

**BY-LAWS OF THE NORTH PROVIDENCE
SPECIAL EDUCATION LOCAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

ARTICLE I: NAME

The name of this committee shall be the North Providence Special Education Local Advisory Committee (NPSELAC).

ARTICLE II: PURPOSE AND MISSION STATEMENT

- Improve communication among parents, staff, administrators, schools and School Committee on special education needs through the promotion of a team concept.
- Advocate for partnerships with parents of students with disabilities to ensure that they receive the entitlements provided to them under state and federal laws. (RI Reg. 300.900c)
- Inform the community of North Providence through the North Providence School Committee about current special education services, meeting needs, future plans, state and federal funding applications, and the evaluation and monitoring of outcomes of special education programs.
- Encourage a greater understanding, acceptance, compassion, and inclusion of children with special education.

ARTICLE III: FUNCTIONS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- Advise the North Providence School District on matters concerning the unmet needs of students with disabilities. (RI Reg. 300.900c)
- Comment and provide recommendations on improvement plans including school support plans resulting from Part B compliance reports, local compliance with state and federal laws pertaining to the education of students with disabilities. (RI Reg. 300.900c)
- Comment and provide recommendations on applications for federal and state funds. (RI Reg. 300.900c)

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- Serve as advocates in partnership with parents for students with disabilities to ensure that they receive the entitlements provided to them under state and federal laws. (RI Reg. 300.900c)

ARTICLE IV: OPERATING PROCEDURES

- The committee will run as a pro-active collaborative partnership between North Providence parents, students, educators, and administrators.
- The committee will promote mutual respect and trust and assist parents by providing opportunities for them to learn more about laws and services pertaining to students with disabilities.
- The advisory committee shall meet a minimum of 4 times annually. Additional meetings shall be scheduled when necessary. (RI Reg. 300.900e)
- Official minutes shall be kept of all committee meetings and be available for public review upon request. These minutes will be located in the North Providence Public School Special Education Office.
- All committee meetings and agendas shall be publicly announced one week prior to the date of the meeting via the North Providence Breeze newspaper, as well as, posted on the North Providence Public Schools website- Special Education Link.
- All meetings shall be open to the public. (RI Reg. 300.900e)
- The committee shall hold its regular meetings at a central location convenient to all members and accessible to persons with disabilities.
- The length of general committee meetings shall not exceed 2 ½ hours unless approved by a two thirds vote of membership present.
- Members must be notified of all regular and special meetings. Any change in the established date, time, or location must be given **five days**' notice unless inclement weather.

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- Interpreters and other necessary services may be provided at meetings for members or participants when requested in advanced, at least **ten days** prior to the scheduled meeting.
- The advisory committee shall serve without compensation, but may be reimbursed for reasonable and necessary expenses for attending meetings and performing duties. (RI Reg. 300.900f)
- All participants of the NPSELAC shall be provided with a copy of the by-laws, and the by-laws will be available at each meeting, and on the NPSELAC's website.
- A **formal** member of the Advisory Committee is defined as a member who
 - a. Meets the membership criteria * and
 - b. Participates in committee meetings or activities. In the event that a **formal** member does not participate in same manner, it will be the responsibility of the officers to contact the **formal** member to determine his/her interest in the continuation of serving on NPSELAC.
- An **attende**e is an individual who attends meetings but has not become a **formal** member either by choice or because they do not meet the membership criteria.
- Provided a quorum is in attendance, formal members will make all advisory committee decisions upon a vote. **
- The rules of parliamentary procedure as described in Robert's Rules of Order shall govern the proceedings of this committee, provided they do not conflict with the intent of the by-laws or any state, federal laws/regulations, and/or any school department policy and/or procedures.
- The committee shall submit such reports as are required by the School Committee, Commissioner of Education, Board of Regents, or United States Department of Education.

*See MEMBERSHIP under Article V

**See VOTING RIGHTS under article VI

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- In order to comment publicly on rules, regulations, and special education issues, members shall either volunteer or be appointed by the Chairperson and the Assistant Chairperson to state, local, and other subcommittees.
- The Chairperson and Assistant Chairperson may establish such subcommittees as they deem necessary or desirable to carry out the duties and responsibilities of the committee and shall appoint a chairperson to each subcommittee. The majority of subcommittee members shall be parents.

A. OFFICERS:

- The officers of the North Providence Special Education Local Advisory Committee shall be:
 - Chairperson
 - Co-Chairperson
 - Recording Secretary
 - Corresponding Secretary
 - Treasurer
 - Trustee

B. ELECTION AND TERM OF OFFICE:

- Length of term is two years, beginning the start of the new school year.
- Limit is two consecutive terms in same role unless a petition to extend the term is approved by the committee.
- The Chairperson shall not be a member of the administration of the North Providence School Department or a member appointed by the Superintendent, North Providence Teacher's Alliance, or the School Committee.
- Elections shall be held in May.

