

Special Education Association of Peoria County

Table of Contents

Special Education Association of Peoria County

SECTION 1 - SCHOOL DISTRICT ORGANIZATION

1:10 Association Legal Status

1:20 Association Organization, Operations, and Cooperative Agreements

1:30 Association Philosophy

1:32 Association Decentralization of Services

SECTION 2 - BOARD OF CONTROL

2:10 Association Governance

2:20 Powers and Duties of the Board of Control; Indemnification

2:40 Board Member Qualifications

2:50 Board Member Term of Office

2:80 Board Member Oath and Conduct

2:80-E Exhibit - Board Member Code of Conduct

2:100 Board Member Conflict of Interest

2:105 Ethics and Gift Ban

2:110 Qualifications, Term, and Duties of Board Officers

2:120 Board Member Development

2:120-E1 Exhibit - Guidelines for Serving as a Mentor to a New Board of Control Member

2:130 Board-Director Relationship

2:140 Communications To and From the Board

2:140-E Exhibit - Guidance for Board Member Communications, Including Email Use

2:150 Committees

2:160 Board Attorney

2:160-E Exhibit - Checklist for Selecting a Board Attorney

2:170 Procurement of Architectural, Engineering, and Land Surveying Services

2:200 Types of Board of Control Meetings

2:210 Organizational Board of Control Meeting

2:220 Board of Control Meeting Procedure

2:220-E1 Exhibit - Board Treatment of Closed Meeting Verbatim Recordings and Minutes

2:220-E2 Exhibit - Motion to Adjourn to Closed Meeting

2:220-E3 Exhibit - Closed Meeting Minutes

2:220-E4 Exhibit - Open Meeting Minutes

2:220-E5 Exhibit - Semi-Annual Review of Closed Meeting Minutes

2:220-E6 Exhibit - Log of Closed Meeting Minutes

2:220-E7 Exhibit - Access to Closed Meeting Minutes and Verbatim Recordings

2:220-E8 Exhibit - School Board Records Maintenance Requirements and FAQs

2:220-E9 Exhibit - Requirements for No Physical Presence of Quorum and Participation by Audio or Video During Disaster Declaration

2:230 Public Participation at Board of Control Meetings and Petitions to the Board

2:240 Board Policy Development

2:240-E1 Exhibit - PRESS Issue Updates

2:240-E2 Exhibit - Developing Local Policy

2:250 Access to Association Public Records

2:260 Uniform Grievance Procedure

2:265 Title IX Sexual Harassment Grievance Procedure

SECTION 3 - GENERAL SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION

3:10 Goals and Objectives

3:30 Chain of Command

3:40 Director

3:50 Administrative Personnel Other Than the Director

3:60 Administrative Responsibility of the Building Principal

3:70 Succession of Authority

SECTION 4 - OPERATIONAL SERVICES

4:10 Fiscal and Business Management

4:15 Identity Protection

4:20 Fund Balances

4:30 Revenue and Investments

4:40 Incurring Debt

- 4:45 Insufficient Fund Checks and Debt Recovery
- 4:50 Payment Procedures
- 4:55 Use of Credit and Procurement Cards
- 4:60 Purchases and Contracts
- 4:70 Resource Conservation
- 4:80 Accounting and Audits
- 4:90 Student Activity and Fiduciary Funds
- 4:100 Insurance Management
- 4:110 Transportation
- 4:120 Food Services
- 4:150 Facility Management and Building Programs
- 4:160 Environmental Quality of Buildings and Grounds
- 4:165 Awareness and Prevention of Child Sexual Abuse and Grooming Behaviors
- 4:170 Safety
- 4:175 Convicted Child Sex Offender; Screening; Notifications
- 4:180 Pandemic Preparedness; Management; and Recovery
 - 4:180-AP3 Administrative Procedure - Administrative Procedure - Grant Flexibility; Payment of Employee Salaries During a Pandemic
- 4:190 Targeted School Violence Prevention Program
 - 4:190-AP1 Administrative Procedure - Target School Violence Prevention Program
 - 4:190-AP2 Administrative Procedure - Threat Assessment Team (TAT)

