

**Hanover Special Education Parent Advisory Council**  
**BYLAWS**

**Article I. Name**

The name of this self-governed organization shall be the Hanover Special Education Parent Advisory Council, also known as the Hanover SEPAC.

**Article II. Authority**

The Hanover SEPAC is formed pursuant to the provisions of Section 3 of Chapter 71B of the Massachusetts General Laws.

**Article III. Purpose and Function of the Hanover SEPAC**

The mission of the Hanover Special Education Parent Advisory Council is to work towards the understanding of, respect for, and support of all children with disabilities in the Hanover Public Schools (HPS) community. To that end and pursuant to CMR 603 28.07 (4), the Hanover SEPAC will:

1. Advise the Hanover Public Schools district on matters that pertain to the education and safety of students with disabilities; meeting regularly with school officials to participate in the planning, development, and evaluation of the school district's special education programs [603 CMR 28:07(4)].
2. Provide input into the development of policies, procedures, and training relating to the district's special education programs.
3. Promote a network of parents, guardians, educational surrogates, including but not limited to parents of children with disabilities, and provide a forum to share information and discuss matters regarding children with disabilities in the Hanover community. This network will also provide support for parents, guardians and other interested parties, as well as relevant information and resources pertaining to special education.
4. Promote communication and programs within the community to encourage understanding, acceptance and inclusion of children with disabilities, thereby encouraging an atmosphere of open communication, understanding and mutual respect among all students, parents, teachers, and the Hanover community at large.

5. To provide and promote information and educational opportunities for the community on topics related to special education.
6. In years where the district is participating in Coordinated Program Reviews (CPR) or Mid-cycle Reviews (MCR) by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE), the SEPAC will look to provide input directly to DESE. The SEPAC will meet with school officials to discuss DESE's CPR and MCR findings and provide input about any required Corrective Action Plans prior to the district's submission of a Corrective Action Plan.
7. Promote ongoing communication between the Hanover SEPAC members and local and state and national organizations, councils and groups. This will include staying current on public policy issues, state advisories and regulation which impact all education in Massachusetts, and crafting responses, as necessary.

## **Article IV. Terms of Membership**

### **Section A: General Membership**

General membership is open to all parents, guardians and educational surrogates of children with disabilities with or without an Individual Education Program (IEP) or 504 Plan residing in Hanover; all students aged 18-22 who receive special education services from Hanover Public Schools; and all parents, guardians or educational surrogates of children whose education is the partial or entire responsibility of Hanover Public Schools (603 CMR 28.10), whether being schooled in HPS, in an out-of-district placement, or in a home or hospital setting; or any other interested person. No official notice is required to join the Hanover SEPAC, nor is there any requirement to pay dues.

### **Section B: Voting Membership**

1. Annual Elections:

Voting membership is required to vote in annual officer elections. Voting membership is open to any general member who has attended at least two (2) previous meetings of the Hanover SEPAC during the past twelve (12) months before the date of the vote.

2. Business Matters:

Voting membership for business matters shall be limited to the current board in order to perform its administrative functions on behalf of the Hanover SEPAC.

## **Article V. Board Members and Duties**

### **Section A: The Executive Board**

The Executive Board of the Hanover SEPAC shall be Chair (or Co-Chairs), Secretary, Treasurer, Public Relations Chair, Events Chair, School Representatives as well as up to three (3) additional at-large members. All Executive Board members shall be voting members of the SEPAC, elected per the provisions of Article VI. Officers may, from time to time, delegate any of their duties to another officer.

### **Section B: Officer Responsibilities of the Hanover SEPAC:**

1. The Chair (or Co-Chairs) shall:
  - a. Set the agenda for each general meeting
  - b. Preside at all meetings of the Hanover SEPAC
  - c. Recommend the organization of and monitor the function of any subcommittees
  - d. Act as liaison to the Director of Student Services
  - e. Act as liaison to the Hanover School Committee
  - f. Lead efforts to advise the district on matters that pertain to the education and safety of students with disabilities
  - g. Present updates about the Hanover SEPAC to the school committee at least annually
  - h. Act as a liaison with the Federation for Children with Special Needs and the MassPAC; and
  - i. Assist board members as appropriate and perform additional responsibilities as needed.
2. The Secretary shall:
  - a. Take meeting minutes at all board meetings
  - b. Keep attendance records of all board meetings
  - c. Draft and distribute approved board meeting minutes for public posting
  - d. Count and record all vote results; and

