

Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) serves as the latest reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA) which was last reauthorized in 2002 as the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB). Since its inception, the intent of the law has been to raise achievement for low-income and otherwise disadvantaged children. Parent and family engagement and consultation have always been a key piece of the law, focused on the low-income parents of “Title I-participating” children. We know that gaps in educational opportunity and achievement will only be remedied when those closest to the affected students – parents, families, and communities – are driving decision-making.

The goal of Pennsylvania Department of Education’s Migrant Education Program (PA-MEP) is to ensure that all migrant students reach challenging academic standards and graduate with a high school diploma (or complete a GED) that prepares them for responsible citizenship, further learning, and productive employment.

Article I

Section 1: Names

The PA-MEP Parent Advisory Council will be called PAC. The PAC exists at both the state (State PAC) and regional levels (Local PAC). The LEAs will be referred as the PA-MEP project areas. The PA-MEP project areas are divided into five (5) statewide regions servicing nine (9) MEP project areas.

Article II

Section 2: Purpose

The Parent Advisory Council (PAC) is a vital component of PA-MEP. Research shows that parents play a significant role in the academic achievement of their children. Therefore, it is important for parents and schools to develop ongoing dialogues to improve student achievement. Through the PACs, parents are involved in the planning, operation, and evaluation of the services provided by the migrant program.

Section 3: Functions

The Parent Advisory Council:

1. Recommends to the PA-MEP Statewide Parental Involvement Coordinator activities related to academics, health services, extended learning opportunities (afterschool/Saturday programs), summer programs and parental involvement.
2. Is invited to comment and make recommendations to the evaluation of programs and comprehensive needs assessment.
3. Consults with PA-MEP and the PA-MEP project areas about: (1) the needs of migratory children served; (2) concerns of migrant parents that relate to the academic success and/or performance of migrant children in their region; and (3) development an annual work plan aligned to the local and/or state goals and service delivery plan.
4. Meetings are designed to achieve two objectives: (1) to develop leadership among migrant parents; and (2) to educate parents about topics they express interest in and/or educate parents on topics and concerns that may impact the academic success of their children.

Section 4: Basic Policies

1. The PAC is a non-political, non-commercial, and non-sectarian group of migrant parents that serve as advocates and/or leaders in their communities.
2. The PAC works with the PA-MEP state and local administrators. It should not seek to control or establish policies for PA-MEP project areas without the approval of state and local administrators.
3. The PAC supports the improvement of education in cooperation with state and local administrators.

Article III

Section 5: Structure and Meetings

1. PAC Elections are conducted every two (2) years.
2. Each of the PA-MEP project areas elect and/or appoint a minimum of five (5) officers to their Local PAC (president, vice-president, secretary and at least two (2) delegates).
3. The amount of Local PAC officers and meetings may vary by PA-MEP project area. Local PACs are expected to meet with a PA-MEP assigned staff member on a monthly basis. However, in rural and/or less populated areas where migrant families live; meetings may occur on a quarterly basis. In some cases, they are conducted in conjunction with local community organizations and neighboring school districts to give non-migrant parents the opportunity to attend.
4. PA-MEP project areas in collaboration with their Local PAC members appoint and/or nominate officers to participate from the PA-MEP State PAC Elections. If a PA-MEP project area does not have an active PAC (quorum/geographic region), the local MEP administrators can nominate active eligible migrant parent(s) to participate from the PA MEP-State PAC Elections.
5. Each of the PA-MEP project areas together with their Local PAC, are responsible for nominating two (2) Local PAC members and/or guest parents to participate from the Statewide PAC Meetings that are held twice (2) per year (fall/spring).
6. State PAC Officers Meetings are held four (4) times per year. Depending on the concerns and issues that may arise, meetings may occur more frequently (via conference call, webinar, face-to-face, etc.).
7. PA-MEP project areas are allowed to invite (2) guest parents, in addition to their elected State PAC Official, to participate from the State PAC Officers meetings. This gives other eligible migrant parents to experience the level of involvement at the state level.
8. Members that participate from PAC meetings and/or related events consist of appointed and/or elected parents of migrant children (PAC officers/guest parents) and assigned PA-MEP staff that are knowledgeable of children's needs and are working towards strengthening parental involvement.
9. PAC Meetings will be announced with the dates, place and time noted. Electronic and/or written notifications will be sent to all PAC members two weeks prior to the scheduled meeting (Local PAC and State PAC). Invite phone calls and/or home visits must be documented. When necessary, interpreting services are arranged for PAC meetings. The information that is shared and/or delivered during PAC meetings should be delivered in a language parents can understand.
10. The workshop sessions and/or activities that are held at the Local PAC and Statewide PAC Meetings are planned and coordinated between PAC members, officers, and the assigned PA-MEP staff.
11. PA-MEP Out of School Youth (OOSY) that have children and are eligible to receive PA-MEP services are also eligible to be nominated into PAC vacancies.¹

Article IV

Section 6: Votes and Selection of Officers

1. PAC officers are elected by the votes of current council members and eligible migrant parents that participate from the Local PAC and/or State PAC elections.²
2. Nominations and elections of officers occur during the fall of the prior year for Local PACs and spring for State PAC during their second year term.
3. Elected officers are expected to serve for two years.³
4. The State PAC and Local PACs consist of a minimum of five (5) elected officials (president, vice-president, secretary and at least two (2) delegates).⁴
5. The past president is encouraged to remain for an additional year beyond his/her term to provide guidance and assistance to the newly elected PAC.
6. Nominees that are not selected and/or voted into the presidential, vice-presidential, or secretary positions are invited to become the delegates of the newly elected PACs (State PAC and/or Local PAC).⁵
7. A PAC officer can be re-elected if he/she has a current MEP eligibility at the time of the election.⁶
8. Guest MEP parents can be invited to the State PAC and Local PAC meetings but do not have the authority to make any decisions during the meetings without the approval of elected PAC officials (State PAC and/or Local PAC).⁷

Section 7: Voting Ballots⁸

Eligible MEP parents that attend the scheduled PAC Election will be granted the right to vote.

