norwell, with or without an Individual Education Plan (IEP)
- a parent or guardian of a child with special needs who attends Norwell Public Schools providing they have attended at least one prior meeting of the Norwell SEPAC during the past 12 months;
- or has requested voting status in writing to the Secretary prior to the start of the meeting.

Meetings are defined as any Norwell SEPAC meeting, activity or committee at which attendance is taken.

**Article IV: Officers of the Norwell SEAPC**

Officers of the Norwell SEPAC are elected by the voting membership and hold office for 2 years. If any officer resigns prior to completion of term, an election for that office shall be held immediately and the new officer will complete the remainder of the term. All officers may have the option to run for re-election. All resignations will be done in writing. There will be no fewer than 3 parents/guardians assuming the positions of Co-Chairpersons and Secretary. A Treasurer will be elected as deemed necessary.

**Co-Chairpersons**

1. Set the agenda for each general meeting;
2. Preside at all meetings of the Norwell SEPAC;
3. Recommend the organization and monitor the function of sub-committees;

4. Act as liaison with the ~~Director of Student Services~~Administrator of Special Education;
5. Present annual report to the School Committee Members.

### **Secretary**

1. Co-ordinate all communications between the Norwell SEPAC and its membership;
2. Co-ordinate the recording and filing of minutes of the Norwell SEAPC and its sub-committees. Available upon request by voting members;
3. Collect and review all correspondence of the Norwell SEPAC;
4. Prepare periodic reports for the ~~Director of Student Services~~Administrator of Special Education regarding;
5. SEPAC activities and needs.

### **Treasurer**

1. Co-ordinate efforts to apply for grants, donations, reimbursements or any other funds for which the Norwell SEPAC may be eligible. (This can be a collaborative effort, not just the Treasurer.);
2. Manage and account for funds collected, donated and spent for Norwell SEPAC. (In the event of vacancy, the Secretary will assume this responsibility.)
3. Co-ordinate fund raising activities.

### **Advisor**

- ~~1. Previous board member, whose term shall not exceed one year, will serve as advisor to the new board. This position is not an elected position. The advisor will be appointed by a majority of the current officers.~~

### **Article V: Elections**

Elections shall be the first order of business during the May meeting upon completion of the current boards 2 year term. Elections shall be decided by a simple majority vote of the voting membership, subject to the presence of a quorum. A quorum consists of a minimum of 2 board members and no fewer than 10 voting members. New officers shall take office immediately following their election.

The Department of Education will be informed of the annual election with names, addresses and telephone numbers of the new board members by June 1.

Nominations will be made by ballot. Nomination ballots will be made available to voting members at a Norwell SEPAC meeting at least 2 weeks prior to elections. All voting members are eligible to make nominations.

Prior to the nomination meeting, a volunteer will be recruited from the voting membership of the Norwell SEPAC for the temporary position of Election Coordinator. If necessary, the selection of the volunteer will be decided by a lottery of the names of volunteers.

The Election Coordinator will coordinate activities necessary to complete the election. At the nominating meeting, the Election Coordinator will tally the nominations. Within two days, the Election Coordinator shall announce/notify individuals nominated. To remain on the ballot, nominees shall accept or decline their nominations within one week of being notified of their nomination. The Election Coordinator shall compile the list of eligible voting members and prepare ballots. A ballot must be available for each voting member.

### **Article VI: Meetings**

SEPAC meetings are subject to open meeting laws in accordance to MGL c.39, s 23A-23C.

There will be no fewer than 5 Norwell SEPAC meetings during the school year. These meetings will consist of 2 informational/speaker meetings and 3 general meetings. Officers of the Norwell SEPAC will meet as often as deemed necessary to conduct the business of the SEPAC.

Notice of all general meeting dates and elections shall be published at town hall, in the school ~~newspapers-newsletters~~ in advance and on the Norwell Schools ~~cable station channel 22~~ website. At the last general meeting, the Co-Chairs shall take recommendations for the calendar of meetings for the following school year. The calendar shall include dates and times of the meetings and projected activities for the year. A change in the by-laws must be voted on at a general meeting. Minutes of all Norwell SEAPC meetings shall be recorded and retained for public record.

The ~~Director of Student Services~~ Administrator of Special Education shall be available to attend any/all meetings given proper notification by SEPAC officers.

#### **Article VII: Subcommittees**

Subcommittees shall be created as needed.

#### **Article VIII: Amendments**

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

#### **Article IX**

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

Amended 9/13/2012