

**Prince Georges County  
SPECIAL EDUCATION CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

**BYLAWS**

**ARTICLE I: Name**

The name of the committee shall be the Prince Georges County Special Education Citizens Advisory Committee (SECAC-PG).

**ARTICLE II: Mission**

SECAC-PG is established pursuant to the Code of Maryland Regulations (COMAR 13A.05.02.131) which requires each local school system to establish and maintain a Special Education Citizens Advisory Committee (SECAC). SECAC-PG works together to put children first. The Committee focuses on open and honest communication, improving effectiveness and accountability, identifying systemic issues, and advocating for maintenance and expansion of services and programs to meet the needs of students with disabilities. In collaboration with Prince Georges County Public Schools (PGCPS) leadership of special education, parents, PGCPS staff and community members, the Committee strives to facilitate positive changes in the delivery of special education services and the success and achievements of students with disabilities.

**ARTICLE III: Members & Membership**

Section 1. SECAC-PG membership will be sought from:

- a. Parents, guardians, and family members of children with disabilities, Individual Education Plans (IEPs), Individualized Family Service Plans (IFSPs), and 504 plans.
- b. Individuals with disabilities, including students.
- c. Community members and community organizations.
- d. PGCPS Family Support Center staff.
- e. PGCPS staff including Administrators, Special Educators, General Educators, Paraprofessionals, and related service providers.
- f. PGCPS organizations, including but not limited to Parent Teacher Associations (PTAs), County Council, Board of Education, PTA members, and Teachers Union Representatives.

There is no maximum number of members.

**ARTICLE IV: Membership Guidelines**

Section 1      Membership Rules

- a. There shall be no limit on the number of members.
- b. Membership shall be open to the full range of families with students with disabilities including all of the ethnic, cultural, and geographic diversity of the county.
- c. All members shall reside in Prince Georges County or be employed by PGCPSS.
- d. Voting members and non-voting members may participate in meetings.
- e. Votes are passed with the majority vote.
- f. The nominating committee shall present a slate of nominees for Board elections to voting members.
- g. Any member of SECAC-PG who has a relationship with an individual or organization that is or may present a conflict of interest shall disclose that relationship. A conflict of interest shall be defined as any alliance with a business, organization, or employer that prohibits or significantly interferes with a member freely and impartially executing the mission and purpose of SECAC-PG. Personal gain, defined as directly soliciting business for financial purposes from the SECAC-PG or its members, is a form of conflict of interest.

## Section 2. Voting Members

- a. Voting Members are all members of SECAC-PG who have attended a minimum of four SECAC-PG meetings during the preceding 12-month period, excluding the meeting in which the voting occurs.
- b. Voting members shall recuse themselves from a vote when there is a conflict of interest as defined in the membership rules above.

## Section 3. Executive Board Composition

- a. The Executive Board shall consist of interested parties who are voting members of the SECAC-PG.

# ARTICLE V: Executive Board

## Section 1. The Executive Board shall:

- a. Consist of a Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary, Co-Secretary, Treasurer, immediate past Chair, and one at-large member.
- b. Meet regularly with PGCPSS Department of Special Education Leadership and staff as appropriate.
- c. Fill any vacancy in the Chair position with the Vice Chair.
- d. Any vacancy for Vice Chair, Secretary, Co-Secretary (optional), Treasurer, or

At-Large Member shall be elected in the same manner as described in section VII.

- e. A person filling a vacancy shall serve the remainder of the two-year term.
- f. A member may not be elected for more than two consecutive terms in any one Executive Board position.
- g. A term shall consist of two years.

The Chairperson shall:

- a. Preside at all meetings.
- b. Create meeting agendas.
- c. Act on urgent matters between general meetings.
- d. Create standing committees and ad hoc committees.
- e. Delegate roles and responsibilities to voting members as deemed necessary.
- f. Work to ensure the Executive Board is representative of the larger SECAC-PG membership.
- g. Lead the preparation of an annual written report for the Associate Superintendent of Special Education, PGCPS Board of Education, and SECAC-PG membership.
- h. Represent the SECAC-PG on external meeting requests.

The Vice Chairperson shall:

- a. Perform the duties of the Chairperson in their absence, when they are unable to perform their duties, or at the Chairperson's request.
- b. Support the Chairperson in accomplishing duties as assigned.
- c. Assume the duties of the Chairperson if he/she resigns or is unable to perform his/her duties.
- d. Oversee the maintenance of the website and respond to inquiries.

The Secretary shall:

- a. Take minutes of all SECAC-PG meetings and ensure those minutes or a recording of the meetings are promptly posted on the SECAC-PG website.
- b. Take the roll of attendees for all meetings and keep attendance records.
- c. Maintain a voting member list.
- d. Perform the duties of the Chairperson in the absence of the Chairperson and

Vice Chairperson.

- e. Prepare and distribute informational mailings and website posts regarding meeting information.
- f. Assist Vice Chairperson and website manager (if there is one) with website content and updates.

The Co-Secretary shall:

- a. Assist the Secretary with their duties.

The Treasurer shall:

- a. Be responsible for ensuring receipts for budget expenses are submitted to the office of the Associate Superintendent of Special Education.
- b. Submit Budget documents with approval by the Executive Board.
- c. Submit Grant documents with approval by the Executive Board.

The Immediate Past-Chair and At-Large Member shall:

- a. Participate and attend meetings around the county to represent SECAC-PG
- b. Lead subcommittees as requested by the Chairperson, and assist by reaching out to the community to enhance membership.

