

Special Education Advisory Panel

Bylaws

Article I: Name of Organization

The name of this self-governed organization shall be the Special Education Advisory Panel also known as SEAP.

Article II: Purpose of the SEAP

Section 1. The principal purpose of this Panel shall be to promote the successful preparation of Mississippi's children and youth with disabilities for lifelong success.

Section 2. The mission of the Special Education Advisory Panel shall be to promote the education of children and youth with disabilities. The panel shall provide advice and guidance to the Mississippi Department of Education, Office of Special Education, regarding the continuous improvement of educational and related services to ensure and enhance learning of all children and youth with disabilities in local educational agencies. The advice and guidance shall include input from citizens and constituent groups.

Article III: Functions

(a) **General.** The SEAP shall:

1. Advise the State Education Agency (SEA) of unmet needs within the State in the education of children with disabilities;
2. Comment publicly on any rules or regulations proposed by the State regarding the education of children with disabilities;
3. Advise the SEA in developing evaluations and reporting on data to the Secretary under section 618 of the Act;
4. Advise the SEA in developing corrective action plans to address findings identified in Federal monitoring reports under Part B of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA); and
5. Advise the SEA in developing and implementing policies relating to the coordination of services for children with disabilities.

(b) **Advising on eligible students with disabilities in adult prisons.** The advisory panel also shall advise on the education of eligible students with disabilities who have been convicted as adults and incarcerated in adult prisons, even if, consistent with §300.600(d), a State assigns general supervision responsibility for those students to a public agency other than an SEA. (Authority: 20 U.S.C. 1412(a)(21)(D))

Article IV: Procedures

Specific procedures will include the following:

1. The SEAP shall meet a minimum of four (4) times per year to conduct its business.

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2. By July 1 of each year, the SEAP shall submit an annual report of panel activities and suggestions to the SEA. This report must be made available to the public in a manner consistent with other public reporting requirements of Part B of the Act.
3. Official minutes must be kept on all SEAP meetings and must be made available to the public on request.
4. All SEAP meetings and agenda items must be announced enough in advance of the meeting to afford interested parties a reasonable opportunity to attend. Meetings must be open to the public.
5. Interpreters and other necessary services must be provided at SEAP meetings for members or participants. The State may pay for these services from funds under §300.620.
6. The SEAP shall serve without compensation, but the State must reimburse the panel for reasonable and necessary expenses for attending meetings and performing duties. The State may use funds under §300.620 for this purpose. (Authority: 20 U.S.C. 1412(a)(21))

Article V: Administrative Year

The administrative year shall be July 1 through June 30. All reference to “year” in these bylaws refer to the administrative year unless otherwise noted.

Article VI: Terms of Membership

Section 1. The membership shall be composed of persons concerned with the education of children and youth with disabilities as required by State and Federal regulations. Membership shall include, but not be limited to:

- a) parents of children with disabilities (ages birth through 26);
- b) individuals with disabilities;
- c) teachers;
- d) representatives of institutions of higher education that prepare special education and related services personnel;
- e) State and local education officials, including officials who carry out activities under subtitle B of title VII of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 11431 et seq.);
- f) administrators of programs for children with disabilities;
- g) representatives of other State agencies involved in the financing or delivery of related services to children with disabilities;
- h) representatives of private schools and public charter schools;
- i) not less than 1 representative of a vocational, community, or business organization concerned with the provision of transition services to children with disabilities;
- j) a representative from the State child welfare agency responsible for foster care; and
- k) representatives from the State juvenile and adult corrections agencies.
- l) Special rule--A majority of the members of the panel shall be individuals with disabilities or parents of children with disabilities (ages birth through 26).

