



WASHINGTON STATE
SPECIAL EDUCATION ADVISORY COUNCIL
(SEAC)
BYLAWS

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Washington State Special Education Advisory Council Bylaws

Article I—Name

The name of this organization shall be the SPECIAL EDUCATION ADVISORY COUNCIL (SEAC) in compliance with the requirements and conditions set forth in [RCW 28A.155.090](#).

Article II—Purpose

The SEAC is established in order to help facilitate the provision of special education and related services to meet the unique needs of students eligible for special education services.

The SEAC shall provide policy guidance with respect to special education and related services for children with disabilities.

The purpose of this organization shall be to:

- Provide workable solutions—taking into account the diverse needs of our communities
- Build partnerships across agencies and organizations to ensure the processes within education support the needs of the whole child
- Engage stakeholders throughout our schools and communities
- Review research and evidence based practices
- Highlight examples of excellence in schools and communities across our state.

Article III—Belief Statement

We believe that every student in Washington has the right to reach his or her full human potential. We believe that students will fully and meaningfully participate in their education and community.

We will use our strength as a broad based and diverse constituency group to play an active and influential role in decisions affecting education policies, programs, and services. Our priorities are focused on building a strong public education system that is inclusive, equitable, proactive, and supportive of students, families, and educators.

Article IV—Functions

The function of the SEAC shall be to:

- a) Advise the State Superintendent of Public Instruction, making recommendations on all matters related to special education and specifically advise the State Superintendent of unmet needs within the state in the education of students eligible for special education services.

- b) Comment publicly on any rules or regulations proposed by the state regarding the education of students eligible for special education services.
- c) Advise the state in developing evaluations and reporting such information as may assist the state in its data requirements under section 618 of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).
- d) Advise the state in developing corrective action plans to address findings identified in federal monitoring reports under Part B of the IDEA.
- e) Advise the state in developing and implementing policies relating to the coordination of services for students eligible for special education services.
- f) Review state due process findings and decisions.

Article V— Membership Representatives and Expectations of the SEAC Members

The members shall be representative of the state population and composed of individuals involved in, or concerned with, the education of students eligible for special education services (34 C.F.R. §300.168 (b)).

Section 1: Membership Representatives of the SEAC

The membership of the council is appointed by the State Superintendent of Public Instruction and shall include at least one representative of each of the following groups or entities:

- a) Parents of children, aged birth to twenty-six, with disabilities;
- b) Individuals with disabilities;
- c) Educators;
- d) Institutions of higher education that prepare special education and related services personnel;
- e) State and local district officials who carry out activities under subtitle B of Title VII of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act;
- f) Local administrators of special education programs;
- g) State agencies involved in the financing or delivery of related services to special education students;
- h) Representatives of private schools and public charter schools;
- i) Not less than one vocational, community, or business organization concerned with the provision of transition services (i.e., by age 3 and school to post-school) to students eligible for special education;
- j) A state child welfare agency employee responsible for services to children in foster care;
- k) State juvenile and adult corrections agencies;

- l) Cultural Linguistic diversity to reflect the communities we serve and ensure a diversified council;
- m) Other individuals or groups as may hereafter be designated and approved by the State Superintendent of Public Instruction.

A majority of the members of the advisory council shall be individuals with disabilities or parents of students eligible for special education as defined in IDEA. Efforts will be made to recruit members who reflect the diversity of the state.

The membership for a) and b) in Article V, Section 1, may be composed of as many at-large members as needed to meet the membership requirement as stated in Article V, Section 1, who will be required to submit an application to the State Superintendent that addresses their knowledge and experience in the education of children and youth with disabilities.

The SEAC shall advise the State Superintendent of Public Instruction to advertise at-large positions as necessary to meet the membership requirements of this council.

Section 2: Expectations of SEAC Members

The SEAC members need to:

- Be Committed to quality education for children eligible for special education services;
- Have a history of association with special education programs;
- Have the capability to gather concerns from and to report back to organizations or constituencies which are involved in the various aspects of the provision of special education services;
- Possess a broad view of the system of special education services; and
- Be available to actively participate in three Special Education advisory Council meetings each school year.

Section 3: Tenure of SEAC Members

It is intended that the members of the SEAC shall be appointed for a two-year term, commencing with the corresponding month of their initial appointment. However, in order to maintain a reasonable balance in expiration of terms, the State Superintendent of Public Instruction may establish shorter or longer terms of membership, at the State Superintendent's discretion.

Section 4: Attendance for SEAC Members

All members of the SEAC are expected to attend meetings for the length of their tenure in order to represent their constituency, organization or agency and to enhance the effectiveness of the SEAC. If they are unable to attend, they must contact the SEAC executive assistant at SEAC@k12.wa.us as soon as possible.

