

FREDERICK COUNTY SPECIAL EDUCATION CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMITTEE BYLAWS

ARTICLE I: Name

The name of the committee shall be the Frederick County Special Education Citizens Advisory Committee (SECAC)

ARTICLE II: Mission

The Frederick County Special Education Citizens Advisory Committee strives to enable our local director(s) of special education to collaborate with others on local issues and facilitate positive changes in the delivery of special education services and the achievement of students with disabilities. The committee will focus on open and honest communication, improving effectiveness and accountability, advocating for appropriate resources, and identifying individual issues that may often be systemic. The committee will work together to put children first.

ARTICLE III: Members & Membership

Section 1. Members will be FCPS staff members serving students with disabilities, parents of children with disabilities enrolled in FCPS, community members who have special knowledge or interest in the needs of special education students, and high school students enrolled in any Frederick County Public School.

Maximum membership will be 31 voting members, comprised of 14 parents, 7 FCPS Staff, 7 community members, and 3 voting student members.

Section 2. A member's term will run for 2 years. A typical year will run from September to May. A member can reapply for additional terms.

Section 3. Individuals interested in membership will complete an online application after reviewing the By-Laws or email the completed application to secacinformation@gmail.com by May 15th of the application year. This also includes members who wish to reapply.

a. The deadline for accepting applications may be extended for an additional month if deemed necessary, by the Membership Committee, to ensure there are enough applicants to provide enough members for a full committee.

Section 4. Members may resign at any time by notifying the Chairperson, Co-Chairperson and/or Secretary in writing. E-mail is an acceptable form of notification.

Section 5. Members are expected to attend all monthly meetings. A member may be removed from membership after missing 3 consecutive meetings.

Section 6. Members are expected to serve on standing or ad-hoc committees which will meet once per month. See subcommittee section for more information.

Each subcommittee will be required to submit a work plan to the SECAC at the October meeting which will describe the goals/changes for the school year. Each subcommittee will be required to identify a Chairperson. A member may serve as Chairperson of only one subcommittee.

Section 7. Members will have one vote and only members may vote. A simple majority of active members based on the current membership must be present to vote. However, electronic voting may be approved by the Chairperson/Co-Chairperson in case of exceptions preventing face to face meetings.

Director(s) from the office of Special Education, the Board of Education Liaison, and the Family Support Services (Partners for Success) Family Coordinator will serve as non-voting members. Students will be voting members.

Section 8. The Chairperson/Co-Chairperson shall appoint a Membership Subcommittee Chair each September to:

- Publicly advertise membership each year, February – May.
- Solicit new members and review letters of interest.
- Notify newly selected members and provide Acceptance Letter, By-Laws, Mission Statement and Group Norms.
- Notify unselected candidates with letter of regret.
- Affirm new members each year at the first monthly meeting in September.
- Strive for a balance of membership that represents experience with a variety of disabilities and cultural diversity.
- Fill mid-term vacancies when they occur at the discretion of the membership committee.
 - The new member will serve the remainder of the term being vacated. Mid-term new membership requires vote affirmation at the next scheduled meeting.
- A member who is an FCPS employee and also a parent or community representative would be considered FCPS staff for the purpose of membership classification.
- Any changes in status will be implemented the following September, even if the member changes status mid-term.

Section 9. Any member of the Frederick County SECAC who has a relationship with an individual or organization that is or may be a conflict of interest will disclose that relationship. A conflict of interest is defined as any activity from which the member would or could derive personal or financial benefit.

Section 10. While the committee respects each person’s fundamental right to speak out on matters of public concern, the Chairperson or Co-Chairperson serves as the spokesperson for SECAC and will be responsible for media interactions.

ARTICLE IV: Subcommittees

Section 1. Members are required to serve on standing or ad-hoc committees which will meet once per month.

Section 2. Sub-committees will be established no later than September of the SECAC school year and sub-committee Chairpersons will be selected by the end of the October meeting of the SECAC school year. A member may only Chair one subcommittee at a time, but may be a member of multiple committees.

Section 3. Each subcommittee will be required to submit a work plan to the SECAC at the October meeting of the SECAC year. The work plan will include the projected meeting schedule, subcommittee mission, possible projects for the year, and an

estimated budget. Subcommittees will present their progress at least bi-monthly to SECAC.

