



## **SPECIAL EDUCATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

### **Bylaws**

*Revised, June 25, 2018*

## **Article I: Authority**

*Section One. Establishment.* Under provisions of district policy BDF(Local), the Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC) is established by the Superintendent and serves at the will of the Superintendent. The Superintendent shall designate an appropriate staff member to serve as the SEAC Coordinator (the Coordinator).

*Section Two. Limitations.* The SEAC shall serve strictly as an advisory body at will of the Superintendent. Any SEAC recommendations to the Board of Trustees must go through the Superintendent. The SEAC shall have no power to expend public funds, enter into contracts, or otherwise place obligation or liability upon the district.

*Section Three. Bylaws.* It shall be the responsibility of the Coordinator of District Advisory Bodies, in consultation with the Coordinator, to establish and amend the bylaws. The SEAC shall observe the bylaws.

*Section Four. Sunset.* Under provisions of district policy BDF(Local), the SEAC shall be subject to a biennial sunset review process.

## **Article II: Charge**

The SEAC is charged with providing input to the Coordinator on matters pertaining to the special education programs and services of the district, as deemed necessary or appropriate by the Coordinator.

## **Article III: Meetings**

*Section One. Regular Meetings.* The SEAC shall conduct regular meetings, and the Coordinator shall determine the regular meeting schedule. The regular meeting schedule shall be placed on the SEAC website. The regular meeting schedule may be revised as necessary by the Coordinator. If necessary, the Coordinator may cancel a regular meeting with good cause (i.e., inclement weather or other adverse conditions), and determine if the meeting should be rescheduled. Members shall be given the reason for meeting cancellations, and be given sufficient notice of cancelled or rescheduled meetings.

*Section Two. Subcommittees.* The Coordinator may establish subcommittees of the SEAC from time to time on any matter as deemed necessary or appropriate. Subcommittees may not constitute a quorum of the SEAC. The Coordinator shall determine whether subcommittee meetings are open to the public (if they are open to the public, meetings must be posted under provisions of Section Nine of this Article). The Coordinator may select a SEAC member to serve as the chair of a subcommittee. Unless otherwise directed by the Coordinator, subcommittees shall meet at the discretion of the subcommittees. Subcommittees are not required to have a regular meeting schedule. Subcommittees shall report findings or recommendations to the SEAC through the Coordinator. Unless otherwise directed by the Coordinator, subcommittees are not required to take minutes of meetings.

*Section Three. Open Meetings.* All regular meetings of the SEAC shall be open to the public, and the public shall have a reasonable opportunity to provide comment. The time given to speakers may be limited (see the district's Citizens Communications and Visitor Requirements).

*Section Four. Quorum.* For regular meetings of the SEAC, a quorum shall be a simple majority of the current membership (vacancies do not count toward a quorum). Meetings may still be held without a quorum for purposes of presentations or discussion. However, no actions or voting may take place without a quorum.

*Section Five. Attendance.* Member attendance shall be monitored by the Coordinator, who shall work with members to try and resolve any attendance problems. More than three unexcused absences within a one-year period may result in dismissal by the Coordinator. Excused absences include, but are not limited to, personal or family illness, emergency situations, jury or military duty, or mandatory employment duty. It shall be the responsibility of members to report excused absences to the Coordinator, and the Coordinator shall record excused absences. In cases of numerous excused absences or long-term absence, the Coordinator shall consider the factors in each individual case and determine whether continued service on the SEAC is practicable.

*Section Six. Virtual Attendance.* Members may virtually participate in meetings through various means, to the extent they are readily available to the Coordinator.

*Section Seven. Decision-Making.* Members shall attempt to reach decisions by consensus. However, if a clear consensus cannot be obtained, decisions shall be reached by a majority vote. Proxy voting shall not be permitted.

*Section Eight. Email Voting and Polling.* In lieu of a meeting, from time to time the Coordinator may request members to vote or take a poll on a certain matter via email. However, this should not be a common practice.

*Section Nine. Agendas.* Agendas shall be prepared for all regular meetings and posted on the SEAC website and at the AISD central office at least 72 hours in advance of meetings. Agenda items shall normally be determined by the Coordinator in consultation with the Co-chairs. However, a majority of the SEAC may place an item on a future agenda.

*Section Ten. Minutes.* Minutes shall be kept for all regular meetings and other plenary meetings. Minutes may be kept for subcommittees at the direction of the Coordinator. Minutes are records of meeting highlights, and are not intended to provide a high level of detail. At a minimum, minutes shall include: attendance of members, staff, and visitors; the time the meeting was called to order and adjourned; the outcome of any votes or other actions; and a brief synopsis of the meeting proceedings. Minutes for regular meetings and other plenary meetings shall be approved by the SEAC and posted on the SEAC website.

## **Article IV: Membership**

*Section One. Restrictions.* The following restrictions apply to the SEAC membership:

1. Parent members must be a custodial parent or guardian of a student currently enrolled in the district. Parents may not also be employees of the district.
2. Teacher members refer to classroom teachers.
3. The business member need not live or work within the district. The business member may also be a parent.
4. Community members must live within the district and be at least 18 years of age. Community members may not also be parents or district employees.
5. Close relatives may not serve on the SEAC at the same time.