SECTION 5 - PERSONNEL

General Personnel

- 5:10 Equal Employment Opportunity and Minority Recruitment
- 5:20 Workplace Harassment Prohibited
 - 5:20-E Exhibit - Resolution to Prohibit Sexual Harassment
- 5:30 Hiring Process and Criteria
- 5:35 Compliance with the Fair Labor Standards Act
- 5:40 Communicable and Chronic Infectious Disease
- 5:50 Drug- and Alcohol-Free Workplace; E-Cigarette, Tobacco, and Cannabis Prohibition

5:60 Expenses

5:70 Religious Holidays

5:80 Court Duty

5:90 Abused and Neglected Child Reporting

5:100 Staff Development Program

5:110 Recognition for Service

5:120 Employee Ethics; Code of Professional Conduct; and Conflict of Interest

5:125 Personal Technology and Social Media; Usage and Conduct

5:130 Responsibilities Concerning Internal Information

5:140 Solicitations By or From Staff

5:150 Personnel Records

5:170 Copyright

5:180 Temporary Illness or Temporary Incapacity

5:185 Family and Medical Leave

Professional Personnel

5:190 Teacher Qualifications

5:200 Terms and Conditions of Employment and Dismissal

5:210 Resignations

5:220 Substitute Teachers

5:230 Maintaining Student Discipline

5:240 Suspension

5:250 Leaves of Absence

5:260 Student Teachers

Educational Support Personnel

5:270 Employment At-Will, Compensation, and Assignment

5:280 Duties and Qualifications

5:290 Employment Termination and Suspensions

5:300 Schedules and Employment Year

5:320 Evaluation

5:330 Sick Days, Vacation, Holidays, and Leaves

SECTION 6 - INSTRUCTION

6:10 Educational Philosophy and Objectives

6:15 School Accountability

6:20 School Year Calendar and Day

6:40 Curriculum Development

6:50 School Wellness

6:60 Curriculum Content

6:65 Student Social and Emotional Development

6:70 Teaching About Religions

6:80 Teaching About Controversial Issues

6:100 Using Animals in the Educational Program

6:110 Programs for Students At Risk of Academic Failure and/or Dropping Out of School and Graduation Incentives Program

6:120 Education of Children with Disabilities

6:122 Recording of IEP Meetings

6:135 Accelerated Placement Program

6:140 Education of Homeless Children

6:145 Migrant Students

6:150 Home and Hospital Instruction

6:160 English Learners

6:210 Instructional Materials

6:230 Library Media Program

6:235 Access to Electronic Networks

6:240 Field Trips and Recreational Class Trips

6:250 Community Resource Persons and Volunteers

6:255 Assemblies and Ceremonies

6:260 Complaints About Curriculum, Instructional Materials, and Programs

6:270 Guidance and Counseling Program

6:280 Grading and Promotion

SECTION 7 - STUDENTS

7:10 Equal Educational Opportunities

7:10-E Exhibit - Equal Educational Opportunities Within the School Community

7:15 Student and Family Privacy Rights

7:20 Harassment of Students Prohibited

7:60 Residence

7:70 Attendance and Truancy

7:80 Release Time for Religious Instruction/Observance

7:90 Release During School Hours

7:100 Health, Eye, and Dental Examinations; Immunizations; and Exclusion of Students