- Section 4. Subcommittees include, but are not limited to:
- a. Budget
 - b. Communication
 - c. Membership
 - d. Resource Fair

ARTICLE V: Officers

Section 1. Officers will serve a two-year term. The Chairperson and Co-Chairperson should have terms that renew on alternating years. The Secretary should have alternating terms years of at least one of the Chairpersons.

Section 2. The Chairperson

- a. The Chairperson presides at all meetings.
- b. The Chairperson may delegate roles or responsibilities to voting members.
- c. The Chairperson establishes a written agenda for each meeting.

Section 3. The Co-Chairperson

- a. The Co-Chairperson will perform the duties of the Chairperson in his/her absence, or at the Chairperson's request. If the chairperson resigns or is unable to perform his/her duties, the Co-Chairperson will assume the duties until another Chairperson is elected.

Section 4. The Secretary

- a. The Secretary will take the minutes at all SECAC meetings and Executive Board Meetings.
- b. The Secretary will take attendance at each meeting and maintain attendance records.
- c. The Secretary/ will review and update SECAC membership lists annually.

Section 5. The Treasurer

- a) The Treasurer will be responsible for submitting receipts for budget expenses to the office of the Director(s) of Special Education.
- b) The Treasure will hold the office of Chair on the Budget Committee.
- c) The Treasure will be responsible for submitting Budget and Grant documents with approval by the Executive Board.

Section 6. Executive Board

- a. The Executive Board will consist of the Chairperson, Co-Chairperson, Secretary, Treasurer, immediate past Chairperson if applicable/available, and any subcommittee Chairpersons.
- b. The Executive Board and/or the Chairperson/Co-Chairperson can call meetings as needed.

ARTICLE VI: Elections

- Section 1. At the regular March and April meetings, nominations for officers will be taken from the floor. Members may self-nominate.
- Section 2. Election of officers will take place at the regular May meeting. Voting will be by show of hands and the majority of members must be present. Officers will be elected based on simple majority of the vote. Officers may reapply after their term ends.
- Section 3. A special election will be held when there is an officer vacancy, in accordance with Article V, Section 2.

ARTICLE VII: Meetings

- Section 1. Meetings will be held the last Monday of each month during September, October, November, and January through May. Meeting dates will be announced at the September meeting and may be altered by majority vote.
- Section 2. Meetings will be open to the public and time will be provided for public comment. Individuals making public comment will be required to sign in. SECAC will provide a reference document to public speakers at the end of the public comment section.
- Section 3. The agenda will be established two weeks prior to the meeting and made available to the public at least one week prior to the meeting.
- Section 4. Meetings canceled due to inclement weather may be rescheduled at the discretion of the Chairperson/Co-Chairperson.
- Section 5. The Chairperson/Co-Chairperson will have the authority to schedule emergency meetings, in addition to the regular monthly meetings.
- Section 6. The SECAC may establish ad hoc or standing subcommittees, as needed. If a time-sensitive issue arises in between monthly meetings, the Chairperson/Co-Chairperson may appoint an ad hoc subcommittee to address it.
- Section 7. Voting will be done by a show of hands, with majority rule. A simple majority of members must be present to vote on items.
- Section 8. SECAC will hold a retreat annually prior to the May meeting. The purpose of the retreat will be to identify priorities for the coming year and to prepare recommendations/advisements for the annual report.

ARTICLE VIII: Amendments and Bylaws Review

- Section 1. Proposed amendments to SECAC bylaws will be submitted in writing to the members at least 20 days prior to a vote during a general meeting.
- Section 2. Amendments must be approved by simple majority and upon ratification, will take effect immediately.

Section 3. Bylaws will be reviewed every two years by the Executive Board. The Chairperson/Co-Chairperson will submit them with or without changes to the general membership for review and final approval. The membership will receive the proposed bylaws at least 20 days prior to the vote.

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Jennifer Wheat
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Patricia Thomas
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Signature/Chairperson of the Frederick Co. SECAC

9/23/2014

Date Adopted

5/24/2021

Date Revised

BUDGET PLAN

An annual budget allocation of \$2500 will be provided by the Maryland State Department of Education and managed by the office of the director of special education. The funds will be used by the SECAC and receipts will be submitted for reimbursement by the secretary/treasurer. Formal requests for funds must be presented to the SECAC and approved by majority vote.

For example, funds may be used to support the following:

- SECAC sponsored events 70%
- Subcommittee funds 25%
- Meeting materials 5%