

Rules of Internal Procedure
WQSB Special Education
Advisory Committee
SEAC

(approved March 29, 2021)

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COMPOSITION OF COMMITTEE:

Reference: Education Act (s. 185)

185. Every school board shall establish an *advisory committee* on services for handicapped students and students with social maladjustments or learning disabilities.

The committee shall be composed of:

- parents of the students concerned, designated by the parents' committee;
- representatives of the teachers, of the members of the non-teaching professional staff and of the members of the support staff, designated by the associations which represent them in their dealings with the school board and elected from among the persons who provide services to the students concerned;
- representatives of bodies which provide services to handicapped students or to students with social maladjustments or learning disabilities, designated by the council of commissioners after consulting with those bodies;
- a school principal designated by the director general.
- The director general or his representative shall take part in the sittings of the committee but he is not entitled to vote.

1988, c. 84, s. 185; 1990, c. 8, s. 16.

NUMBER OF MEMBERS:

Reference: Education Act s. 186

186. The council of commissioners shall determine the number of representatives from each group. The representatives of the parents shall constitute the majority of the members of the committee.

1988, c. 84, s. 186.

As determined by the council of commissioners (Sept 2018), the WQSB Composition of SEAC

Voting Members:

- 16 Parents of the students concerned (students with an IEP), designated by the Parents' Committee.
- 1 Teacher representative, designated by their Association

- 1 Non-teaching professional staff representative, designated by their Association
- 1 Support staff representative, designated by their Association
- 1 School principal, designated by the Director General
- Up to 2 representatives of organizations which provide services to students with special needs, designated by Council, after consulting with those bodies

Non-voting Members:

- The Director General or designate.

SELECTION OF MEMBERS:

Reference: Education Act (s. 185)

The parent members of SEAC will be “designated by the Parents’ Committee” (Ed Act 2.185)

Appointment of SEAC Members by Parent Committee

The parent members of SEAC are designated by The Parent Committee at the first meeting of the school year. (Typically in October)

Effective the 2016-17 school year, the process to be followed for the selection of WQSB SEAC parent members will be:

1. Any parent of a student with an IEP, who is interested in becoming a member of SEAC, must submit his/her name at the General Assembly of their child’s school. (held before the end of September)
2. The names of parents, who are interested in becoming members of SEAC, are forwarded to the Parent Committee (via administration).
3. The parents, whose names were submitted, will be invited to introduce themselves (in person or in writing) at the 1st Parent Committee in the event that *17 or more parents have expressed interest and elections must be held.
4. The Parent Committee members will designate the parent members who will be named to SEAC. (Up to a maximum of *16 parents).
5. The (maximum *16) parent members of SEAC will be named to the Director of Complementary Services who will then invite all SEAC members to the 1st SEAC meeting.
6. Two additional names will be selected by Parent Committee in the event of a resignation or vacancy on SEAC.
7. The parent members will serve a one-year mandate.

RESIGNATIONS AND VACANCIES:

Should a parent member no longer be able to fulfill their duties within the committee, the member will write the Chair to inform them of their resignation. Should another member be unable to fulfill their duties, they will inform their respective association/organization as well as the Chair. The Chair will then inform the committee of the resignation.

In order to fill a vacant position, due to a member leaving or resigning, names previously submitted to Parent Committee will be maintained and consulted. Parent Committee will designate two additional candidates to SEAC (above the prescribed number of parent members), who may be called upon during the current year's mandate to fill any vacant position. These two candidates will be notified of the possibility of being called upon.

ROLE AND MANDATE OF SEAC:

Reference: Education Act (s. 187)

187. The functions of the advisory committee on services for handicapped students and students with social maladjustments or learning disabilities are:

1. to advise the school board on a policy for the organization of educational services to handicapped students and students with social maladjustments or learning disabilities;
2. to advise the resource allocation committee and the school board on the allocation of financial resources to the services intended for those students.
3. to advise the commitment-to-student-success committee on the commitment-to-success plan.

The committee may also advise the school board on the implementation of an individualized education plan for a handicapped student or a student with social maladjustments or learning disabilities.

