



## Terms of Reference for Special Education Advisory Committee

**Committee Term:** 4 years

**Terms of reference updated as of:** November 2023

---

|                             |          |
|-----------------------------|----------|
| <b>Mandate</b>              | <b>1</b> |
| Terms and Definitions       | 1        |
| <b>Purpose</b>              | <b>2</b> |
| <b>Membership</b>           | <b>2</b> |
| Committee Chair             | 4        |
| Committee secretary         | 4        |
| <b>Meeting Procedures</b>   | <b>5</b> |
| Meeting Frequency           | 5        |
| Notice                      | 5        |
| Attendance                  | 5        |
| Attendance by other parties | 6        |
| Public access               | 6        |
| Reporting to the Board      | 6        |
| <b>In-camera Discussion</b> | <b>6</b> |
| Confidentiality             | 6        |
| <b>Rules of Order</b>       | <b>7</b> |
| <b>Committee Review</b>     | <b>7</b> |

---

### **Mandate**

In accordance with section 57.1(1) of the [Education Act](#) and [Ontario Regulation 464/97](#), and in recognition that strong partnerships between the school, parents/guardians, and the community are vital to the success of all students, particularly, students with special needs, Trillium Lakelands District School Board has established a Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC).

### **Terms and Definitions**

Local Associations: Provincially recognized/represented organizations that act on behalf of parents/guardians. To meet the criteria in regulation 464/97, section (1):

- the local association of parents must operate locally within the school board jurisdiction; and,
- the local association must be affiliated with an incorporated provincial organization that works on behalf of one or more groups of exceptional students; and
- the local or provincial association cannot be an association or organization of professional educators.

Community Representatives: Up to three community representatives may be appointed to a SEAC when the number of nominated local association representatives does not meet or exceed twelve representatives.

### **Purpose**

The Board, in partnership with local associations and with community members, is committed to providing clear direction on how *Regulation 464: Special Education Advisory Committees* is implemented in TLDSB, allowing for an effective forum for members of the committee to provide feedback and input to the Board and administration. This may include:

- Making recommendations to the Board about matters affecting the establishment, development, and delivery of special education programs and services.
- Participating in the annual review of the Board's Special Education Plan and Parent/Guardian Guide to Special Education.
- Participating in the Board's annual budget process and review as related to special education
- Providing information to parents/guardians, as requested

### **Membership**

A new SEAC is formed every four years following the election of the Board of Trustees. Each SEAC term lasts four years. The first meeting of a newly established SEAC will occur in the month following the fall trustee election.

To best fulfill the mandate of SEAC, a broad base of student exceptionality and geographic representation will be considered for the selection of members.

The SEAC will be composed of the following representatives:

- One representative from each local association, not to exceed 12 (twelve), in the area of jurisdiction of the Board, as nominated by the association and appointed by the Board.
- One alternate member for each association may also be appointed to serve in the absence of the regular member.
- Up to three members may be appointed from the community to represent the interests of all exceptional pupils in the Board if the number of nominated local association members does not meet or exceed the maximum of 12 (twelve).

- Two representatives and one alternate from the Board of Trustees, as selected through the Board's own process for trustee representation on Board committees.
- The superintendent responsible for special education will normally act as staff resource to the committee, and will arrange for the preparation of minutes and other materials required by SEAC. The Superintendent is a non-voting member.
- Other educators and/or support staff may attend the meetings as appropriate to provide information or support to the committee. Other educators or support staff are non-voting members.

### Membership selection process

The following process will be used for membership selection:

- For local associations:
  - A letter will be sent to each local association, as defined in section 1 of the regulation, that is known to operate within the jurisdiction of the Board.
  - The letter will request the nomination in writing of a member representing the association to be considered for the committee. An alternate member may also be nominated.
  - Requirements for membership will also be advertised in local papers and via websites and social media.
- For community representatives:
  - Promotion of and requirements for membership for community representatives will be advertised in local papers and via websites and social media.
  - Nomination of community representatives will be made in writing by the individual interested in being considered as a representative on the committee.
- The superintendent responsible for special education will receive the local association and community representative applications for the committee, and will short list candidates.
- An interview of potential candidates may be conducted by the superintendent responsible for special education and the current SEAC chair.
- An administrative report recommending membership for the committee will be prepared by the Superintendent.
- Members will be appointed to the committee through Board motion.
- If an association position on a special education advisory committee becomes vacant during the course of a term, the agency/organization that appointed the person shall appoint a qualified person to fill the vacancy for the remainder of the term.

- If a seat for a community representative becomes vacant during the course of a term, TLDSB may open up the application process per the above.

#### Committee Chair

A chair and vice-chair are elected at the inaugural meeting of SEAC. The term of office for chair and vice-chair will coincide with the four-year term of SEAC. The chair and vice chair of SEAC can be acclaimed should there only be one nomination for each position. If required at any time, a new chair or vice-chair will be elected following the process outlined below.