- e. Assist board members as appropriate and perform additional responsibilities as needed
- 3. The Treasurer shall:
  - a. Keep a full and accurate account of receipts and expenditures in accordance with any budget adopted by the Hanover SEPAC
  - b. Arrange disbursements as authorized by the Executive Board
  - c. Present a financial statement at all board meetings and at other times upon request
  - d. Act as the liaison with the town accountant and/or the Hanover Public Schools business manager as necessary; and
  - e. Assist board members as appropriate and perform additional responsibilities as needed
- 4. The Public Relations Chair shall:
  - a. Coordinate publicity and promotion of all Hanover SEPAC events and other public communications
  - b. Manage any public social media accounts and postings, and the Hanover SEPAC website; and
  - c. Act as the liaison with the Hanover Public Schools technology administrator
  - d. Assist board members as appropriate and perform additional responsibilities as needed
- 5. The Events Chair shall:
  - a. Lead event planning
  - b. Coordinate events logistics (book location, speakers, date and time, refreshments, etc.)
  - c. Coordinate with the Public Relations Chair to advertise scheduled events
  - d. Coordinate with the Treasurer for any payments required; and
  - e. Assist board members as appropriate and perform additional responsibilities as needed.
- 6. School Representatives shall:
  - a. Act as liaisons between their representative school and the Hanover SEPAC
  - b. Communicate Hanover SEPAC information to their respective school

- c. Build awareness at their respective school of the Hanover SEPAC and related workshops and events
- 7. Board Members at Large shall:
  - a. Support the purpose and function of the Hanover SEPAC, as described in Article III
  - b. Assist board members as appropriate and perform additional responsibilities as needed
  - c. The number of at large board members shall not exceed three (3)

## **Article VI: Voting and Elections**

### **Section A: Voting and Quorum**

All decisions requiring a vote will be made by a simple majority of the voting members present at any Hanover SEPAC meeting. A quorum of no less than three (3) voting members must be present to constitute a meeting.

### **Section B: Elections**

1. Elections shall take place at the annual meeting, which is the last meeting of the school year. Elections shall be decided by a simple majority vote of the voting membership, subject to the presence of a quorum of voting members. New officers shall take office immediately following their election.
2. Nominations may be made by ballot or voice vote at the meeting. All voting members are eligible to make nominations.
3. Officers of the Hanover SEPAC shall be voting members who are elected by the voting membership and whose term of office will run from the date of their election to the date of the next election of officers, approximately one year. If any office becomes vacant, an election for that office shall be held at the Board's discretion, no later than the next scheduled election. In the interim, the Board will absorb the duties of the vacant position.

## **Article VIII: Meetings**

Meetings are defined as any Hanover SEPAC meeting at which a quorum is met and attendance is taken. The Hanover SEPAC shall hold an annual meeting of the voting members each year for the purpose of electing officers and to vote on any matters as shall be specified in the notice of such meeting.

1. All meetings are open to the general public
2. The number of meetings to be held each year and the dates of those meetings shall be determined annually by the executive board
3. Minutes of all board meetings will be recorded and retained for public record
4. Reasonable attempts shall be made to notify the general membership of meeting times and proposed agenda prior to the meeting

#### **Article IX: Conflict of Interest**

Any member of the Executive Board who has a financial interest in or conflict (or appearance of a conflict) with any matter pending before the Hanover SEPAC, of such nature that it prevents or may prevent that member from acting on the matter in an impartial manner will offer to the Board to voluntarily excuse themselves and will vacate his seat and refrain from discussion and voting on said item.

#### **Article X: Subcommittees**

Subcommittees shall be created as needed at the discretion of the Officers and shall report on activities to members at regular meetings.

#### **Article XI: Amendments**

These by-laws may be amended by a simple majority of the voting members at a general meeting, but by-laws changes may not be voted upon in the same meeting as they are proposed unless a quorum (as described in Article VI) votes unanimously to approve the change.

**APPROVED: June 9, 2023**