1. MEP parents that are unable to attend the scheduled PAC Election will not be given the right to vote (sign-in sheet).
2. The ballot design should aid or inhibit clarity in the election process.
3. The ballot design should inhibit the available vacancies.
4. Ballots can be pre-printed with names of candidates and the text of the referenda. It should also provide a blank space for write-in candidates.
5. Each voter will use one ballot, and ballots are not shared.
6. Election officials can be assigned PA-MEP administrators, staff and two (2) current PAC officials. Election officials can manually count the ballots after upon the conclusion of votes and may be recounted in the event of a dispute.
7. Upon the conclusion of the PAC Elections, voting ballots will be kept in a MEP file until the end of the two (2) year term.

Section 8: Expired Officers

If the eligibility of a PAC officer expires during the two-year period, the officer may continue to serve on the council until the end of the two-year term. However, academic support services will not be provided to a migrant child that has an expired eligibility (EOE).

Section 9: Quorum

1. A quorum will consist of at least 50% of PAC officers. In the absence of a quorum, no official matter will be considered.
2. When an elected official is unable to exercise its position, has EOE, moved or absent, the next elected official in line will serve as interim and act as the decision-maker.⁹

Section 10: Vacancies

If multiple vacancies occur during the first year and there are no more PAC officers to fill the vacancies, the PA-MEP administrators and/or PA-MEP staff can elect or appoint new members.

Article V

Section 11: Services

The PAC seeks to provide parents with a variety of educational resources that are available to them in their communities to help them cope with special needs. In addition to sharpening parents' leadership skills, the PAC teaches parents how to become actively involved in their child's education, know their rights and learn how to become an advocate for their child.

Section 12: Obligations and Responsibilities of PAC Officers

1. PAC Officers, who fail to attend regularly to scheduled meetings, may be removed or voted out by their council members, and as determined by PA-MEP administrators. The position will be filled as described in Article IV, Section 6 (State PAC and Local PAC).
2. When funds become available, PAC Officers may be nominated and/or invited to participate from state and national conferences.
3. All PAC Officers are expected to take notes and share minutes of important points that are discussed during the meetings (State PAC and Local PAC).
4. Will work together to ensure positive participation of parents at Statewide Parent Meetings.
5. Will offer guidance and assistance to other migrant parents.
6. Will consult and seek guidance from the assigned PA-MEP staff (State and Local Parental Involvement Coordinator).
7. With the assistance of the assigned PA-MEP staff person, the PACs will develop, submit and report out regional reports during PA-MEP Statewide PAC Meetings.
8. Will present local and/or statewide concerns to PA-MEP administrators and/or PA-MEP Statewide Parental Involvement Coordinator and assigned PA-MEP staff.

9. President: In collaboration and with the guidance of the assigned PA-MEP staff, the president will plan and conduct all PAC related meetings.¹⁰ Maintain order during the meetings. Will present nominations of substitutes until new officials are elected. Will have the right to call out meetings and set agenda items. Will request from council members the opportunity to give their suggestions for events, meeting and/or concerns.
10. Vice-president: Shall preside in the absence of the president and exercise the duties of the president.
11. Secretary: Will ensure meetings start in time. Will be the appointed person to gather minutes from council members. Review important points from past minutes/meetings. Share and submit the sign-in sheet upon the conclusion of each meeting. Minutes will be kept on file and will be made available to all council members.

Section 13: Code of Conduct¹¹

1. PAC Officers should be committed to serve as a role models and advocates. They are to respectfully provide support and guidance to one another and/or to other parents.
2. Recognize that the education of children is a joint responsibility of the parents, school communities, and the PA-MEP.
3. They direct themselves in a respectful manner to assigned officials and/or present authority.

Section 14: Funding Expenses

1. All PA-MEP funds must allocate one percent (1%) of their federal funds towards parental involvement activities that follow the state guidelines.
2. Childcare services will be announced in the PAC invites (State PAC and Local PAC Meetings). Child-care services are not provided during the State PAC Officers Meetings. Limited funds are used for the coordination and delivery of the State PAC Officers Meeting.
3. Interpreting services are offered and provided during PAC related meetings.
4. PA-MEP funds may be used to reimburse the lost wages for elected PAC officials and/or appointed PAC members. Guest migrant parents and/or spouses that serve as participants to PAC related meetings are not entitled to receive reimbursement for lost wages.
5. Traveling arrangements are coordinated by PA-MEP (local and state) and should be at no cost to the parents.¹²

Article VI

Section 15: Amendments

1. Amendments to the by-laws may be presented and voted upon by PAC Officials.
2. By-laws can be amended by a two-third vote of the quorum present.¹³
3. Any future amendments to the by-laws must be consistent with the policies of the PA-MEP and any applicable state and federal guidelines. The PA-MEP State Director can veto any amendment that is not in compliance with the guidelines.

Dates of Amendments

¹ May 7, 2010

³ May 7, 2010

⁵ May 7, 2010

⁸ May 7, 2010

¹¹ May 7, 2010

² April 5, 2014

⁴ October 11, 2004

⁶ March 29, 1996

⁹ October 11, 2014

¹² March 28, 1996

⁷ December 10, 2004

¹⁰ May 7, 2010

¹³ March 29, 1996