Trillium Lakelands
DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC) Handbook

If you require this information in an accessible format,
please contact Communications Services at info@tldsb.on.ca.

Table of contents

Introduction **2**

Membership **2**

Formation of a new Special Education Advisory Committee **3**

The election of chair and vice-chair **4**

Orientation for SEAC members **5**

Roles and responsibilities **5**

Meetings **6**

- Agendas and minutes 6
- Quorum 7
- Attendance 7
- Meeting protocols 8
- Meeting expenses 9

Communication with the Board **9**

Input to the SEAC **9**

Terms and definitions **10**

SEAC resources **10**

Community resources for schools and families **11**

TLDSB Special Education Services acronyms **12**

Introduction

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).

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

The SEAC will be composed of the following membership:

- 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.

A current list of SEAC members and associations they represent is available at https://www.tldsb.ca/special-education-advisory-committee/

Formation of a New Special Education Advisory Committee

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 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.

The Election of Chair and Vice-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 Services 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 the steps 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 Services will draw a ballot.
- The ballot chosen will be declared the chair of the committee.

Orientation for SEAC Members

At the first SEAC meeting, and as required throughout a SEAC term, new SEAC members will be provided with an orientation session that reviews SEAC duties, best practices and logistical information.

The Provincial Parents Association Advisory Committee (PAAC) has developed a PAAC on *SEAC Effective Practices Handbook* and other online resources for SEAC representatives to access.

Additional resources and other training materials will be made available to SEAC members as required to align with agenda topics or by request.

Roles and Responsibilities

A Special Education Advisory Committee of a Board may make recommendations to the Board in respect of any matter affecting the establishment, development and delivery of special education programs and services for exceptional pupils of the Board.

Before making a decision on a recommendation of the committee, the Board shall provide an opportunity for the committee to be heard by the Board and before any other committee of the Board to which the recommendation is referred.

The Board shall ensure that its SEAC is provided with the opportunity to participate in the Board's annual review, under *Regulation 306 of the Revised Regulations of Ontario 1990*, of its special education plan.

The Board shall ensure that its SEAC is provided with the opportunity to participate in the Board's annual budget process under Section 231 of the Act, as that process relates to special education.

The Board shall ensure that its SEAC is provided with the opportunity to review the financial statements of the Board, prepared under Section 252 of the Act, as those statements relate to special education.

SEAC regularly participates in information, consultation, and discussion of the following areas:

- *Regulation 464 (SEAC)* review of requirements
- *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act* information
- Annual review of Special Education Plan
- Special education budget input
- Association news
- Special presentations

Meetings

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 monthly during the school year.

The meeting schedule for 2026-2027 is:

Date	Location
September 8, 2026	Lindsay and Muskoka Education Centres
October 6, 2026	Haliburton County Education Centre
November 3, 2026	Lindsay and Muskoka Education Centres
December 1, 2026	Lindsay and Muskoka Education Centres
January 5, 2027	Lindsay and Muskoka Education Centres
February 2, 2027	Lindsay and Muskoka Education Centres
March 2, 2027	Lindsay and Muskoka Education Centres
April 6, 2027	Lindsay and Muskoka Education Centres
May 4, 2027	Lindsay and Muskoka Education Centres
June 1, 2027	Haliburton County Education Centre

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

In the event of inclement weather:

- A decision will be made by the superintendent by the afternoon of the meeting day whether to cancel an in-person meeting and pivot to a fully virtual format. SEAC members will be notified via email, and may also phone the designated contact person to confirm meeting arrangements.
- The meeting agenda may need to be altered to accommodate the virtual format.

Agendas and Minutes

The agenda for each meeting is developed collaboratively by the chair and the superintendent responsible for special education.

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. Minutes will be distributed to all SEAC members and their alternates.

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

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.

Meeting protocols

Meetings shall begin on time. No meeting shall continue in session for more than three (3) hours.

All members are expected to adhere to the following meeting norms:

- Arrive on time.
- Review the agenda prior to the meeting.
- Turn off cell phones and other electronic devices.
- Raise a hand to indicate intention to speak; speak only when recognized by the chair.
- Listen respectfully and courteously to others.

Rules of order will be followed as per the Trillium Lakelands District School Board by-laws.