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C. REMOVAL:

- Any officer of the committee may be removed by a two-thirds vote of all members sitting on the committee, whenever it is in the judgement of the committee that the best interests of the committee would be served by the decision.

D. VACANCY:

- A vacancy in any office because of death, resignation, removal, disqualification, or otherwise shall be filled by the committee from a volunteer among existing membership for the unexpired portion of the term.

E. DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES:

Chairperson

- Preside at all committee meetings.
- Will sign all letters, reports, and other communications of the committee.
- Respond and forward e-mails sent to the committee.
- Maintain the Contact list within the e-mail account.
- Send agenda/minutes out prior to meetings.
- Generally responsible for directing and coordinating affairs of the committee.
- Conduct September formal membership enrollment drive.
- Keep a binder of all correspondence to the Chair.
- Keep correspondence with sub-committees.
- Chair Strategic Plan and By-laws committee in absence of Trustee.
- Compile annual report to be submitted to superintendent by July 1st of each year.
- Attend workshops with state and local agencies. If unable to attend will be responsible for securing replacement to represent the NPSELAC.
- Attend North Providence School Committee meetings as needed for related issues pertaining to the NPSELAC.
- Be available for interviews by media, state, or federal reviews or interviews.

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- If a leadership position is vacant, the Chair will delegate duties as needed until said position is filled by the nominating committee.

Co-Chairperson

- Take over chairperson roles in the event chairperson, not in position, or absent.
- Assist Chairperson as needed to maintain goals of NPSELAC.
- Perform such other duties as may be provided for by these bylaws or directed by the Chairperson.
- Chair the Liaison Committee.
- Maintain a log of Formal Membership.
- Maintain a binder of all correspondence to the Co- Chair.

Recording Secretary

- Take the minutes and attendance of all meetings.
- An electronic copy will be sent to Chair, Co-Chair and Special Education Director within **two weeks** of meeting.
- Post approved minutes on website per current defined process.
- Prepare other necessary communications as directed by the Chairperson.
- Chairperson of the nominating committee.

Correspondence Secretary

- Post meeting information in the North Providence Breeze.
- Maintain a binder of all correspondence.

Treasurer

- Record complete and accurate financial transactions and report on those transactions to the committee members.
- Maintain all official records of the Committee's financial transactions in a binder.
- At the end of the fiscal year these official documents will be stored at the North Providence School Department Administration building.

Trustee

- Chair Strategic Planning Committee.
- Chair By-laws Committee.

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- Annual revision of the Procedures Manual with Chair.
- Keep a binder of all correspondence to the trustee. At the end of the fiscal year these official documents will be stored at the North Providence School Department Administration building.

Nomination Committee

- A standing “nomination committee” will be established in November for the election of the upcoming school year officers.
NOTE: This occurs biennially in even years. Examples: 11/2016, 11/2018, 11/2020 etc.
- Nomination Committee consists of:
 - 1 school committee rep
 - 2 formal members
 - Special Education Director
- This committee is then announced at the January meeting and published in the minutes.
- The Recording Secretary shall chair this committee.
- Nominations are formally announced during the March meeting, at which time additional nominations may be made from the floor.
- Elections will take place at the May meeting.
- Officers shall assume their official duties following the close of the meeting in May in which they are elected and shall serve for a term of two year(s) or until their successors are elected.

ARTICLE V: APPOINTMENT OF MEMBERS

MEMBERSHIP

The Advisory Committee must be composed of individuals involved in or concerned with the education of children with disabilities. (RI Reg. 300.900b)

Formal Membership shall be composed of no more than twenty-one (21) individuals involved in or concerned with the education of children with disabilities.

- Parents of students with disabilities shall compose a majority of the committee membership, and at least fifty percent (50%) of this majority shall be selected by the parents of students with disabilities.
- An individual with a disability.

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- A special education teacher.
- A general education teacher.
- A public school administrator; and at least one member of the North Providence School Committee will serve as a formal member and liaison to the NPSELAC and the North Providence School Committee.
- The NPSELAC may expand the committee to include additional persons in the preceding groups and representatives of other groups.

A. APPOINTMENT OF MEMBERS:

- The Superintendent shall select the administrators.
- School Committee shall select its representative.
- Parents will be selected by parents of children with disabilities and voting members of NPSELAC.
- Each September, a membership drive will be conducted to ensure that the NPSELAC membership roster is up to date with individual's willing to be formal members. The Leadership Team will retain this list of formal members. When alternates to formal members are needed to fill vacancies, the leadership team will be responsible for reviewing the list of participating members and will ask these members if they wish to become formal members.

