



1/23/17 Agenda

- Approve previous SEPAC Board Meeting Minutes
- Review SEPAC Calendar and discuss other proposed events
- Discuss Open Meeting Law guidelines
- Review and discuss revisions proposed to current Natick SEPAC By Laws
- General discussion



Proposed SEPAC Calendar

- Feb 2: Basic Rights Training
- March 16: Self-Directed IEP / Board Meeting
- April 4: School Budget Overview (*proposed*)
- May 23 or 25: Recap and 2017-18 Elections

- Discussion Items:
 - Feedback for agenda for 4/4 (School Budget) discussion
 - Social Events
 - Recognition Program
 - Spark Kindness (2017-2018)



Open Meeting

- Because SEPACs are considered an advisory council to the school committee, a governmental body, SEPACs need to follow Open Meeting Law guidelines.
- Meetings
 - Need to have a quorum to hold a meeting or vote
 - Meeting details and agenda need to be publicized (submitted to Town Clerk at least 48 hrs in advance to the meeting)
 - Meeting minutes must be documented and approved
- Email
 - All emails received to Natick SEPAC email are subject to the public record laws
 - SEPAC email footer now includes: *Please remember when responding or writing that the Secretary of the State's Office has determined that e-mail is a public record.*
 - Sensitivity regarding parents/guardians emailing Natick SEPAC with detailed concerns



Natick SEPAC By-Laws

- By-laws required to be reviewed every 2 years. Last review was April 2015.
- Tonight's proposal incorporates:
 - Guidance from the FCSN (Federation for Children with Special Needs)
 - Guidance from the Attorney General Open Meeting hotline
 - Review of other local Sepac by-laws.
 - Searched 21 local SEPACs website and located/reviewed 12 SEPAC by-laws
- Proposed Approach
 - Tonight: gather feedback on Membership, Board, Voting/Elections and Liaisons
 - Incorporate feedback into By-laws. Publish proposed By-Law revisions with our 1/23 Meeting Minutes (~by 2/1)
 - Vote to adopt new Bylaws at next SEPAC meeting
 - Bylaws will go in effect in the next election cycle (Spring Elections)



Summary of Feedback/Guidance

- **Guidance**
 - Quorum must be 50% of serving public body
 - Only have a general membership
- **Recommended Approach**
 - Reduce # of Board members to address quorum issues
 - Eliminate “voting membership”
 - General Membership responsibility is to elect Board members
 - Address gap on roles, vacancies and elections



SEPAC Board Members

Current Natick By-Law Board:

- Co-Chairs
- Secretary/Treasury
- All School Representatives

We were advised to reduce the # of Board Members. **Proposal:**

- Co-Chairs (2)
- Secretary/Treasury
- Communications Coordinator
- Programs Coordinator
- Other Suggestions?



Proposed New Board Roles

- **Communications Coordinator:**
 - Maintain the Natick SEPAC communication tools including Gmail list, webpage and Facebook page
 - Coordinate all public communications and communications to SEPAC members, not including those communications that are the responsibility of the Secretary.
 - Support in marketing upcoming events, speakers, workshops, etc.
- **Programs Coordinator:**
 - Coordinate the SEPAC programs
 - Collect feedback and propose programming recommendations
 - Coordinate volunteers to help plan, manage, organize and implement programs



Proposal: Liaisons

- Responsibilities:

- Act as the liaison for SEPAC and your community
- Build awareness of SEPAC with your community
- Support the SEPAC Programs coordinator by volunteering for at least one SEPAC event.
- Attend board meetings and provide status updates and feedback to SEPAC Board.

- Overview:

- Liaisons are not Board members, but they serve a valuable role in increasing communication and collaboration between SEPAC and the community.
- Liaisons are appointed and removed as agreed by the SEPAC Board.
- Liaison roles are filled in the best interest of the SEPAC and can be filled throughout the year.
- SEPAC is not required to have Liaisons.
- The SEPAC Board may create additional Liaison roles if they determine there is a need.



General Membership

General Membership must align with
CMR 603 CMR 28.07(4)...

*Parent advisory participation. Each school district shall create a **districtwide** parent advisory council offering membership to all parents of **eligible students** and **other interested parties**.*

Current Bylaws:

General membership shall be open to any parent, guardian, educators, and other parties interested in special education in the Natick Public Schools.

Voting membership shall be limited to any general member who is a parent or guardian of a child with special needs residing in Natick, with or without an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) or 504 plan AND who has attended at least one previous meeting in the past 12 months

Decision needed: With the General Membership now electing the Board – does SEPAC want to revise the General Membership definition?

Possible Option:

General Membership shall be open to any resident of Natick including parents, guardians, educators and other parties interested in the special education of Natick students. In addition, a parent/guardian of a current student receiving Special Education services administered through the Natick School District may also be a General Member even though the parent or guardian may reside outside of Natick.



Board / Liaison Role Eligibility

SEPAC has the option to set eligibility requirements to serve on a role (Board/Liaison). Possible examples to consider:

- Parent/Guardian requirement
- IEP/504 requirement
- Residency requirement
- Prior SEPAC involvement
- Anything else?

Decision needed: Does SEPAC want to define eligibility requirements for the Board and Liaison roles? If yes, what are the requirements?



Proposed By-Law Changes

Election Guidelines (for Board Members)

- All general members are eligible to vote.
- Anyone who meets the eligibility requirements and who wishes to volunteer for a Board role should notify SEPAC prior to the election deadline (deadline will be posted).
- If there is only one person nominated for a board role, that person must receive a majority vote (50% or greater) to fill the position. If they do not receive a majority vote then the position will remain open.
- If more than one person is nominated for a board role then a simple majority will apply.
- Elections for positions on the SEPAC Board will take place each spring. Additional elections to fill vacancies may take place during the year (if needed).
- New Board members will take office immediately following the vote.



Proposed By-Law Changes

Addressing Resignations and Vacancies

- Board Member Resignations
 - Any Board member may resign by delivering a written notice of resignation by mail, in person, or by email to the Assistant Superintendent for Student Services. Resignation shall be effective immediately upon such delivery unless the resignation is slated to be effective at another time.

- Board vacancies will be handled as follows:
 - Following the resignation of any Board member, the SEPAC Board shall make the public aware of the open position and request for interested parties to notify the Board prior to the next meeting.
 - Open Board positions can be filled during the year. Open positions filled during the year will have a term that expires at the following election.
 - Voting will follow the election guidelines detailed on previous slide.