- Call to Order: The chair will call the meeting to order and confirm attendance and quorum.
- Approval of Agenda: motion for approval should be made and seconded before additions or deletions are made. If the agenda is amended, it must then be moved and seconded.
- Declaration of Conflicts of Interest: no member should vote on any issues if they appear to have a conflict of interest, particularly if the member stands to gain financially from the outcome.
- Presentation(s): Guest speakers, including community partners, or Board staff may provide information to the committee. Presentations shall be limited to 20 minutes.
- Approval of Minutes: motion for approval should be made and seconded.
- Business arising from previous minutes: Outstanding and ongoing items from previous meetings that need to be followed up and resolved.
- Special education Board policy review: SEAC members can provide feedback on policies impacting special education students, in advance of those policies being approved by trustees.
- Actions and Information Items: This can include SEAC member notices of motion, sub-committee updates and other items requiring action, or to be received for information.

- Community updates: SEAC members may share updates, news, and information on programming and events taking place in the community.
- Correspondence: Communications to SEAC.
- Future business: The chair identifies items for follow up at future meetings.
- Adjournment: A motion to adjourn.

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

Meeting expenses

Mileage will be paid at the TLDSB corporate rate for meeting attendance by SEAC members.

Other expenses for SEAC members shall be approved by the superintendent in advance.

Communication with the Board

SEAC advises the Board by way of a motion, letter, or through trustee representatives. SEAC works on a consensus model and reports to the Board on a monthly basis through the SEAC board report. In the event that consensus cannot be reached, a majority report and any minority report(s) would be presented to the Board for consideration.

Input to the SEAC

Parents/guardians and other members of the public can give input to the SEAC committee. Correspondence to the committee can be addressed to:

> The Trillium Lakelands District School Board Special Education Advisory Committee
> 300 County Road 36
> Lindsay, ON, K9V 4R4

Telephone contacts to the committee can be directed to the executive assistant to the superintendent of learning responsible for Specialized Services at 1-888-526-5552.

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.

SEAC Resources

- Ministry of Education | ontario.ca
    - Education Act, R.S.O. 1990, c. E.2
    - R.R.O. 1990, Reg. 306: Special Education Programs and Services
    - O. Reg. 464/97: Special Education Advisory Committees
    - Special education in Ontario Kindergarten to Grade 12 – Policy and resource guide
    - Education in Ontario: policy and program direction
- SEAC Terms of Reference
- Trillium Lakelands District School Board website
    - Policies
    - Special Education
    - Special Education Advisory Committee
    - TLDSB Special Education Plan
    - TLDSB Parent/Guardian Guide to Special Education
- Provincial Parents Advisory Committee on SEAC website

Community resources for schools and families

Autism Ontario
www.autismontario.com

Canadian Hearing Services
www.chs.ca/

Canadian National Institute for the Blind (Barrie Office)
www.cnib.ca

Closing the Gap
www.closingthegap.ca

Home and Community Care Support Services
www.healthcareathome.ca

Community Living South Muskoka
www.clsm.on.ca

Community Living Huntsville
www.clhuntsville.ca

HANDS The Family Help Network
www.thefamilyhelpnetwork.ca

Learning Disabilities Association of Ontario
www.ldao.ca

One Kid's Place Children's Treatment Centre
www.onekidsplace.ca

Simcoe Muskoka Family Connections
www.familyconnexions.ca

Autism Ontario
www.autismontario.com

Community Living Trent Highlands
www.clth.ca

Point in Time
www.pointintime.ca

Learning Disabilities Association of Ontario
www.ldao.ca

Home and Community Care Support Services
www.healthcareathome.ca

Five Counties Children's Centre
www.fivecounties.on.ca

Autism Ontario
www.autismontario.com

Canadian Hearing Services – Peterborough
www.chs.ca

Canadian National Institute for the Blind (Peterborough Office)
www.cnib.ca

Chimo Youth & Family Services
www.chimoyouth.ca

Community Living Trent Highlands
www.clth.ca

Home and Community Care Support Services
www.healthcareathome.ca

Learning Disabilities Association of Ontario
www.ldao.ca

Five Counties Children's Centre
www.fivecounties.on.ca

Kinark Child and Family Services
www.kinark.on.ca

Kerry's Place - East Region
www.kerrysplace.org

Canopy Support Services
www.canopysupport.ca

TLDSB Special Education Services acronyms

BIRT	Behaviour intervention resource team
CT	Classroom teacher
EA	Educational assistant
VP	Vice principal
IEP	Individual education plan
ILT	Inclusive learning team
IST/SST meeting	In-school /Student Success team meeting
IPRC	Identification Placement and Review Committee
SEA equipment	Special Education Amount equipment (student equipment)
SEAC	Special Education Advisory Committee
SEAB	Special Education Appeal Board
SERT	Special education resource teacher