

Somerset Berkley Regional School District
Special Education Parent Advisory Council (SBRSD-SEPAC)

Mission

The mission of the Somerset Berkley Regional School District Special Education Advisory Council, SBRSD-SEPAC, is to work for the understanding of, respect for, and support of appropriate education, provision of resources and services for all students with learning needs in the District.

To that end, we will:

- Advise the District Administration and the Regional School Committee on matters pertaining to the education and safety of students with disabilities.
- Meet regularly with school officials to participate in the planning, development, and evaluation of the District's special education programs.
- Provide and promote a network of support for parents/guardians of students with disabilities and a forum for sharing ideas and information, offering training and support.
- Provide workshops, guest speakers, forums, meetings and activities to educate and inform parents/guardians of children with disabilities, and other interested parties in areas such as, but not limited to: federal and state special education law, special education programs and services, inclusion, advocacy, post-secondary and vocational opportunities, information regarding Age of Majority and implications for independent living.
- Collaborate with the school community to continue to build the educational/vocational opportunities available within and without our school and our community that promote improved educational outcomes and lifelong learning for students with disabilities and learning needs.

Somerset Berkley Regional School District

Special Education Parent Advisory Council

By-Laws

In accordance with federal and state special education laws and regulations, and in adherence with the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) directives and advisories pertaining to the creation and functioning of special education parent advisory councils, Somerset Berkley Regional School District (SBRSD) has established and will continue to foster the Somerset Berkley Regional School District-Special Education Parent Advisory Council (SBRSD-SEPAC).

Article I: Name

The name of this self-governed organization shall be the Somerset Berkley Regional School District-Special Education Parent Advisory Council, also known as SBRSD-SEPAC.

Article II: Mission/Purpose

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Article III: Terms of Membership

General Membership

General membership shall be by request and open to any parent/guardian of a student found eligible for special education in the SBRSD, as well as any student who has reached their 14th birthday and receives special education services from SBRSD.

Other interested parties who have a stake in the education of SBRSD students with disabilities may become general members, with the exception of school administrators and elected officials.

A general member must attend at least one SEPAC event or meeting during the school year.

Voting Membership

Voting membership for business that requires a vote during SBRSD-SEPAC meetings shall be limited to members who have a student in the regional district with special needs on an IEP, and to students with disabilities who have reached age of majority. Voting members must have attended at least one SEPAC event and a minimum of one SEPAC general meeting during the school year.

Article IV: Officers

Executive Board shall consist of at least:

Chairperson:

- Serves as the first point of contact for the SBRSD-SEPAC.
- Presides at all meetings of the SBRSD-SEPAC.
- Sets the agenda for each general meeting.
- Acts as liaison between the school district, community meetings (school committee), and general members.
- Recommends the organization and function of subcommittees, as needed.
- Collects regular updates from subcommittees.
- Has the ability to disperse funds and must provide details at the next scheduled meeting.
- Prepares incoming officers for the upcoming term.
- Coordinate public communications, if needed, not including those communications that are the responsibility of the Secretary.

Vice Chairperson:

- Presides at meetings in the absence of the Chairperson, or at the request of the Chairperson.
- Adheres to by-laws and keeps/maintains order.
- Assists the Chairperson as appropriate and performs those responsibilities of the Chairperson at his/her request.

Secretary/Treasurer:

- Keeps and maintains all by-laws and has them available at all SBRSD-SEPAC meetings.
- Records and keeps minutes of the proceedings of the organization and ensure that the minutes are distributed and preserved.
- Keeps an accurate record of all SBRSD-SEPAC motions, votes, and official business.
- Collects and reviews all correspondence of the SBRSD-SEPAC.

- Coordinates all communication between the SBRSD-SEPAC and its membership.
- Maintains an account in a journal of all receipts and expenditures.
- Monitors monthly expense totals for budget compliance.
- Gives a Treasurer's Report at SBRSD-SEPAC meetings.
- Coordinates fundraising activities.
- Handles all monies collected at fundraising events.

Article V: Elections

- Nominations will be by ballot. Nomination ballots will be available to voting members at a SBRSD-SEPAC meeting scheduled in the spring of the current academic school year.
- If a member cannot be present, an absentee ballot can be requested prior to the meeting. It must be returned by the voting meeting date.
- Election is by a simple majority of voting membership.
- The District Administration and School Committee will be informed of the annual elections with the names, addresses, and phone numbers of the new board no later than one week after elections.
- An office is held for a maximum of 2 consecutive years.

Article VI: Meetings

The SBRSD-SEPAC shall hold at least four general meetings per academic school year. One meeting must be a Basic Rights Workshop, in parent-friendly terms, thereby meeting the district's requirement of 603 CMR 28:03 (1)(a)(4) for information given to students/parents/guardians of their rights under state and federal laws. Other meetings may be designed to offer families advocacy help, support, and disability related information through workshops. All meetings are open to the public. Notice of all general meeting dates, elections and informational workshops shall be published in the local press in advance, submitted to Somerset Berkley Regional High School (SBRHS) for inclusion in the high school newspaper, posted on the SBRHS website, posted at Somerset and Berkley Town Halls, and a notice sent to each voting member via annual calendar or email. During the spring meeting, the Chairperson shall take recommendations for the calendar of meetings for the following academic school year.

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Article VII: Amendments

These by-laws may be amended by a simple majority of the voting membership at a general meeting, but changes to the by-laws may not be voted upon in the same meeting as they are proposed, unless the majority votes unanimously to approve the change. The by-laws shall be reviewed at least every two years. The requirements for adoption for a revised set of by-laws shall be the same as in the case of an amendment.

Article VIII:

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