

PAaC

Provincial Parent Associations Advisory Committee

on SEAC

Special Education Advisory Committees



PAAC on SEAC

Effective Practices Handbook

for SEAC Members

Revised 2016

PAAC on SEAC

Effective Practices Handbook for SEAC Members

This handbook has been created with support from a Ministry of Education Parent Engagement Office Parents Reaching Out Grant with the lead agency being the Ontario Brain Injury Association (OBIA). The views and ideas included in the handbook belong to the members of the Provincial Parent Associations Advisory Committee on Special Education Advisory Committees (PAAC on SEAC) and do not necessarily reflect those of the Ministry of Education.

The PAAC on SEAC Effective Practices Handbook is available electronically, in both English and French, on the PAAC on SEAC website at www.paac-seac.ca or from any of the member associations.

The PAAC on SEAC Effective Practices Handbook for SEAC members (2016) is a revision of the handbook developed in 2010. PAAC on SEAC has a history of developing guides for SEAC members, including the Handbook for Members of Special Education Advisory Committees produced by PAAC on SEAC in 1985, 1995 and 2001. The handbook content builds on the work by Marilyn Dolmage, Derryn Gill, Eva Nichols, Alison Morse, Diane Wagner, Lynn Ziraldo and others, who have developed PAAC on SEAC and SEAC training resources over the years.

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Introduction

The Provincial Parent Associations Advisory Committee on Special Education Advisory Committees (PAAC on SEAC) was established in 1983 to provide a forum for parent associations, whose members are eligible to sit on SEAC, to share ideas, compare strategies and address common concerns related to SEACs across the province. The provincial parent associations and their representatives are valuable resources not only to each other and to SEACs but to the Ministry of Education, school board officials, education and service providers, parents and the community at large.

Special Education Advisory Committees (SEACs) play an important role in the delivery of special education across Ontario. Each school board is required by law to establish SEACs to advise it on special education matters. SEAC members are important community volunteers whose contributions should be recognized and supported. Parents have been involved in SEACs since they were first established in the 1970s and their contributions have demonstrated the value of parent involvement in education.

The 2010 handbook, and the 2016 revisions, were made possible by a Parents Reaching Out grant from the Ministry of Education, Parent Engagement Office. The handbook was revised in response to the results of a PAAC on SEAC Survey of SEAC Effectiveness in 2014 and feedback from the 2015 SEAC Provincial Conference. This document is the latest version of the PAAC on SEAC handbook and builds on the *Handbook for Members of Special Education Advisory Committees* produced by PAAC on SEAC in 1985 and 1995. A review of the previous PAAC on SEAC handbooks, and the SEAC resources developed by the different parent association members, has helped to identify practices that have been demonstrated to improve the effectiveness of SEACs and support the engagement of members.

This handbook was designed for SEAC Members and Alternates who represent local associations and are affiliated with a provincial parent association. The handbook should also be helpful for all SEAC members and could be used by SEACs to evaluate their current practices and consider effective practices used by other SEACs. The handbook does not reflect any particular philosophy or exceptionality. SEAC members are encouraged to contact local association and/or provincial parent associations for further information regarding specific exceptionalities or disabilities, and for orientation and training supports.

Section 1: Background

The Provincial Parent Associations Advisory Committee on Special Education Advisory Committees (PAAC on SEAC) was founded in 1983, at a time when the roles and responsibilities of school board Special Education Advisory Committees (SEACs) were being increased. Bill 82, *An Act to Amend the Education Act*, was passed in 1980 and required school boards to provide special education programs and services to exceptional pupils, or purchase the services from another school board. School boards were given five years to implement Bill 82, and establish special education plans, in consultation with their SEACs.

PAAC on SEAC was established to provide a forum for representatives from provincial parent associations to share ideas and strategies and address common concerns related to SEACs throughout the province, and the fact that it has lasted almost 36 years is a testament to the passion and dedication of the volunteers and leadership from the parent associations.

Throughout the 36 years, PAAC on SEAC has maintained a relationship with the Ministry of Education, and continues to be invited to government consultations on matters concerning special education. Representatives from the Ministry of Education Special Education Policy and Programs Branch regularly attend PAAC on SEAC meetings. Membership of PAAC on SEAC has varied over the years and continues to evolve. There are currently 16 provincial parent association members, and new members are welcome. (See section 1.1 for current membership information.)

Over the years the expectations of school board SEACs have also changed. Most significantly, the provincial government amalgamated school boards and changed the way education is funded in 1998. The Ministry of Education has issued numerous Regulations, Policy/Program Memorandums and Resource Guides that pertain to special education and of particular significance is Regulation 464/97 regarding Special Education Advisory Committees. (See Appendix 1 for a complete copy of Regulation 464/97.) This Regulation consolidated successful practices and mandated many aspects of SEAC including:

- Membership Eligibility
- Number of Meetings
- Election of Chair and Vice Chair
- Roles of SEAC
- Expectations of school board

PAAC on SEAC has developed numerous resources to support SEAC members and this new handbook incorporates many of the effective practices cited in earlier PAAC on SEAC documents, along with new recommendations that reflect the additional expectations and responsibilities of SEACs today.

