



AUSTIN
Independent School District

**SPECIAL EDUCATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE
BYLAWS**

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 Special Education Advisory Committee coordinator.

Section Two. Limitations. The SEAC shall serve strictly as an advisory body at the will of 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. Under the provisions of district policy BDF(LOCAL), it shall be the responsibility of the coordinator of district advisory bodies, in consultation with the committee coordinator, to establish and amend the bylaws, as needed.

Article II: Charge

Section One. Purpose. The purpose of the SEAC shall advise the Special Education Department on select initiatives, action plans, and ways to support families and students receiving special education services

Article III: Meetings

Section One. Regular Meetings. The SEAC shall conduct regular meetings, and the committee 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 committee coordinator. If necessary, the committee 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 canceled or rescheduled meetings.

Section Two. Subcommittees. The committee coordinator will request approval from the Chief Officer of Intergovernmental Relations & Board Services and the district advisory body coordinator to establish a subcommittee and shall provide a description of the purpose and the desired outcome of the requested subcommittee, as well as the number of members needed to accomplish the task. Subcommittees may include non-members to serve only in a consultative capacity.

Section Three. Open Meetings. Regular and other plenary meetings of the SEAC shall be open to the public and conducted in accordance with the district standard citizen's communications and visitor guidelines.

Section Four. Quorum. For regular and other plenary meetings of the SEAC, a quorum shall be the majority of current membership. Regular and other plenary meetings may be held without a quorum for purposes of presentations or discussions; however, no actions or voting may take place without a quorum.

Section Five. Attendance. Member attendance shall be monitored by the committee 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 committee 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 committee coordinator who shall record excused absences. In cases of numerous excused absences or long-term absences, the committee 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 participate in meetings virtually through various means, to the extent they are readily available to the committee coordinator. However, members shall not participate virtually on a recurring basis.

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. Each member shall be entitled to one vote per motion. Members in virtual attendance may vote, but proxy voting is not allowed. In accordance with open meetings procedures, any voting must be done openly during meetings, normally by a show of hands (zoom poll or google doc)– any non-open voting methods, such as paper ballots or email, are not allowed.

Section Eight. Agendas. Agendas shall be prepared for all regular meetings and posted on the SEAC website at least 72 hours in advance of meetings. Agenda items shall be determined by the committee coordinator and co-chairs in consultation with the voting committee members.

Section Nine. Minutes. Minutes shall be kept for all regular meetings and other plenary meetings. Minutes may be kept for subcommittees at the direction of the committee 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. Membership Criteria. Members are selected by in accordance with District Policy BDF (LOCAL). Membership of the SEAC will strive to reflect the geographic, ethnic, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, disability, and economic diversity of the district. The committee shall be compromised of no more than SEAC members as follows:

- One parent from each vertical team;
- One teacher from each vertical team;
- Two school administrators, including representation from both elementary and secondary level. School administrators may include assistant principals.
- One business representative;
- One para professional staff member;
- Two community representatives;
- Two at-large members, who may be selected for the purpose of ensuring a balance and/or depth of experience on the SEAC. At-large members may be supplemental to any of the above membership categories.

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

- Parent members must be a custodial parent or guardian of a student currently enrolled in the district;
- A district employee may not count as a parent member;
- Teacher members refer to classroom teachers employed by AISD;
- Any business members need not live or work within the district; business member may also be a parent.
- Any community members must live or work within the district; and be at least 18 years of age. Community members may not also be parents or district employees.
- The following persons may not serve on the SEAC at the same time:
 - Both parents or guardian of a student
 - A sibling and the sibling's parents or guardian
 - Sibling students
 - Other close relatives [See DK(LOCAL)]

Section Three. Term of Service. In accordance with BDF (LOCAL), members shall serve one two-year term. Members may serve one additional term, but renewed membership is not automatic. Members seeking a second term shall submit a [standard application](#) to the district advisory bodies coordinator.

Section Four. Member Selection. The Chief Officer of Intergovernmental Relations & Board Services, committee coordinator, committee co-chairs and district advisory body coordinator shall be responsible for recommending individuals to the Superintendent 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 committee 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 committee coordinator.

Section Six. Change in Member Status. If the status of a member changes, the committee 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 SEAC 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 discussion or recommendations of the committee or subcommittee; and
- 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 for appropriate action. If a member is determined to have a conflict of interest, appropriate action may include:

- Recusal from a particular agenda item or items;
- Recusal from a particular meeting or meetings; and

- Removal from the committee or subcommittee.

Section Nine. Code of Conduct. The district welcomes freedom of expression and debate. However, SEAC members, as well as subcommittee 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 SEAC, members shall not speak for the SEAC, 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 SEAC or the district. Violation of this code of conduct may result in reprimand or dismissal by the coordinator of district advisory bodies.

Section Ten. 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 of district advisory bodies. (As examples, it would be considered an undue advantage if a person included his or her membership in the SEAC in attempting a student transfer or for student entry into a particular program; it would be considered an undue advantage to request information that would ordinarily require a formal process to acquire; however, it would not be considered an undue advantage to include SEAC membership on his or her resume.

