

## **Plymouth Special Education Parent Advisory Council SEPAC**

### **By-Laws 2025-2028**

#### **Article I: Name of Organization**

The name of this organization shall be Plymouth Special Education Parent Advisory Council, also known as the Plymouth SEPAC or Board.

#### **Article II: Purpose of the SEPAC and Mission**

The 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 CMR 28.07 (4).

The SEPAC's duties include, but are not limited to:

- advising the district and school committee on matters that pertain to the education and safety of all students with disabilities.
- meeting regularly with the school committee, school officials and the community to collaborate and advise on all matters relating to special education.
- participate in the planning, development, and evaluation of the school district's special education programs (including special education within the general education setting), services and extracurricular activities.

Mission: Through our advisory and participatory role the Plymouth SEPAC provides a bridge between families and Plymouth public schools district to collaborate for safe, inclusive, equitable education for all students with disabilities. We empower families, foster collaboration, and promote a culture of respect, understanding, and high expectations for all learners.

#### **Article III: Terms of Membership**

General membership shall be open to any parent, guardian, or interested party to a child receiving special education or a 504 plan from Plymouth Public Schools. Administrators will be welcomed to SEPAC meetings as general membership but will not be eligible for voting membership.

Voting membership shall be limited in general to any member who is a parent or guardian to a child receiving special education or a 504 plan from Plymouth Public Schools AND who has attended at least two previous SEPAC meetings (not including elections) in the previous 12 months. This will assure that voting members are actively involved. Voting members will be recorded by the Vice-chair /Secretary on a voting members list.

Board Member Officers shall be limited to a parent or guardian of a child receiving special education or a 504 plan from Plymouth Public Schools.

#### **Article IV: Meetings**

Meetings are defined as any SEPAC sponsored meeting at which the business of the SEPAC is conducted and an agenda is provided.

SEPAC will generally hold both monthly, public and district meetings. Public meetings will allow for SEPAC organization and upkeep, guest speakers, required annual workshop and focus groups. Public meetings will be held in person with a virtual option (when available).

Monthly district meetings will allow time for SEPAC board members to meet with district leaders, and the School Committee. District meetings will be held virtually.

SEPAC may also hold “spin off groups” such as coffee chats, social events and mentor groups.

SEPAC officers will make an asserted effort to attend all meetings. In the case of an absence, officers will bring themselves up to date with the meeting minutes and will carry out their specific duties and action items.

Minutes shall be taken at all public and district meetings by the Vice-chair / Secretary. Minutes will be approved by the board and then shall be delivered to the members and school officials within 3-5 business days.

#### **Article V: Officers of the Special Education Parent Advisory Council**

The officers of the Plymouth SEPAC shall include a Chair, Vice-chair / Secretary, Treasurer, District / SEPAC Liaison and Community Development Officer. Each shall be elected for a one year term.

The nature of the SEPAC is that the board will act as a team and some roles may overlap. The board will collaborate and use team discussion and consensus to guide their decisions.

Officer responsibilities of the Plymouth SEPAC include:

##### **Chair:**

- Set the agenda and purpose for each meeting.
- Preside at all meetings of the Plymouth SEPAC.
- Oversee the organization of SEPAC officers and monitor their functioning.
- Act as liaison with the Director of Special Education, School Committee Liaisons and district leaders.

-Approve external communications, web publications, social media publications, printed materials prior to distribution or publication.

Vice-chair / Secretary:

-Approve the agenda and purpose of each meeting.

-Preside at all meetings of the Plymouth SEPAC.

-Assist the Chair as liaison with the Director of Special Education, School Committee liaisons and district leaders.

-Record and distribute meeting minutes to the board for approval and then to appropriate recipients within 3-5 business days.

-Create an ongoing and up to date email list for both members and voting members.

District / SEPAC Liaison:

-Organize SEPAC representation at District events such as open houses, the health fair, PTA events etc.

-Develop and maintain a contact list for the principals, special education department heads, administrators and PTAs, within the district.

-Develop a working relationship to share SEPAC monthly happenings with the district for their social media, emails, newsletters and school bulletin boards.

Treasurer:

-Work with the board to develop a budget in the summer, to present to the School Business Administrator for approval for the year ahead.

-Coordinate efforts to apply for grants, donations, reimbursements or any other funds for which the Plymouth SEPAC may be eligible.

-Manage and account for the annual budget of the SEPAC.

-Budget for SEPAC website and domain. Assist in the design and operation of the website.

Community Development:

-Maintain a positive, informative, up to date and well organized presence on social media.

-Assist in the development, design, upkeep and content with other board members on the SEPAC website.

-Network with local support agencies in the community.

-Stay abreast of special education happenings in the broader community to share with the SEPAC.

#### **Article VI: Digital and Physical Assets**

All board members will transfer ownership of any and all digital and physical assets of the Plymouth SEPAC. The transfer for individual officers will happen immediately following elections. In the case of a resignation, the transfer shall happen immediately. Digital and physical assets may include, but are not limited to, the SEPAC website and domain, email accounts, social media accounts, printed materials, and files.

#### **Article VII: Voting and Elections**

All decisions requiring a vote will be made by a simple majority of the voting members present at a SEPAC meeting. A quorum of no less than five voting members must be present in order to cast a vote. Elections shall be the first order of business during the May meeting and shall be advertised at least 2 weeks in advance. 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.

All voting members are eligible to make nominations. SEPAC officers wishing to stay in their role, may announce that at the time the election information is publicized. Officers are elected by the voting membership and hold office for one year. If any office becomes vacant, the board shall have the authority to absorb the role until the annual May elections. If they seek to fill the officer position they may hold a special election. The special election will be publicized and held at a public meeting. The individual receiving a simple majority vote shall immediately assume the responsibilities of the position, with term to expire at the following May elections meeting. If the SEPAC can not fill all five positions, they may add an amendment for one officer to fill two roles.

Activities that require a vote to be taken of the voting membership include, but are not limited to the following items:

- a change in the by-laws can only be voted on at a meeting;
- a commitment of financial resources over \$150.00 requires a simple majority of voting members present, and
- elections require a simple majority of voting members present.

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

These bylaws may be amended by a two-thirds vote of the voting members present at a meeting.

The Plymouth SEPAC shall review these bylaws every three years.

Plymouth Public School Special Education Parent Advisory Council–Bylaws 2025

Date of acceptance: November 20, 2025

Plymouth, MA 02360