*Section Two. Membership Criteria.* Membership of the SEAC will strive to reflect the geographic, ethnic, gender, disability, and economic diversity of the district. At a minimum, the SEAC shall

consist of the following members, which may be expanded upon at the discretion of the Coordinator:

1. Seven parents, at least one of whom must be a representative of a special education English Language Learner.
2. Two school principals, one from the elementary level and one from the secondary level.
3. One special education teacher.
4. One general education teacher.
5. One business representative.
6. One community representative.

*Section Three. Term of Service.* The term of service for a member shall be for two years, normally starting at the first regular meeting of a school year. Members may serve multiple terms.

*Section Four. Member Selection.* The Coordinator shall be responsible for selecting individuals for service on the SEAC, based on applications received, referrals, and recruitment. The district's standard membership selection considerations shall be applied.

*Section Five. Mid-Term Vacancies.* If a member resigns or is dismissed, the Coordinator shall fill the position if a year or more remains in the term; if less than a year remains in the term, the position may be left vacant for the remainder of the term at the discretion of the Coordinator.

*Section Six. Change in Member Status.* If the status of a member changes, the Coordinator may allow the member to fill an appropriate vacancy. If no appropriate vacancy exists, the Coordinator may allow the member to continue to serve in the current position for a period of up to one year.

*Section Seven. Continued Operation.* Any vacated terms left unfilled under Sections Five and Six of this Article shall not cause the DSC to discontinue its operations.

*Section Eight. Conflict of Interest.* Conflicts of interest shall include, but are not necessarily limited to, the following:

- Having a pecuniary interest in any discussions or recommendations of the committee.
- Involvement in any litigation or procedural challenges against the district.

Any cases or possible cases of conflict of interest shall be referred to the Coordinator of District Advisory Bodies, who may consult with the General Counsel as necessary, for appropriate action. If a member is determined to have a conflict of interest, appropriate action may include:

- Required recusal from a particular agenda item or items.
- Required recusal from a particular meeting or meetings.
- Removal from the committee.

*Section Nine. Code of Conduct.* The district welcomes freedom of expression and debate. However, DSC members shall conduct themselves, in meetings and at all other times, with courtesy and respect to fellow members, district parents and students, district staff and Trustees, and members of other district advisory committees. In meetings, members must be recognized by the Co-Chairs before speaking, and otherwise respect the order maintained by the Co-Chairs. Unless otherwise authorized by the DSC, members shall not speak for the DSC;

and, unless otherwise authorized by the administration, members shall not speak for the district. Members, by their comments and/or actions, shall not reflect badly on the DSC. Violation of this code of conduct may result in reprimand or dismissal by the Coordinator, who may consult with the Coordinator of District Advisory Bodies for appropriate action.

*Section Nine. Undue Advantage.* SEAC members shall not use their position to gain or attempt to gain an undue advantage for themselves or anyone else. Violation of this requirement may result in dismissal by the Coordinator. (As examples, it would be considered an undue advantage if a person included his or her membership in the SEAC in the reasoning for allowing a student transfer or for allowing a student entry into a particular program; however it would not be considered an undue advantage for a person to include SEAC membership on his or her resume.)

## **Article V: Co-Chairs**

*Section One. Election.* The SEAC shall elect two Co-Chairs. No more than one Co-Chair may be an employee of the district.

*Section Two. Term of Service.* Each Co-Chair shall serve a two-year staggered term. Co-Chairs may serve multiple terms. Co-chair elections shall be held at the first regular meeting of a school year.

*Section Three. Mid-Term Vacancies.* If a vacancy occurs after a Co-Chair's term has commenced, the SEAC shall elect a new Co-Chair to serve for the remainder of the term.

*Section Four. Responsibilities.* The responsibilities of the Co-Chairs shall include:

1. Consulting with the Coordinator in the development of SEAC agendas. However, the Coordinator shall have final decision on agendas.
2. Presiding at meetings of the SEAC (refer to the district's Information for Chairs of Advisory Committees). The Co-chairs shall ensure commonly accepted parliamentary procedure, and apply the district's Citizens Communications and Visitor Requirements.
3. Representing the SEAC, as may be deemed necessary or appropriate by the Coordinator.

*Section Five. Removal of Co-Chairs.* The elected Co-Chairs serve at the will of the SEAC. A two-thirds majority of the SEAC may at any time remove a Co-Chair. Such action in itself does not equate to dismissal from the SEAC.

## **Article VI: Additional Administrative Support**

*Section One. Additional Support.* In addition to the responsibilities of the Coordinator described under other Articles of these bylaws, the Coordinator shall ensure an appropriate level of support for the SEAC, which shall include, but is not limited to:

1. Securing adequate facility arrangements and support staff for meetings.
2. Providing members with agendas and review materials as may be appropriate in advance of meetings.
3. Serving as custodian of SEAC records, including the status of member terms.
4. Ensuring that orientation information is provided to new SEAC members.

5. Maintaining the SEAC website.
6. Communicating as needed with the Coordinator of District Advisory Bodies.