MECHANISM FOR THE RESOLUTION OF COMPLAINTS RELATED TO IEPS (ED ACT, S. 187)

SEAC will establish a process for advising the school board on the implementation of individualized education plans.

OTHER ADVISORY DUTIES AS INDICATED IN THE EDUCATION ACT

Agreements with outside bodies (Education Act, s. 213)

213. A school board may enter into an agreement, for the provision of instructional services at the preschool, elementary or secondary level, with another school board or an educational institution governed by the Act respecting private education (chapter E-9.1), or an educational body in Canada which provides educational services equivalent to those referred to in this Act.

A school board may enter into an agreement with another school board, a body or a person for the provision of student services and special educational services, literacy services or popular education services or for any purposes other than the provision of services referred to in the first paragraph.

Before entering into such an agreement, the school board shall consult every student of full age and the parents of every student likely to be concerned by such an agreement. In the case of a handicapped student or a student with a social maladjustment or a learning disability, the school service centre shall consult the advisory committee on services for handicapped students and students with social maladjustments or learning disabilities.

Exemption from Compulsory Attendance (Education Act, s. 15)

15. The following students are exempt from compulsory school attendance:

...(2) a student excused by the school board, at the request of his parents and after consultation with the advisory committee on services for handicapped students and students with social maladjustments or learning disabilities established under section 185, by reason of a physical or mental handicap which prevents him from attending school; ...

Financial resources for students with special needs (Education Act, s. 187.1)

187.1. Each year, the school board shall inform the advisory committee on services for handicapped students and students with social maladjustments or learning disabilities of the amount of the financial resources available for services intended for those students and of the allocation of those resources in light of the policies defined by the Minister.

The school board shall report each year to the committee and the Minister on requests for reconsideration made under section 9 relating to services for handicapped students and students with social maladjustments or learning disabilities. (section 9: A student or parents of a student affected by a decision of the school board's council of commissioners or the governing board, or of an officer or employee of the school board may request the school board's council of commissioners to reconsider such decision.)

SELECTION OF INTERNAL ROLES/OFFICERS:

The positions for the following roles will be voted on by all members of SEAC, at the first meeting of the year:

- Chair
- Vice-Chair
- Secretary

The positions for the following roles will be voted on by parent members only, at the first meeting of the year:

- EHDAA Parent Commissioner (every two years)
- Parents' Committee representative

ROLE OF OFFICERS and DURATION OF TERMS:

Chair of SEAC

- The position of the Chair of SEAC must be held by one of the parent members.
- The Chair will serve a one year mandate.
- Prepares the draft agenda, in collaboration with the Director of Complementary Services
- Notifies the members of upcoming meetings, and forwards agenda and related documents
- Responsible for the running of meetings in accordance with the rules of procedure
- Maintains order and decorum at meetings
- May call a special meeting of the committee if deemed necessary
- Ensures all recommendations and meeting minutes are sent to the Council of Commissioners for acknowledgement of receipt

Vice-Chair of SEAC

- The position of the Vice-Chair of SEAC must be held by one of the parent members.
- The Vice-Chair will serve a one-year mandate.
- Assumes the duties of the Chair in the event he/she is unable to do so, or in the event the Chair wishes to participate in the meeting discussion.

Secretary

- The secretary will take draft minutes during the course of the SEAC meetings.

EHDAA Parent Commissioner

- The position of the EHDAA Commissioner must be filled by one of the parent members of SEAC.

- The name of the successful candidate will be submitted to the Parent Committee and the name will then be submitted to Council.
- The EHDA Parent Commissioner will serve a two year mandate on Council.
- Attends monthly WQSB Council of Commissioners, and other meetings as required in order to represent parents of children with special needs
- Provides oral and written reports to SEAC on the activities of the Council of Commissioners
- The EHDA Parent Commissioner will provide information, as needed to the Council of Commissioners.
- Reaches out to school Governing Boards to inform them about SEAC and activities in the Board related to students with special needs and their families, with special emphasis on those schools who are not represented on SEAC.
- Attends community events and public participation, as a representative of SEAC, or as designated by the Council of Commissioners

SEAC Parents' Committee representative

Education Act, s. 189 (re. Parent Committee) regarding members:

"...one representative of the advisory committee on services for handicapped students and students with social maladjustments or learning disabilities, designated by and from among the parents who are members of that committee.

