

WASHTENAW INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL DISTRICT
PARENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE BYLAWS

2023

Section 1: Organizational Structures of the Parent Advisory Committee

A. Members

1. Eligibility—A Parent Advisory Committee (PAC) member is a parent or a guardian of a student whose:
 - i. Child has been determined eligible for special education services by an Individualized Educational Program Team;
 - ii. Child has a current academic year Individualized Education Program;
 - iii. Nomination as a PAC member has been approved by his/her local school board or public school academy board; and
 - iv. Approved nomination has been accepted and approved by the Washtenaw Intermediate School District Board of Education.

While eligible, each member serves a 2-year term.

2. The membership will consist of members representing the nine (9) local school districts, Public School Academies, and the Washtenaw County Intermediate School District as follows:
 - i. Ann Arbor Two Members
 - ii. Chelsea Two Members
 - iii. Dexter Two Members
 - iv. Lincoln Two Members
 - v. Manchester Two Members
 - vi. Milan Two Members
 - vii. Public School Academies (PSA) Two Members*

viii. Saline	Two Members
ix. Whitmore Lake	Two Members
x. Ypsilanti Community	Two Members

3. PAC members will have either “active” voting or “at-large” non-voting status. Active members are recommended by their public school agency for appointment by the WISD Board. WISD Board members may also bring forth member candidates to the local districts Board of Education to hasten the appointment process in cases of district non-representation. Each local district may have two (2) active voting members. The public school academy body, as a whole, may have up to two (2) members with voting status as defined in Section C2 below. Terms of active voting and at-large, non-voting members shall be two (2) years and will be adjusted to reflect an expiration date of July 31.

4. Up to 1/3 (33.3 percent) of the PAC may be made up of members at-large. “At-large” status may occur in several ways: An active member may, at the end of his/her term, request to remain on the Committee as a member at-large. In addition, a former active member may return as a member at-large. If at any time during an active member’s term, he/she can request to become a member at-large by sending a letter to both the PAC Chairperson(s) and his/her Special Education Director notifying them of the need to find a new, active voting member for his/her district. The WISD Board of Education may appoint “at-large,” non-voting members, including when a certain disability category is under-represented on the PAC. In order to facilitate this process, if (1) a parent attends two (2) or more PAC meetings and wishes to become a member at-large, and (2) represents a disability category which is under-represented on the PAC, this parent can approach the PAC Chairperson(s) with a request for at-large, non-voting membership. The PAC Chairperson(s) will notify the WISD Board of the parent’s interest.

5. Each active, voting PAC member must attend at least 50 percent of scheduled meetings during the school year to maintain membership status. Absences from regular meetings are excused by contacting the PAC Chairperson before the meeting. After the fifth meeting in a school year has been missed, the PAC Chairperson will contact the WISD Executive Director of Special Education and the PAC member’s Special Education Director. They will meet with the member to discuss consideration of maintaining membership.

6. The PAC Chairperson(s) or his/her designee shall contact the WISD Special Education Director and the public school agency Special Education Director/Administrator or his/her designee when a vacancy occurs.

7. Meeting minutes shall be taken by PAC members on a rotating basis.

B. Officers

1. PAC officers must be active, voting members and will be elected by a majority vote of the Committee. Officers shall be Chairperson, Chairperson Elect, and Correspondence Secretary. Duties of the officers:
 - i. Chairperson(s): The Chairperson(s) shall develop an agenda for the meetings of the PAC, call meetings of the PAC to order, and preside at those meetings. In addition, the Chairperson(s) shall take at-large, non-voting recommendations to the WISD Board for approval as this becomes necessary. It shall be the responsibility of the Chairperson(s) to provide the WISD with appropriate materials for distribution ten (10) days prior to meeting dates. In case of absence, the Chairperson(s) shall designate a PAC member to reside over the meeting.
 - ii. Correspondence Secretary: A full-time Correspondence Secretary may be chosen, whose responsibilities will include keeping a file of hand-outs distributed at every meeting and corresponding with appropriate persons. The Correspondence Secretary or his/her designee shall keep monthly meeting minutes and send a copy of the minutes to each active PAC member.
 - iii. PAC Members: Meeting Minutes shall be taken by PAC members on a rotating basis if no Correspondence Secretary is voted into office.