If a member misses three meetings in a twelve-month (July 1 through June 30) period, the Executive Committee will make a recommendation to the Superintendent that said member should be replaced.

Members who are absent two times, with or without prior notice during the twelve-month (July 1 through June 30) period, may be contacted by the Chairperson to determine their continuing interest in membership.

Section 5: Resignation by SEAC Member

A member may resign by notifying the State Superintendent of Public Instruction and the SEAC chair, in writing, and the State Superintendent will advertise to fill the vacancy before the next regularly scheduled meeting using the process described in Article V, Section 1, 2, and 3.

Section 6: Travel Reimbursement for SEAC Members

Council members shall be reimbursed at the current state rates for travel, meals, and lodging expenses while attending approved functions for the SEAC. Other necessary expenses related to the SEAC members' responsibilities, as determined by the State Superintendent of Public Instruction or his/her designee, may be reimbursed.

Article VI—Executive Committee and Their Duties/Elections

Section 1: Executive Committee Nomination and Election Process

During the next to the last regularly scheduled meeting of the odd numbered year, the Chairperson shall take nominations and elect for the position of Chairperson, Vice-chairperson, and an Executive Member (known as the Executive Committee) for a two year term beginning July 1 and running through June 30 of the second year. Only seated members shall be able to vote or cast ballots. A minimum of one member of the Executive Committee shall be a person with a disability or a parent of a child with a disability as defined by IDEA at the time of the election.

Section 2: Candidates for Executive Committee

Candidates shall have been members of the SEAC at least one year before assuming office.

Section 3: Vacant Executive Committee Position

In the event of a vacancy in an officer position, the membership shall elect a member to that vacant position at the next regularly scheduled meeting.

Section 4: Chairperson Duties

The duties of the Chairperson shall be to convene and preside at all regular and special meetings, appoint committees and ad hoc committee chairpersons, assign issues and activities to committees, facilitate the generation of annual priorities, serve as official SEAC spokesperson to other assemblies, establish the preliminary agenda with the advice of the Assistant Superintendent of Special Education and other Executive Committee members, to be responsible for developing the SEAC's year-end annual report by July 1, and to perform

other duties as required by the State Superintendent of Public Instruction in order to promote the purpose of the organization.

Section 5: Vice-chairperson Duties

The duties of the Vice-chairperson shall be to preside over all regular and special meetings in the absence of the Chairperson, to report on the bylaws as needed, serve as a parliamentary resource, and perform such other duties as requested by the Chairperson.

Section 6: Executive Member Duties

In the event that both the Chairperson and Vice-chairperson are absent, the Executive Committee Member will chair the meeting.

Section 7: Charge of Executive Committee

The charge of the Executive Committee is to set an agenda for the SEAC meetings. The Executive Committee will consist of the Chairperson, Vice-chairperson, and an Executive Member. Executive Committee members may be required to attend additional meetings to fulfill their duties.

Section 8: Executive Assistant

The Assistant Superintendent of Special Education for the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) shall appoint an individual to act as Executive Assistant to the SEAC. The Executive Assistant shall maintain accurate minutes of all regular meetings, shall be responsible for distributing the agenda at least two weeks prior to each regular meeting, shall notify members of matters concerning special education services where appropriate, and shall be responsible for maintaining an up-to-date record of attendance. Copies of all pertinent information shall be transmitted to Council members, the State Superintendent of Public Instruction, standing committees, and other interested parties as appropriate.

Article VII—Meetings

Section 1: Regular Meetings

The SEAC shall hold regular meetings at least three times in each school year. The SEAC members at the last scheduled meeting of the current school year will suggest calendar dates for the ensuing school year. Meetings shall be held in various geographical areas of the state. Members shall receive an agenda, any information necessary to act on the agenda items, and the minutes of the previous meeting at least two weeks in advance of each regularly scheduled meeting.

Section 2: Meeting Norms

To conduct effective SEAC meetings, members are expected to:

- Respond by the deadline with regard to their attendance at upcoming SEAC meetings.
- Regularly attend SEAC meetings.
- Arrive prepared for the meeting, be present, actively participate, and limit side conversations.

- For members representing organizations, represent organization’s viewpoint versus personal perspective.
- Be sensitive to other members of the SEAC and the diversity of the issues and other perspectives around the table.
- Strive for a balance of work that identifies what needs improvement and what works well.
- Have the courage to disagree respectfully while teaching and learning from one another.
- Allow for a thorough conversation that is respectful while honoring different realities and experiences to be added to the conversation.
- Listen to understand and assume positive intent.
- Be responsible to speak for, or seek out perspectives from those not in the room.
- Always protect confidentiality.
- Utilize people–first language.
- Practice self–care.