...

The parents who are members of the advisory committee on services for handicapped students and students with social maladjustments or learning disabilities may designate a second representative as a substitute to attend and vote at meetings of the parents' committee when their representative is unable to do so."

- The position of the SEAC Parents' Committee representative must be filled by 1 of the parent members of SEAC.
- A second representative will be chosen and will serve as a substitute, when the primary representative is unable to do so
- The name of the successful candidate will be submitted to the Parents' Committee.
- Attends monthly Parents' Committee meetings representing SEAC.
- Provides a report, if requested, on current topics discussed at SEAC and/or report on upcoming events which might be of interest to the Parents' Committee members
- Reports to SEAC on monthly Parents' Committee meetings.

EXPECTATIONS:

SEAC aims to provide a safe, non-judgmental environment where members are comfortable in sharing their ideas and perspectives. Members are expected to maintain a collaborative, respectful and open dialogue/participation within the committee. Members should be committed to:

- Regular attendance at meetings
- Inform the Chair of any foreseen absence
- Represent and conduct themselves with moderation, honesty, integrity, courtesy, honour and respect
- Read documentation provided
- Participate and contribute to meeting discussions
- Ensure respectful dialogue between members
- Make contributions that are in the best interest of the special needs population
- Be prepared to discuss special needs as it pertains to the greater population
- Refrain from using specific student/staff names
- Maintain confidentiality where necessary

FREQUENCY AND NUMBER OF MEETINGS:

A member may take part in and vote at a meeting of the committee by any means allowing all the participants to communicate with each other (Ed Act, s. 195)

- The rules shall provide for at least three sittings every school year (Ed Act; s. 195)
- Meetings are generally held on a bimonthly schedule.
- Meetings are generally held at the school board with access to a variety of different platforms (eg. videoconferencing, telephone, online platform)
- Should an additional meeting be required, due to a deadline or urgent advisory matter, the Chair may call for a 'Special' SEAC meeting to be held. An agenda will be forwarded to members outlining the urgent matter/items to be included.

AGENDA:

A draft agenda will be developed between the Chair and the Director of Complementary Services.

A draft agenda will be sent to all SEAC members, one week in advance of meetings. Members may submit additional items for discussion, either prior to or at the start of the meeting (at approval of agenda item).

DISTRIBUTION OF DOCUMENTS:

Documents and presentation slides, related to the meeting's agenda, will be sent to members prior to the meeting. In the event that they are not available prior to the meeting, they will be forwarded during or immediately following the meeting.

If the meeting is held in person, hard copies of documents can be made available, as needed.

ATTENDANCE AND QUORUM:

Attendance at SEAC meetings is encouraged to ensure quorum is achieved.

Resource people may be invited to present on various items related to students with special needs. These resource people do not have a voting right and will only attend for the portion of the meeting that is relevant to them. The Chair of SEAC or Director of Complementary Services will invite the person identified as a resource to the committee. If the resource person will be presenting to the committee, all documentation should be provided prior to the scheduled meeting.

When the draft agenda is forwarded to members, RSVPs will be requested to ensure quorum is achieved.

Quorum at regular meetings shall consist of 50% of members plus one.

VOTING AND MAJORITY:

1. When an item is moved by a member of the committee, it must be seconded by another member before it can be voted on.
2. Following this, the Chair opens the floor for discussion or debate.
3. The Chair asks for any further discussion or comment.
4. The Chair calls for a vote on the motion.
5. In regards to motions related to minutes of a meeting, only those members in attendance (as noted in section on attendance) at the given meeting may move and vote for adoption of the minutes.
6. Members may vote in favour, to oppose, or to abstain.
7. The number of each, must be recorded in the minutes, with the associated name if members wish it to be recorded.
8. If the majority of members participating approves, or the committee members vote unanimously in favour, the motion will be "carried."
9. Should a majority not be attained, the motion will be noted as "not approved." The floor will be open to further discussion or motion, otherwise the Chair will move to the next item on the agenda.