2. Terms of Office: Each officer shall be elected to serve a 2-year term. Terms will run from August 1 thru July 31.

3. Nominations and elections will be held at the May meeting.

4. A quorum (a majority of PAC members) shall be present to constitute a valid election.

C. Voting Procedures

1. All decisions and actions on all issues brought before the PAC shall be at an open meeting and shall be duly recorded in the minutes of the Committee.
2. Each local district in Washtenaw County (Ann Arbor, Chelsea, Dexter, Lincoln, Manchester, Milan, Saline, Whitmore Lake, and Ypsilanti Community), and the Public School Academy body, as a whole, receiving special education services, has two (2) votes. No member may have more than one vote. If an active PAC member is absent, members at-large from that local district/public school academy shall have the absent vote. A quorum is achieved when more than 50 percent of all public school agencies with active members have a representative present. The Chairperson(s) shall have full voting rights as defined under the district voting allowance (two (2) per district).
3. Any decision that requires a vote by active voting PAC members must be given due consideration. A member wanting an item to be voted on should request that it be placed on the agenda of the following meeting as an item to be voted on. Procedures for voting on a motion are as follows:
 - i. The item to be voted on appears on the meeting agenda
 - ii. The Chairperson(s) determines that there is a quorum present
 - iii. A member describes a specific course of action, and makes a motion that it be voted on
 - iv. The Chairperson(s) acknowledges there is a motion
 - v. A member seconds the motion
 - vi. The Chairperson(s) asks for any discussion on the motion
 - vii. Members have the opportunity to discuss or clarify the motion. The motion may be amended, as necessary. If amended, the new motion should be acknowledged, seconded, and discussed.

- viii. The Chairperson(s) calls for a vote
 - ix. The PAC member taking minutes for that meeting tallies the votes and announces the tally
 - x. The Chairperson(s) announces the results
 - xi. The result of the vote on the motion is recorded in the Minutes, along with the number of votes in support and non-support of the motion
4. In the case of a tie vote, the PAC will table the issue and require that more information on the proposed course of action be gathered for the next meeting. Any missing members will be contacted by a PAC officer and apprised of the re-vote at the next meeting.

D. Meetings

1. The PAC shall meet at least six (6) times during the school year per the schedule developed by the PAC. The schedule is available every fall. PAC meetings are open to the public.
2. Meetings shall follow a prescribed agenda.
3. Individuals or groups wishing to appear on the printed agenda must submit their intention to the Chairperson or the PAC no later than seven (7) days prior to the date of the meeting.
4. Any person shall be permitted to address the PAC under an appropriate agenda item. The agenda will always have a "Parent Questions/Concerns" item to allow for member and/or public comment. A person wishing to address the PAC shall be recognized by the Chairperson and shall give his/her name and the issue on which comments shall be made.
5. PAC may, but is not obligated to, provide the option of remote attendance using the following procedure:

Remote Attendance Procedure

1. Every effort should be made by committee members to attend meetings in person, recognizing the value of in person collaboration and sharing of ideas and concerns.
2. Remote attendance is only available for committee members.
3. The committee secretary shall send out a meeting reminder with an RSVP request of in person or virtual attendance the week prior to scheduled meetings; denoting the time, location, and agenda items for the meeting.
4. Committee members shall RSVP no later than 24 hours prior to the meeting, and only if necessary, request a virtual attendance option.
5. The secretary will communicate to the designated technology volunteer (a committee member who has volunteered to set up and run the virtual meeting options, i.e. Zoom, Google Meet, etc.) a need for virtual links to be sent to the members requesting virtual attendance.
6. During the time of the committee meeting, the technology volunteer will monitor the virtual session and periodically check chat boxes for questions and comments from virtual attendees, sharing this input with the in person attendees.
7. If an agenda item requires a vote, the virtual attendee shall vote by chat feature (yes or no) to ensure clarity of vote.
8. Virtual attendees should follow meeting norms; attending to the meeting, participating where appropriate by noting questions or comments in the chat, remain on mute unless contributing to the discussion, and if possible, remain in meeting until adjournment.