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- Section 2.** A majority of the members of the SEAP shall be individuals with disabilities or parents of children with disabilities.
- Section 3.** A term of office shall be for four (4) years with eligibility for re-appointment. The State Superintendent of Education shall have the authority to remove a member before the appointment has expired due to noncompliance with attendance requirements.
- Section 4.** The following procedures are followed to fill vacancies on the SEAP.
- The SEA will distribute nomination forms to all interested parties.
 - All nomination forms will be submitted to the SEA and should include the nominee's name, contact information, a resume or biography, a statement about why the person would make a good SEAP member and what role they would fill
 - The State Superintendent shall receive nominations for membership and has been granted the authority to appoint committee members based on received nominations pursuant to Miss. Code Ann. § 37-23-145.
- Section 5.** Recommendations for appointments to the SEAP should be made by June 30 of each year. Perspective members should be appointed in July unless minimum membership requirements are not met. In such cases where minimum membership requirements are not fulfilled, nominations may be received and submitted to the State Superintendent at any time.
- Section 6.** Membership on the panel requires consistent attendance at regular meetings. An attendance report will be generated during May of each year. When a member has missed more than 50% of the meetings, a recommendation will be made to the State Superintendent to replace the member. If the member has had extenuating circumstances, which justify absences from meetings, he/she may petition the State Superintendent in writing to remain on the Panel.

Article VII: Officers of the Special Education Advisory Panel

Special Education Advisory Panel officers shall include a chairperson, a chairperson-elect, a secretary, an assistant secretary, and a past-chairperson.

Article VIII: Nominations, Appointments, Elections, and Duties of Officers

- Section 1.** To be elected to an office, one must be a SEAP member for at least one year unless no such person is willing to serve, in which case newer members may be considered. Elections for all officers are by simple majority of the full membership.
- Section 2.** The chairperson-elect will serve a term of one year. After serving in this capacity for one year, the chairperson-elect will automatically assume the position of chairperson. The chairperson-elect shall preside over meetings in the absence of the chairperson and discharge the duties of the chairperson until a chairperson can be elected upon the inability of the chairperson to discharge said duties.
- Section 3.** The chairperson will serve a term of one year. After serving in this capacity for one year, the chairperson automatically assumes the position of past-chairperson. The chairperson shall preside over all meetings and serve as an ex-officio member of all committees.
- Section 4.** The past-chairperson will serve a term of one year.

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- Section 5.** The secretary will serve a term of one year. The secretary shall record the minutes of all meetings of the SEAP and distribute the minutes to all members of the SEAP.
- Section 6.** The assistant secretary will serve a term of one year. The assistant secretary shall record the minutes of the meetings in the absence of the secretary and assist the secretary as directed by the secretary or chairperson.
- Section 7.** The election will be held annually in June. New officers will begin service in August of each year.
- Section 8.** The chairperson shall appoint a successor to complete the unexpired term of an officer should any elected position become vacant prior to the regular annual election.

Article IX: Meetings

- Section 1.** The annual schedule of regular meetings shall include at least four (4) meetings per calendar year. Special meetings may be called by either the chair or co-chair when he or she deems it necessary.
- Section 2.** Dates for the regular meetings of the administrative year shall be established during the last meeting of the previous year.
- The chairperson, with input from the entire panel and the facilitation of the SEAP, shall set the agenda for each meeting. The chairperson may request the SEAP to provide information based upon agenda items.
- Section 3.** One-third of the SEAP membership shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business in any meeting of the SEAP. Meetings can be held even if a quorum is not present without conducting business transactions.
- Section 4.** Any or all of the members of the SEAP may participate in a special, regular, or annual meeting of the advisory panel by or through the use of telephonic or video conference, internet computer conference, or any other means of communication by which all persons participating in the meeting can simultaneously hear each other. Participation by telephonic or similar means shall constitute presence in person at the meeting.

Article X: Committees

- Section 1.** The SEAP may establish committees to carry out SEAP responsibilities and to accomplish its purpose as stated in the federal law.
- Section 2.** Duties and responsibilities of each committee shall be adopted by the SEAP in the form of a resolution, which shall be entered into the minutes of the SEAP meeting. Persons other than members of the SEAP may serve on its committees. Each committee shall be chaired by a member of the SEAP. Membership on each committee shall include parents of individuals with disabilities or individuals with disabilities.

ARTICLE XI: Amendments

- Section 1:** Amendments to these bylaws must be submitted by SEAP members to the chair at least

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fifteen (15) calendar days prior to the date of the next regular or special meeting at which the proposed amendment is to be considered. The proposed amendments shall be distributed to all panel members by email at least seven (7) calendar days before the meeting.

Section 2: These bylaws may be amended by simple majority of the full membership.

Article XII: Rules of Order

The latest revision of Robert's Rules of Order are the meeting procedures for this organization.