Section 3: Locations of Meetings and Meeting Materials

Meetings shall be held in various geographical areas of the state. Members shall receive the agenda, any information necessary to act on the agenda items, and the minutes of the previous meeting at least two weeks in advance of each regularly scheduled meeting.

Section 4: Outcomes of Each Meeting

Minutes will be taken which reflect the decisions made at each meeting. SEAC members, at the request of the Chair, may provide additional formal written input that can be used or disseminated by the State Superintendent of Public Instruction.

Section 5: Public Participation

All meetings of the SEAC shall be subject to the [RCW 42.30 Washington State Open Public Meetings Act](#). Only the SEAC members may initiate or amend proposals and motions, and only the SEAC members may vote. The Chairperson is a voting member of the SEAC. Public participation will be permitted in the following manner:

- Meetings of the SEAC shall be open to the public.
- At a SEAC meeting, the segment following the last item on the agenda of the first day will be reserved for comments from the public.
- All persons wishing to address the SEAC must declare their intent on appropriate forms prior to the beginning of the portion on the meeting devoted to public participation.
- Persons wishing to address the SEAC will be asked to identify themselves as to name and address, and indicate the organization to which they belong, if any. In those instances in which a person is representing an organization, the presenter should

indicate whether the presentation represents the official views of the organization.

- The public participation segment of the meeting will have a limitation of one hour. Each presentation will be limited to five minutes. The Chairperson has discretionary powers to adjust the time as the situation warrants.
- Persons who may wish to address the committee on topics for which a hearing has been planned or may be scheduled in the near future, should be so informed of the fact by the Chairperson, and it should be indicated that such a hearing might be the appropriate forum for the expression of views.
- In those instances in which more than three persons wish to present their views to the SEAC and represent a single organizational unit or a consortium-type organizational unit, such presentation shall be limited to one spokesperson with ten minutes of opportunity or up to three presenters of three minutes each.
- All written statements should be given to the SEAC Executive Assistant in order that they may be made available to the members of the committee. Lengthy written statements that may not have been completely presented within the time limitation will be made available to the Executive Assistant who will reproduce them for the information of the SEAC.
- Items identified during the public participation will be reviewed at the end of the meeting when the SEAC discusses future agenda considerations.

Note to Public Participants

- All documents distributed during the meetings are part of the public meeting and, therefore, shall be considered public documents.
- The presentations made by the participants during the public participation should take into consideration the rules of common courtesy. The presenters should keep in mind that all statements made at a public meeting become a matter of public record. It is the responsibility of the presenter that all statements made are accurate and based on facts.
- Confidentiality should be observed regarding discussion of people's names and employment.

Section 6: Quorum

A quorum shall consist of a simple majority (more than half) of the SEAC membership. A quorum shall be required to adopt any resolutions or motions and to vote at the SEAC meetings.

Section 7: Accommodations for Meeting Participants

The SEAC will provide interpreters and other necessary services at the SEAC meetings, providing notice of such need is submitted to the SEAC Executive Assistant no later than three business days before the scheduled meeting.

Article VIII—Workgroups

Section 1: Workgroup Designation

As necessary, work groups shall be formed by the SEAC to carry out tasks and responsibilities so designated. The Executive Committee will help determine work group membership and consider the representation of stakeholders included in each workgroup.

Section 2: Workgroup Responsibilities

The duties and responsibilities of each work group shall be assigned by the SEAC in the form of an adopted motion, which shall be entered into the minutes of the SEAC meeting. The SEAC members speak “to” the SEAC, not “for” the SEAC.

Section 3: Workgroup Chairperson

A member of the SEAC shall chair each such work group. Membership may consist of members of the SEAC, as well as other stakeholders.

Section 4: Non-SEAC Member Approval for Workgroup

Participation of non-SEAC members on workgroups must receive formal approval from the Executive Team.

Article IX—Amendments to the Bylaws

Section 1: Bylaws Amendment Review

These bylaws shall be reviewed by the SEAC as needed.

Section 2: Bylaws Amendment Two-thirds Vote

The bylaws of the SEAC may be amended or revised by the affirmative vote of at least two-thirds.

Section 3: Proposed Bylaws Amendment(s)

The text of proposed amendment(s) shall be distributed to all members at least two weeks prior to the vote.

Article X—Parliamentary Procedures

In matters of parliamentary procedures not covered by these bylaws, the provisions of Robert's Rules of Order shall prevail.

Signed: _____

Ms. Carrie Fannin
The SEAC Chairperson

Date: _____

Signed: _____

Mr. Chris Reykdal
State Superintendent of Public Instruction

Date: _____