Article V: Co-Chairs

Section One. Eligibility. To be eligible to serve as a co-chair, a member must have served at least the majority of one school year on the SEAC with reasonable acceptable attendance.

Section Two. Terms of Service. Co- chairs shall serve two-year terms. Co-chairs may serve one additional term. Co-chair elections shall normally be held during the second regular meeting of the 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 committee coordinator in the development of SEAC agendas. The co-chairs and voting committee members shall have the final decision on the agendas, with the understanding that some proposed agenda items may require coordination with the committee coordinator district departments and personnel, who may not be available to the SEAC committee.
2. Presiding at meetings of SEAC, following basic meeting procedures provided by the coordinator of district advisory bodies.

Section Five. Removal of Co-Chairs. 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 of the co-chair, from the SEAC.

Article VI: Committee Coordinator

Section One. Role of the Coordinator. The committee coordinator shall provide ongoing support to the SEAC. Responsibilities of the committee coordinator shall include, but are not limited to:

- Ensuring that adequate arrangements are made for venues for regular and other plenary meetings, as well as any subcommittee meetings;
- Providing members and applicable staff with agendas and background materials sufficiently in advance of regular and other meetings;
- Serving as custodian of SEAC records, including the status of member terms;
- Keeping minutes of regular and other plenary meeting;
- Ensuring that agendas and approved minutes for regular and other plenary meetings are posted in a timely manner;
- Serving as a point of contact and information for stakeholders, and conveying any pertinent information to the SEAC;
- Ensuring that new members are sufficiently oriented to service on the SEAC; and
- Consulting with the coordinator of district advisory bodies as needed.

Section Two. Technical and Specialized Support. The committee coordinator shall ensure that appropriate technical and specialized support, either internal or external to the district, are available to the SEAC as needed.

Article VII: Sunset Review

Section One. Review of the Committee. Superintendent appointed-advisory committees that are not required by law shall sunset either on a specific date or upon the conclusion of an action or occurrence as set out in the committee's bylaws, unless specifically reauthorized by the Superintendent. The district advisory bodies coordinator shall consult with the committee coordinator to request a position statement or recommendation as to the reason why the committee shall continue. Based upon the information provided, the Superintendent shall have final approval for the continuation of SEAC committee.

Section Two. Time Frame. The SEAC committee shall cease to exist on August 31st, 2025 (Sunset Date), unless the committee is reauthorized by the Superintendent.

Subcommittee Guidelines

1. Applicability
 - a. These guidelines apply to subcommittees formed under Article III, Section Two.
2. Formation
 - a. The committee coordinator and co-chairs may form a subcommittee if the advisory committee or the administration deems a subcommittee is necessary or advisable.
 - b. The SEAC committee coordinator will call for volunteers to serve on the subcommittee.
 - c. To provide diverse and fresh perspectives, SEAC members who have not previously served on subcommittees are encouraged to volunteer.

- d. The co-chairs and SEAC committee coordinator may attend and take part in subcommittee meetings.
3. Responsibility
- a. Subcommittees do not constitute a quorum of the SEAC, and therefore do not take any formal vote or action.
 - b. Subcommittees do not speak on behalf of the SEAC or the district.
 - c. The SEAC committee coordinator and co-chairs will develop a charge for each subcommittee.
 - d. The SEAC committee coordinator and co-chairs will designate subcommittee chair(s), who will:
 - i. Ensure adherence to subcommittee guidelines and charges;
 - ii. Develop agendas based on subcommittee input;
 - iii. Convey agendas, messages and information to the subcommittee;
 - iv. Pace meetings and encourage participation of all members;
 - v. Bring any problems or concerns to the SEAC committee coordinator; and
 - vi. Bring committee recommendations to the SEAC committee coordinator;
 - e. The SEAC will consider subcommittee recommendations and determine the extent to which they are forwarded to the Superintendent – any recommendations to the Board are through the Superintendent.
 - f. The SEAC committee coordinator and co-chairs may direct the subcommittee to accelerate, conclude, or extend its work.
4. Meetings
- a. The SEAC committee coordinator will establish a date, time, and location for the initial meeting of the subcommittee.
 - b. At the initial meeting, the minimum order of business is:
 - i. Ask for a volunteer to record meeting attendance and highlights (or this responsibility may rotate from meeting to meeting);
 - ii. Review the subcommittee guidelines;
 - iii. Review the subcommittee charge;
 - iv. Initiate discussion of issues;
 - v. Establish a contact list of subcommittee communications; and
 - vi. Agree on a schedule for subsequent meetings.
 - c. The subcommittee chair(s) provides meeting schedules and highlights to the SEAC committee coordinator.
 - d. The subcommittee may invite non SEAC members to meetings to provide information or input, and as such may take part in meetings.
 - e. The subcommittee may not conduct or direct school or community meetings, interviews, surveys, or field trips without prior approval of the SEAC committee coordinator, who may consult with the co-chairs.
 - f. The subcommittee may request staff support or other district resources through the SEAC committee coordinator.
 - g. In addition to making recommendations, the subcommittee may also conduct research and provide findings or reports.