The following process will be used for the election of a chair and vice-chair:

- Nominations for the position of chair of SEAC are made orally by any member and seconded by another member.
- Each member may make only one nomination for the office of chair.
- Each nominator and each seconder is allowed to speak on behalf of the nominee.
- Each nominee is allowed up to five minutes to outline reasons for standing for office.
- Voting takes place by closed ballot.
- The Superintendent responsible for Special Education and a trustee collect and count the ballots.
- The candidate receiving the majority of votes of the members present is declared elected.
- The process outlined in a) through g) above is repeated for the election of vice-chair.
- In the event of a tie vote, a ballot for each candidate will be placed in the ballot box, and the Superintendent responsible for Special Education will draw a ballot.
- The ballot chosen will be declared the chair of the committee.

#### Committee secretary

Meeting minutes are recorded by the executive assistant to the superintendent of learning responsible for Special Education Services who shall work with staff and the chair to set an agenda for each committee meeting; provide the required notice about meetings and ensure handouts and reports are prepared and sent to the committee in advance of meetings. Minutes of each meeting shall be approved by the committee at its next meeting and uploaded on the [tldsb.ca](http://tldsb.ca) Committees page following approval. All notifications of meetings will also be posted along with supporting documentation by the executive assistant on the [tldsb.ca](http://tldsb.ca) website on the committees page.

## Meeting Procedures

### Meeting Frequency

Specific meeting times, dates, and locations are determined by the committee in June in accordance with the Regulation governing SEAC. These meetings are open to the public and are held on the first Tuesday of each month, unless otherwise noted.

Additional meetings may be required and will be scheduled by committee or Board/staff request and by committee motion.

### Notice

Once confirmed in June, meeting details for the school year will be shared on the Board website.

The Board will provide the agenda to members a minimum of three (3) days prior to the meeting, along with a request for confirmation of attendance.

### Attendance

SEAC members are encouraged to attend as many meetings as possible in order to foster a broad and balanced discussion. Members are encouraged to attend meetings in-person, but arrangements can be made for virtual attendance should the need arise.

If a SEAC member has missed two (2) or more consecutive meetings and anticipates a third consecutive absence but does not wish to vacate their appointment, the member may notify the chair in writing in advance to request that SEAC approval of the absence be noted in the minutes.

Where an attendance concern becomes apparent the chair may contact the SEAC representatives and/or the community partner to inquire about the intent and capacity of either the representatives and/or the association to continue their involvement with SEAC.

In the event that a position is vacated, the chair shall send written confirmation of the same to the vacating representative, and shall further notify the association to request that the association nominate another representative for appointment by the Board.

The superintendent responsible for Special Education Services and the chair of the committee shall be in attendance at the meeting location.

### Quorum

A quorum requires the physical or virtual presence of the majority of the voting members of the committee. In accordance with Regulation 464/97, SEAC requires a quorum for any decision that binds the committee.

The chair may convene a meeting of SEAC without quorum for the purposes of discussion and receiving information.

Trustee and local association alternate representatives are only considered to be voting members in the absence of a voting member, and are otherwise not counted for purposes of determining quorum. Attendance by other parties

The committee may request other parties to present information and participate in discussions at committee meetings. The committee chair may invite individuals who are not committee members to attend meetings.

#### Public access

Committee meeting time, date and locations shall be determined and published on the TLDSB committees website. Committee meetings that are open to the public must allow for public attendance.

#### Reporting to the Board

A trustee member of SEAC (or designate) will provide a report to the subsequent Board meeting following each committee meeting, summarizing the significant items discussed or actions taken, and tabling any recommendations for consideration by the Board.

### **Agendas and Minutes**

Meeting minutes are recorded by the executive assistant to the superintendent responsible for Special Education Services who shall work with staff and the chair to set an agenda for each committee meeting; provide the required notice about meetings and ensure handouts and reports are prepared and sent to the committee in advance of meetings. Minutes of each meeting shall be approved by the committee at its next meeting and uploaded on the [tldsb.ca](http://tldsb.ca) committees page following approval. All notifications of meetings will also be posted by the executive assistant on the [tldsb.ca](http://tldsb.ca) website on the committees page.

Additional agenda items may be suggested by members, provided a request to add an agenda item is received by the chair at least five (5) days prior to the meeting for which it is intended.

The Board will provide the agenda to members a minimum of three (3) days prior to the meeting, along with a request for confirmation of attendance.

Minutes of each meeting will be kept and approved by SEAC, and forwarded to the Board. Minutes will be distributed to all SEAC members and their alternates.

### **In-camera Discussion**

The committee may meet in camera with management to discuss any matters that should be discussed privately with the committee in alignment with section 207(2) of the *Education Act*.

### **Confidentiality**

The nature and subject of discussions and deliberations on matters before the Committee, if said committee is conducting business in-camera, are confidential until such time as an item is approved by the Board and released publicly.

**Rules of Order**

Unless otherwise provided in the TLDSB by-laws or these terms of reference, committee business and conduct of the committee members shall follow Robert's Rules of Order.

Committee members should avoid raising personal business during the meeting, and should be instead addressed through regular Board communication channels.

**Committee Review**

Annually, the Special Education Advisory Committee will review its performance as a committee and that of its individual members as part of the Board's annual report process.

Annually, the Director's Council will review the terms of reference for the Special Education Advisory Committee to ensure it continues to reflect the Board's Strategic Plan Goals and aligns with good governance practices.