Section 2: Roles and Responsibilities of the Parent Advisory Committee

A. Parental Concerns

1. When information or concerns are brought to the attention of the PAC, the Chairperson(s) may add the item to the meeting agenda for discussion. The PAC will then decide if the item is an issue to be voted on. The Committee may choose to advise the appropriate director(s)/ administrator(s) of Special Education or their designees or the WISD Board of Education of the matter. If so, the following steps may be taken until a satisfactory resolution has been obtained:
 - i. If the PAC decides to vote on the item, the voting procedure on this action follows those normally used as outlined in Section 1.C.
 - ii. The Chairperson(s) informs the appropriate public school agency Special Education director(s)/administrator(s) or their designee(s) and WISD Special Education Director of the matter through a letter or meeting.
 - iii. After the director(s)/administrator(s) or their designee(s) have been informed, the PAC informs the WISD Superintendent and other appropriate school administrators. If the

issues can be resolved administratively, the PAC request that this be done. If the issue is a result of a Michigan Department of Education ruling or policy, the PAC may communicate its concerns or position on the matter via the WISD Special Education Director or directly to the Michigan Department of Education.

iv. After informing appropriate administrators, the PAC advises the WISD Board of Education through written communication via the WISD Superintendent. If the PAC wishes to also meet with the Board, it may request that the Superintendent arrange time at a Board meeting and may communicate with him on its preference for a work session or regular Board meeting.

2. Matters of compliance may be pursued using the complaint procedures outlined in the WISD Plan.

B. Communication

The PAC may communicate information to parents with children of disabilities through its website, meetings, and list serves. Topics may include: PAC meetings, functions and community services available to children with disabilities such as special programs, and other issues of interest to parents.

C. Parent Handbook

The PAC shall be responsible for keeping the Parent Handbook up-to-date.

D. Optional Activities of the Parent Advisory Committee

1. Optional activities of the PAC are limited only by imagination and resources. Possible activities include:

i. The Chairperson or his/her designee may meet with Local and Intermediate Superintendents and Directors of PSAs.

- ii. The Chairperson or his/her designee may make presentations to Local and Intermediate District Boards of Education and PSAs' Board of Directors.
 - iii. The PAC may establish a subcommittee to work on specific disability areas in the development and review of appropriate sections of the WISD Plan.
 - iv. The PAC may develop a program or in-service subcommittee to provide information and training for its members.
 - v. The PAC Chairperson(s) or his/her designee may attend public hearings held by the Michigan Department of Education (MDE) to represent the PAC regarding proposed rules and regulations or proposed changes to the Michigan Administrative Rules for Special Education (MARSE).
 - vi. The PAC may become involved in the evaluation of programs and services prior to the regular meetings held to review the WISD Plan.
 - vii. The PAC may meet more regularly as a committee than is required by the MARSE.
 - viii. The PAC may serve as an advocate for other parents of a person with disabilities when requested to do so.
 - ix. The PAC may become involved with local legislators on legislation pertaining to persons with disabilities.
 - x. PAC members are encouraged to attend public school agency and WISD Board meeting. A rotating schedule may be developed to ensure that representation at WISD Board meetings, and the collection of information there, is on-going.
 - xi. PAC members are asked to contribute to information distributed through the list serve and to topics of discussion at PAC meetings.
2. The above activities are only a few in which some PAC members have previously been involved. Other ideas may be obtained by contacting PAC members from other Intermediate School Districts. A list of all PAC Chairpersons may be obtained from the Michigan Department of Education.