B. TERM OF FORMAL MEMBERS:

- All new formal members shall be appointed for a three year term.
- At the conclusion of a formal member's term, he/she may petition for another term by resubmitting a formal membership form to the NPSELAC Leadership Team for review.

C. DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES:

- Formal (voting) membership requires individuals to complete a membership enrollment form indicating their commitment to participate in committee activities and attend meetings on a regular basis. Forms may be obtained on the North Providence Special Education website and at the North Providence School Department.

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- In order to comment on behalf of NPSELAC publicly on rules, regulations, and special education issues, formal members shall either volunteer or be appointed by the Chairperson and the Assistant Chairperson to state, local, and other subcommittees.

D. TERMINATION OF FORMAL MEMBERSHIP:

- Causes for removal shall be for failure to carry out responsibilities assumed by acceptance on the committee.

- NPSELAC, by a two-thirds vote, may request the resignation of, or remove a member upon committee recommendation, if there is just cause.

E. ATTENDANCE:

- Failure of a formal member to attend three meetings of the committee over the duration of a school year without prior notice to the Chairperson will result in removal from the committee.

F. RESIGNATION:

- Any formal member may resign by submitting a written resignation with the NPSELAC.

G. VACANCY:

- Any vacancy on the NPSELAC shall be filled as in the process stated in Article IV, Section D.

ARTICLE VI: VOTING RIGHTS

- Each formal member shall be entitled to one vote by hand and may cast that vote on each matter submitted to a vote of the committee.

- Proxy voting and absentee ballots shall not be permitted.

- Only formal members will have voting rights.

A. VOTING PROCEDURES

- Voting will be done by ballot for election of officers.
- Votes required for resolving issues arising at committee meetings will be done by majority hand count.

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B. QUORUM

- For voting purposes, a quorum will be defined as a minimum number of two “officers” from the leadership team and 2/3 of the formal members of the committee in attendance for a valid vote.

ARTICLE VII: DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE LOCAL AGENCY

- The local education agency (LEA) shall provide support to the committee by contracting for technical assistance services with the Rhode Island designated Parent Training and Technical Assistance Agency or other community-based non-profit parent organizations. (RI Reg. 300.900d)
- Such technical assistance shall include the role of advisory committees in advocating for children, state and federal regulations, community resources, strategic planning and development of an annual report to the school committee. (RI Reg. 300.900d)
- The LEA shall also provide school and district improvement plans to the committee for comment and make available appropriate records and data as permitted by law. (300.900d)
- The LEA shall also assist the committee in disseminating information to parents of students regarding the role of the advisory committee, information pertaining to special education and inform the committee of professional development opportunities that are available within the LEA. (RI Reg. 300.900d)
- The Special Education Director shall be the LEA contact person or their assigned designee. This individual shall work proactively and collaboratively in partnership with the NPSELAC members.
- The LEA contact shall be the contact between NPSELAC and North Providence School Department Administration and shall be the link for any individual concerns of parents.

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ARTICLE VIII: PARENT NOTIFICATION OF LOCAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE

- When a child is referred to special education the North Providence School District Special Education Department shall provide the parents with notification of the existence of a local advisory committee for Special Education established in compliance with these regulations. (RI Reg. 300.900g)
- The notification shall specify that a majority of the local advisory committee is parents of children with disabilities, and shall inform the parents of how the local advisory committee may be contacted. (RI Reg. 300.900g)

ARTICLE VIII: REVIEW OF BY-LAWS

- By-laws will be reviewed biennially or sooner as necessary by the Officers of the NPSELAC to ensure that the by-laws align with the State of Rhode Island Regulations for Elementary and Secondary Education.

ARTICLE X: AMENDMENTS TO BY-LAWS

- In the event that amendments are needed to the by-laws, then a sub-committee will be formed.
- The by-law subcommittee will be responsible for the review and revision of the by-laws, as well as, presenting the revised by-laws to NPSELAC Leadership Team for review.
- The NPSELAC bylaws/amendments shall be provided to the Special Education Director, who shall then review and recommend revisions if necessary.
- The Special Education Director shall present the by-laws to the School Committee for approval.

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ARTICLE XI: APPROVAL OF BY-LAWS

- These by-laws and any subsequent amendment thereto shall become effective upon approval by the School Committee.
- The school committee by majority vote shall approve the by-laws of the advisory committee.

APPROVED: _____ DATE _____
NORTH PROVIDENCE SCHOOL COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN

APPROVED: _____ DATE _____
NORTH PROVIDENCE SCHOOL COMMITTEE VICE-CHAIRMAN