7:130 Student Rights and Responsibilities

7:140 Search and Seizure

7:150 Agency and Police Interviews

7:160 Student Appearance

7:170 Vandalism

7:180 Prevention of and Response to Bullying, Intimidation, and Harassment

7:185 Teen Dating Violence Prohibited

7:190 Student Behavior

7:200 Suspension Procedures

7:210 Expulsion Procedures

7:220 Bus Conduct

7:230 Misconduct by Students with Disabilities

7:250 Student Support Services

7:260 Exemption from Physical Education

7:270 Administering Medicines to Students

7:275 Orders to Forgo Life-Sustaining Treatment

7:280 Communicable and Chronic Infectious Disease

7:285 Anaphylaxis Prevention, Response, and Management Program

7:290 Suicide and Depression Awareness and Prevention

7:310 Restrictions on Publications; Elementary Schools

7:315 Restrictions on Publications; High Schools

7:325 Student Fundraising Activities

7:330 Student Use of Buildings - Equal Access

7:340 Student Records

7:345 Use of Educational Technologies; Student Data Privacy and Security

SECTION 8 - COMMUNITY RELATIONS

8:10 Connection with the Community

8:20 Community Use of School Facilities

8:25 Advertising and Distributing Materials in Schools Provided by Non-School Related Entities

8:30 Visitors to and Conduct on School Property

8:70 Accommodating Individuals with Disabilities

8:80 Gifts to the Association

8:95 Parental Involvement

8:100 Relations with Other Organizations and Agencies

8:110 Public Suggestions and Concerns

Special Education Association of Peoria County

SECTION 1 - SCHOOL DISTRICT ORGANIZATION

Special Education Association of Peoria County

1:10 Association Legal Status

The Illinois Constitution requires the State to provide for an efficient system of high-quality public educational institutions and services in order to achieve the educational development of all persons to the limits of their capabilities.

The General Assembly has implemented this mandate through the creation of Associations. The Association is governed by the laws for Associations serving a resident population of not fewer than 1,000 and not more than 500,000.

The Board of Control constitutes a body corporate that possesses all the usual powers of a corporation for public purposes, and in that name may sue and be sued, purchase, hold and sell personal property and real estate, and enter into such obligations as are authorized by law.

The Association is organized pursuant to Sections 10-22.31 and 3-15.14 of the School Code (105 ILCS 5/10-22.31 and 3-15-14). The Governing Agreement provides the details of the Association's status.

LEGAL REF.:

Ill. Constitution, Art. X, Sec. 1.

105 ILCS 5/10-1 et seq.

CROSS REF.: 2:10 (Association Governance), 2:20 (Powers and Duties of the Board of Control; Indemnification)

Adopted: August 13, 2021

Special Education Association of Peoria County

1:20 Association Organization, Operations, and Cooperative Agreements

The Special Education Association of Peoria County is organized and operates as an Association serving the educational needs as required by the School Code.

The Association enters into and participates in joint programs and intergovernmental agreements with units of local government and other Associations in order to jointly provide services and activities in a manner that will increase flexibility, scope of service opportunities, cost reductions, and/or otherwise benefit the Association and the community. The Director shall manage these activities to the extent the program or agreement requires the Association's participation, and shall provide periodic implementation or operational data and/or reports to the Board of Control concerning these programs and agreements.

The Association's governing agreement - March 2010 may be accessed at: www.seapco.org

LEGAL REF.:

Ill. Constitution, Art. VII, Sec. 10.

5 ILCS 220/, Intergovernmental Cooperation Act.

Adopted: August 13, 2021

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LEGAL REF.:

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5 ILCS 220/, Intergovernmental Cooperation Act.

Adopted: August 13, 2021

Special Education Association of Peoria County

1:30 Association Philosophy

The philosophy of SEAPCO is to serve students with diverse needs through an inclusive environment that is part of general education and that includes a full continuum of specialized services.

The following statements support this philosophy:

- An inclusive environment is one that is accepting, collaborative, supportive, and integrative, providing equal access to opportunities in general education that are based on an individual student's needs.
- Whenever possible, the student's education will be based in general education classes. Special education services that are non-categorical, team-based, and collaborative will support the student in that environment.
- Students will be provided the opportunity to become productive, participating members of the community through specialized instruction that is individualized, objective-based, and skill-oriented.
- Staff development is essential for progress, and is vital to the development of evolving professional roles.
- The needs of the whole student, from birth through transition into the community, will be addressed through increased networking and support systems.
- Parent/guardian and family involvement and the opportunity for their continual education are essential to individual student progress.
- Dissemination of information and provision of quality services are essential to meet the diverse needs of member school districts and their communities.

