

SPECIAL EDUCATION PARENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE

A. Purpose and Responsibility of the Committee

The Elizabeth Board of Education Special Education Parent Advisory committee (ESEPAC) exists to fulfill the requirements of the New Jersey Administrative Code 6A:14-1.2(h):

Each Board of Education shall ensure that a special education parent advisory group is in place in the district to provide input to the district on issues concerning students with disabilities.

The regulation allows parents and school district leaders to create and run an advisory groups that meets local needs. A SEPAC should be structured to benefit all students with disabilities, not just a single group of students or a single issue.

The ESEPAC works collaboratively with all special education parents and district staff in an advisory capacity to the Elizabeth Board of Education to:

1. Strive to achieve mutual respect, understanding, support, safety and appropriate education for children with special needs while addressing possible overlapping concerns of special education and general education families;
2. Foster increased communication of services and information for families of children with special education needs;
3. Facilitate and foster parent involvement in parent education resources;
4. Foster and promote inclusionary special education settings for all students;
5. Provide advisory information to the Elizabeth Board of Education of issues pertaining to special education services in the district; and
6. Provide information meetings on topics of interest for families with students who receive special education and/or educational support services; and
7. Facilitate a network of support between parents/guardians of children with special needs and professionals to address emotional, social, and educational concerns through liaisons and workshops.

B. Scope and Duration of the Committee's Operation

The committee will be a standing committee to meet the requirements of N.J.A.C. 6A:14-1.2(h). The committee's scope is limited to the purpose and responsibility of the committee as detailed in Section A., and serves in an advisory capacity to the Elizabeth Board of Education.

C. Committee Membership

The special services director shall advise those parents that have been selected to serve on SEPAC by July 31 of each school year. Membership on the committee will be comprised of parents of students with special needs who shall be selected as follows:

1. Two elementary school parents who are recommended by the elementary-level principals, with consultation with the elementary school child study teams;
2. Two middle school parents who are recommended by the middle school-level principals, with consultation with the middle school child study team;
3. Two high school parents who are recommended by the high school-level principals, with consultation with the high school child study teams;
4. At least 2 parents of students who are placed out of district who are recommended by the supervisor of special education, with consultation with the child student teams who manage out-of-district placements;

D. The committee may include the following members:

Child Study Team member
Special education teacher
General education teacher
Supervisor of Special Services
Elizabeth Board of Education liaison

E. Recommendations

1. Recommendations of the SEPAC shall not reduce or alter the responsibility of the Board, which shall be free to accept or reject the recommendations as it deems appropriate.
2. SEPAC members may not make decisions nor bind the Board in matters that are reserved to Board members by law.
3. Matters concerning individual students are not appropriate matters for consideration by SEPAC members.