## **ARTICLE VI: Board Member Code of Conduct Guidelines**

- a. Board members shall conduct their affairs with integrity and honesty avoiding any actions that could create a conflict of interest or appearance of conflict of interest with SECAC-PG.
- b. Board members shall believe in and advocate for SECAC-PG's values and mission contributing to its effective operation.
- c. Regular attendance at board meetings and SECAC-PG meetings and active participation in discussions is required, with a minimum attendance of 75% over the course of a school year.
- d. Board members shall disclose any potential conflicts of interest promptly and recuse themselves from discussions or votes where personal interest exists. Board members should not benefit financially from participation on the SECAC-PG board.
- e. Board members shall treat all students, board members, and PGCPS staff with respect and professionalism, ensuring clear and constructive communication.
- f. Board members shall maintain confidentiality regarding sensitive information and avoid disclosing confidential matters to anyone outside the Board as appropriate.

- g. Board members shall work to establish a positive board culture for effective governance. This includes fostering trust, respect, and constructive dialog among board members and PGCPS Administration, BOE, and the disability community.

## **ARTICLE VII: Removing an Executive Board member**

The Executive Board can vote to remove an Executive Board member with or without cause by a majority vote of the entire Executive Board. Vacant positions count as abstentions in this vote. Steps to remove a board member shall be:

- a. The Chair will call an emergency meeting with the Board.
- b. Members of the Executive Board shall vote on the removal.
- c. The vote shall be recorded in the meeting minutes.

## **ARTICLE VIII: Meeting Procedures**

The rules contained in the current edition of *Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised* shall govern SECAC-PG the Board of Directors and all subcommittees in all cases to which they are applicable and do not conflict in which they are not inconsistent with the bylaws of SECAC-PG and these standing rules.

## **ARTICLE IX: Meetings**

### Section 1. Monthly meetings

- a. Meetings will be held on the fourth Tuesday of each month September through November, and January through May. Meeting dates will be announced at the September meeting and may be altered by the Chair and Vice Chair due to holidays or extenuating circumstances.
- b. An agenda shall be prepared by the Chair and provided to SECAC-PG members in advance of the meeting.
- c. All meetings are open to the public, in compliance with the Maryland Open Meetings Act.
- d. Each meeting will have an open comment period available to residents of Prince George's County.
- e. The Executive Board shall meet a minimum of three times per school year.
- f. Special meetings may be called by the Chair or a majority of the full membership of the Executive Board.
- g. Members will have one vote and only members may vote. A simple majority of active members present during the voting process will determine if a vote is passed.
- h. Electronic voting is allowed.

## **ARTICLE X: Elections**

### Section 1. The Nominating Committee shall:

- a. Consist of an odd number (minimum of 3) SECAC-PG members who attend and are solicited by the Chairperson at the March meeting.
- b. The member would be required to accept the nomination before being approved by the membership.
- c. Be approved by the membership by electronic vote.
- d. Determine administrative procedures and develop and present a slate of at least one nominee for each Executive Board position at the regular April meeting.

### Section 2. Election of Officers

- a. All elections shall be with a simple majority, determined by either a show of hands, or by vote using an electronic format that collects unique identifying information so membership status can be verified.
- b. Election of Officers shall take place at the May general meeting, or by electronic vote after the April meeting and prior to the May meeting.

### Section 3. Other Elections

- a. A special election may be held following the occurrence of a vacancy of a Board position, if there are more than four (4) meetings left in the school year.
- b. All nominations for special elections will be made from the floor.
- c. The election will be held in accordance with Section 2a of this article.

## **ARTICLE X: Subcommittees**

### Section 1. Members are eligible to serve on standing or ad-hoc committees.

### Section 2. Other than the nominating committee, sub-committees may be established no later than October of the SECAC-PG school year and sub-committee Chairpersons will be selected by the end of the November meeting of the SECAC-PG school year. A member may only chair one subcommittee at a time but may be a member of multiple subcommittees. The At-Large Executive Board member shall Chair the Outreach subcommittee.

### Section 3. Each subcommittee will be required to submit a work plan to the SECAC-PG Chair and Vice Chair by the last day of the month of December. The work plan will include the projected meeting schedule, subcommittee mission, and deliverables. As feasible, subcommittees may present their progress to SECAC-PG membership during regular monthly meetings.

### Section 4. Subcommittees include, but are not limited to:

- a. Nominating (required)

- b. Budget (optional)
- c. Outreach (optional)

## Section 5      Fiscal Oversight

An annual budget allocation (\$2500 in school year 2026) will be provided by the Maryland State Department of Education and managed by the office of the director of special education. The funds will be used by the SECAC-PG and receipts will be submitted for reimbursement through the Treasurer.

## **ARTICLE XI: Amendments and Bylaws Review**

### Section 1.      Amendments to SECAC-PG bylaws:

- a. Proposed amendments to SECAC-PG by-laws shall be submitted in writing to the members at least 30 days prior to a vote to adopt during a general meeting.
- b. Amendments must be approved by a simple majority of a quorum of the SECAC-PG at a general meeting.
- c. Upon ratification, these articles shall go into effect immediately unless otherwise specified.

### Section 2.      Bylaws shall be reviewed every two years following May elections but before September by the Executive Board. The Chairperson shall submit them with or without changes to the general membership for review and final approval.

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**Signature/Chair Prince Georges County Schools SECAC**

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Date

**These bylaws of the Special Education Citizens Advisory Committee were approved at the SECAC-PG meeting of the general membership on (date)**

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**Secretary-SECAC-PG**