CROSS REF: 2:10 (Association Governance), 3:10 (Goals and Objectives), 6:10 (Educational Philosophy and Objectives)

Adopted: August 13, 2021

Special Education Association of Peoria County

1:32 Association Decentralization of Services

POLICY:

SEAPCO will cooperate with district(s) that employ staff to provide special education related services.

PROCEDURE

Voting:

Districts that employ their own staff for a service and do not utilize SEAPCO services in that discipline will abstain from voting on issues related to that discipline. If there is a question regarding voting rights, the Board Chairperson will determine voting status after allowing an opportunity for district comment.

Funding:

State/Federal project applications written by and disbursed to SEAPCO for monies generated as a result of the number of special education students serviced will pool monies for the entire cooperative. SEAPCO supplies and equipment may be loaned to districts employing special education staff. It is understood that consumable items will be replaced.

Program Compliance for District Withdrawal:

Any district which intends to provide services within the district and not through SEAPCO shall do so in a manner that does not jeopardize the compliance of all member districts. Each member district shall comply with applicable state and federal laws, Illinois State Board regulations, SEAPCO Policies and procedures, and SEAPCO's ISBE-approved required procedures. In addition, districts which employ their own staff will provide a commitment to inservice to such staff, including district administrators.

Paperwork:

The SEAPCO Director will be available to provide consultation to districts employing special education staff so that the district is able to complete any and all forms that are required to generate reimbursement.

Timeline:

Between September 1 and November 1 of each school year, districts may notify the Director in writing of their intent to provide services within the district for the next school year rather than use the cooperatives services. Such services include, but are not limited to, the following: psychological, social work, speech and language, classroom teachers, and teacher assistants. If the written request is not received, the Director will plan for the same level and type of services as necessary to meet projected needs and state and federal regulations and requirements.

By February 1 of each year, any district that has provided notice outlined in the previous paragraph must deliver any and all signed agreements regarding transfer and employment to the Director.

By February 1 of each year, all districts must notify the Director of their request for services beyond the minimum required by state regulation including, but not limited to, the following: psychological, social work, speech and language, classroom teachers, and teacher assistants. If the written request is not received, the Director will plan for the same level and type of services as necessary to meet projected needs and state and federal regulations and requirements. This request is intended to be presented through the SEAPCO Hiring Survey which is updated annually by member district.

Annually, the Director will make recommendations to each district about the level of services that are

required to meet the district's needs for special education services. The recommendations will be based on past usage of services, projected changes in service delivery, projected numbers of students, and other applicable data.

All reductions in force will be discussed in accordance with applicable law and established rules and regulations.

If a district notifies the Director by February 1 of its decision to provide services within the district but later decides to use SEAPCO's services, that district's request(s) for services will be filled last after all other district requests are filled.

If a district wishes to change its service request(s) after February 1, the Director will bring the request to the SEAPCO Board of Control for discussion of the impact that the change would have on programs, services, and costs. The discussion will include issues of state and federal law, rules, and regulations. The Board of Control will make the final decision about how to accommodate the requested changes.

POLICY:

Member districts will share costs for attorneys' fees as they relate to SEAPCO's provision of services to students with disabilities.

PROCEDURE:

All costs for attorneys' fees incurred prior to the filing of a due process hearing are billed under SEAPCO's administrative budget. Each district shares the costs on the basis of the fall housing report.

If a due process hearing request is filed or court action is taken, the district against which the request is filed shares the cost equally with SEAPCO (50/50 split).

ADOPTED: March 8, 2019

Special Education Association of Peoria County