E-VOTING PROCEDURES:

1. On occasion, a time-sensitive motion requires a vote of approval from SEAC, and we need to hold an electronic vote. This may occur when an activity or decision has a

deadline before the next scheduled meeting or quorum at the previous sitting of SEAC was not met.

2. The Chair, or his/her designate, will present the issue, draft and propose the motion.
3. As determined by the Chair or designate, an appropriate amount of time in light of the circumstances (but not more than 72 hours), will be given for SEAC members to raise questions and ask for clarification of the issue or suggest amendments to the motion. This time period will be specified when sending out the initial notice of electronic voting.
4. At the end of the specified time period, the Chair or designate will request a vote by return email.
5. SEAC members should Reply All, with the first reply received counting as the seconding of the motion; then subsequent votes are counted to the resolution.
6. All voting members of SEAC should cast an In Favour, Opposed or Abstention vote.
7. If a member does not press Reply All, the Chair or designate will forward that vote to the entire group.
8. If a member does not vote within the prescribed deadline, it will be noted as an absence for the purpose of quorum. Quorum is required in order to proceed with a decision on the motion.
9. Anyone can raise a question on the motion during voting by Replying All, and this will halt the process until the question is resolved. Then voting will continue. If the motion fails, then it may be resubmitted by any SEAC member with proposed amendments.
10. Quorum rules for SEAC apply.
11. The Chair or designate will inform SEAC members of the vote outcome at the earliest convenience. Minutes for the following meeting will reflect the motion and its outcome.
12. The results of the e-vote will be ratified in the next scheduled SEAC meeting minutes (with associated results – in favour, opposed, abstention)

MEETING PROCEDURES:

Should a meeting require further discussion or should a meeting go beyond the allotted duration, items may be tabled to the next meeting, or a sub-committee may be struck.

Meetings will be maintained at a two hour duration. Should a meeting require an extension, an additional 30 minute period may be added to the length of the meeting, following a motion to extend.

SUB-COMMITTEES/WORKING GROUPS:

Should a sub-committee or working group be required to work on a particular initiative, event, or review, a motion will be made in regards to its formation. A clear mandate/purpose will be identified in the motion. Members will be invited to volunteer for the sub-committee/working group.

Possible sub-committees: IEPs, Internal Procedures, Communications, Commitment to Success, Resource Allocation Committee Recommendations (financial allocations), Policy C-17,...

MINUTES:

Minutes will include agenda items discussed, key discussion points and formal motions.

The minutes will be forwarded to the Chair of SEAC for approval by the committee members.

Once approved, minutes will be kept in a shared SEAC folder.

INTERNAL COMMUNICATIONS (WITHIN THE SCHOOL BOARD):

In consultation with SEAC, the Director of Complementary Services may provide information, as needed, to the Council of Commissioners or other related committees, such as Resource Allocation Committee and Complementary Services Parity Committee.

EXTERNAL COMMUNICATIONS (WITH COMMUNITY/ORGANIZATIONS):

Official public statements are the responsibility of the school board.

Given that there may be *up to 2 representatives of organizations which provide services to students with special needs, designated by Council (Ed Act, 185)*, SEAC may directly or indirectly collaborate and communicate with groups and organizations which may be a resource to SEAC.

SEAC BUDGET:

Reference: Education Act s. 197

197. The parents' committee and the advisory committee on services for handicapped students and students with social maladjustments or learning disabilities shall adopt their annual operating budget, see to its administration and give an account thereof to the school *board*. The budget shall maintain a balance between the expenditures of each committee on the one hand and the financial resources allocated to each committee by the school *board* and each committee's own other revenues, on the other.

The Director of Finance will provide the annual available SEAC budget amount prior to the first meeting of the year.

Budget may be a recurring agenda item. Priorities as to the use of the available funds will be determined by the committee.

EVALUATION OF INTERNAL PROCEDURES :

The above noted procedures shall come into effect upon their adoption at SEAC and shall remain in effect until reviewed and modified. The Internal Procedures of SEAC will be reviewed every 4 years, or following an approved motion to review the internal procedures. A sub-committee will be formed to review, revise and prepare a draft version of the internal procedures. The draft would be presented at a subsequent SEAC meeting, for approval.