

VTSD SEPAG (Special Education Parent Advisory Group)

The Vernon Township School District SEPAG was formed to satisfy the New Jersey Department of Education's mandate: Each district board of education shall ensure that a special education parent advisory group is in place in the district to provide input to the district on issues concerning students with disabilities. New Jersey Administrative Code 6A:14-1.2(h)

What is SEPAG?

SEPAG is a group of volunteer parents and guardians of students with disabilities who work with VTSD's administration and teachers to advise the Board of Education on policy and other matters related to special education services in the district, and serve as a resource by giving information to other parents in Vernon Township. The committee is in place for all parents and guardians of students with special educational needs.

The purpose of the SEPAG is:

- To provide direct input on the policies, programs and practices that impact services and supports for children with disabilities and their families.
- To increase the involvement of families of children with special needs in making recommendations on special education policy.
- To advise on matters that pertain to the education, health and safety of children with special needs.
- To advise on unmet needs of children with disabilities.

How does SEPAG work?

SEPAG meetings will be held each month during the school year. The meetings will be a mix of executive meetings (reporting meeting for SEPAG representatives and district personnel), parent information/training meetings, and parent/SEPAG input meetings. Updates and meeting information will be located on the website. SEPAG representatives are volunteering their time in coordination with the school, faculty, and SCA to assist and share their experiences within the VTSD Special Education programs & services. There is no formal training for the volunteers as it is based on life experiences. SEPAG representatives are advised to give general information and refer parents to the right person in the district to talk to about their concerns or questions. For additional information please contact the Director of Special Services or one of the SEPAG Officers (President-Michele Fulton, Vice President-Leslie McBeth, Recording Secretary-Amy Breitenbach at vtsdsepag@gmail.com).

Please see our Facebook page (Vernon SEPAG) for current information.

Vernon Township School District Special Education Parent Advisory Group Mission Statement

Mission Statement: Together through the efforts of our parents and administration we will create a bridge of understanding and communication to continue to improve the Special Education program for our children.

Vernon Township School District SEPAG Bylaws

Article I: Name

The name of this organization shall be the Vernon Township School District Special Education Parent Advisory Group, hereinafter referred to as SEPAG.

Article II: Authorization

The SEPAG was established by the Vernon Township Board of Education under the provisions of N.J.A.C 6A:14-1.2(h), which states; Each district board of education shall ensure that a special education parent advisory group is in place in the district to provide input to the district on issues concerning students with disabilities.

Article III: Purpose

Special Education Parent Advisory Groups are required for all school districts in New Jersey. The purpose of the SEPAG is to:

1. Provide opportunities for parents and community members to offer input to their districts on critical issues relating to students with disabilities.
2. To provide direct input on the policies, programs and practices that impact services and supports for children with disabilities and their families.
3. To increase the involvement of families of children with special needs in making recommendations on special education policy.
4. To advise on matters that pertain to the education, health and safety of children with special needs.
5. To advise on unmet needs of children with disabilities.

Article IV: Membership

General membership shall be open to all VTSD parents/guardians of children with disabilities, as well as other interested parties, who reside in Vernon Township, NJ. Voting membership will include parents/guardians of students ages 3 to 22 who receive special education services via IEP's or 504's from VTSD.

Article V: Officers and School Representatives

1. The Officers of the VTSD SEPAG shall be the President, Vice-President, and Recording Secretary. Officers shall be selected from the voting membership as per Article IV. Section 3-4 of these Bylaws. Officers shall serve a one year term commencing on July 1.
2. All voting members are eligible to hold office.
3. The president shall accept nominations from the floor at the regular meeting in May.
4. Election of officers will take place at the last meeting of the year, held in June, and the new officers will take office on July 1.
5. All officers may have the option to run for re-election.
6. A special election may be held to fill a vacancy if an officer resigns or is otherwise unable to serve as an officer during the year.

Article VI: Duties of Officers and School Representatives

1. The President is the presiding officer of the SEPAG. The duties of the President include: set the agenda for each general meeting; facilitate all meetings of the VTSD SEPAG; act as liaison to the Director of Special Services and the Board of Education; organize and facilitate all programs, meetings, and other information;
2. The Vice President shall assume the duties of the President if she/he should for any reason vacate the chair during a meeting or be absent from the meeting. The vice president should keep abreast of all issues before the SEPAG.
3. The Recording Secretary: coordinates all communications between the SEPAG and its membership; coordinates the recording and filing of minutes of the SEPAG; collects and reviews all correspondence of the SEPAG; provides copies of posted meeting agendas, attendance, and meeting minutes to the office of the Director of Special Services where said records shall be maintained; records attendance at all meetings

Article VII: Sub Committees

1. Sub committees shall be created as needed.

Article VIII: Elections

1. The President shall select a volunteer voting member to act in the temporary position of Nomination/Election Coordinator in the May regular scheduled SEPAG meeting.
2. All voting members are eligible to make nominations in writing to the Nomination/Election Coordinator with a deadline of two weeks prior to the regular scheduled June SEPAG meeting.
3. Nominees shall be voting members and shall either accept or decline prior to the election.
4. Names of those nominated for election or appointment will be made available to voting SEPAG members at least one (1) week prior to elections.
5. Election of officers will take place at the last meeting of the year, held in June, and the new officers will take office on July 1.
6. Election may be by voice vote or written ballot. A simple majority of voting members present will be required.
7. All officers may have the option to run for re-election.
8. A special election may be held to fill a vacancy if an officer resigns or is otherwise unable to serve as an officer during the year.

Article IX: Voting Membership Quorum/Procedure

A quorum of no fewer than 3 voting members must be present at the time of voting for any motion to be adopted. Only those voting members in attendance may vote. Election shall be decided by a simple majority vote of the voting membership subject to the presence of a quorum.

Article X: Meetings

1. Meetings and procedures for this organization will follow the Robert's Rules of Order (latest revision).
2. Meetings are defined as any VTSD SEPAG meeting, activity, or committee at which attendance is taken. Meeting agendas shall be adhered to and attendance shall be maintained for public record by the office of the Director Special Services.

Article XI: Amendments to Bylaws

1. Proposed amendments to these Bylaws shall be distributed to all voting members at least ten (10) business days prior to any anticipated action or vote.
2. The enactment of proposed amendments to these by-laws requires a two-thirds (2/3) affirmative vote on a quorum of SEPAG members present and voting.