1.1 PAAC on SEAC Membership

Association for Bright Children

Website: www.abcontario.ca

E-Mail: seac@abcontario.ca

Phone: 416-929-4311

Ontario Association for Families of Children with Communication Disorders (OAFCCD)

Website: www.oafccd.com

Phone: 519-290-1763

Association Francophone de Parents d'Enfants Dyslexiques ou ayant tout autre trouble d'apprentissage

Website: www.afped.ca

Phone: 613 747-8000 ext. 298

Toll Free: 1-877-742-3677

Ontario Brain Injury Association

Website: www.obia.on.ca

E-Mail: obia@obia.on.ca

Phone: 905-641-8877

Toll free 1-800-263-5404

Community Living Ontario

Website: www.communitylivingontario.ca

E-Mail: info@communitylivingontario.ca

Phone: 416-447-4348

Toll Free: 1-800-278-8025

Ontario Federation for Cerebral Palsy

Website: www.ofcp.ca

E-Mail: info@ofcp.ca

Phone: 416-244-9686

Toll Free: 1-877-244-9686

Down Syndrome Association of Ontario

Website: www.dsao.ca

Email: info@dsao.ca

Phone: 905-439-6644

Parents for Children's Mental Health

Website: www.pcmh.ca

Phone: 416-220-0742

Easter Seals Ontario

Website: www.easterseals.org

Phone: 416-421-8377

Toll Free: 1-800-668-6252

Spina Bifida and Hydrocephalus Association of Ontario

Website: www.sbhao.on.ca

E-Mail: provincial@sbhao.on.ca

Phone: 416-214-1056

Toll Free 1-800-387-1575

Epilepsy Ontario

Website: www.epilepsyontario.org

Phone: 905-474-9696

Tourette Canada

Website: www.tourette.ca

E-Mail: tsfc@tourette.ca

Phone: 905-673-2255

Toll Free: 1-800-361-3120

Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders – Ontario Network of Expertise (FASD ONE)

Website: www.fasdontario.ca/cms/service-areas/education/

E-Mail: info@fasdontario.ca

IEWS for the Visually Impaired

Website: www.viewson.ca

E-Mail: contact@viewson.ca

Phone: 519-616-4397

Integration Action for Inclusion in Education and Community

Website: www.integration-inclusion.com

Email: rowett.iv@sympatico.ca

Phone: 613-328-7632

VOICE for Hearing Impaired Children

Website: www.voicefordeafkids.com

E-Mail: info@voicefordeafkids.com

Phone: 416-487-7719

Toll Free: 1-866-779-5144

Learning Disabilities Association of Ontario

Website: www.LDAO.ca

E-Mail: resource@LDAO.ca

1.2 PAAC on SEAC Survey

PAAC on SEAC members meet regularly and have the unique ability to quickly collect or disseminate information that is relevant to members of Special Education Advisory Committees across Ontario. In the spring of 2014, PAAC on SEAC members developed a survey of SEAC members regarding SEAC effectiveness. The survey questions were similar to previous surveys by PAAC on SEAC. The Tourette Syndrome Foundation of Canada supported the survey by providing SurveyMonkey as a tool for obtaining SEAC responses. (The 2014 and 2009 survey questions and analysis of results are available on the PAAC on SEAC website at www.paac-seac.ca)

The survey link was made available to SEAC members through letters mailed to every SEAC Chair in the province. The survey was open for approximately 6 weeks in May and June 2014. A total of 178 people responded to the survey, an increase of 27% over the 2009 survey. There were responses from SEAC members on a total of 50 different school boards.

From the answers to the questions about school board and association affiliation it would appear that the demographics of the survey respondents are representative of the distribution of SEAC members. Survey respondents were from a cross section of school boards in the province, large and small boards, urban and rural, catholic and public and four French boards. There also appears to be proportional representation from the provincial parent associations reflecting the relative size of each association's number of SEAC members. It would appear that slightly more than half were in their first SEAC term and almost 20% had been on SEAC for more than 10 years.

PAAC on SEAC members believe the responses to the survey to be consistent with the feedback from the 2015 SEAC Provincial Conference. The key issues and concerns identified by SEAC representatives are in the areas of: SEAC participation, training, parent engagement, and recruitment. For more details on the issues see the Executive summary of The SEAC 2014 Survey of SEAC Effectiveness on the PAAC on SEAC Website at www.paac-seac.ca and the feedback from the SEAC Provincial Conference on the EduGAINS website at <http://www.edugains.ca/newsite/SpecialEducation/seac.html>.

In developing this handbook the key issues have been organized into five topics:

- Membership
- SEAC Roles and Responsibilities
- Information and Knowledge Transfer
- SEAC Meeting Processes
- Provincial and Local Parent Associations

For each topic in the handbook, PAAC on SEAC has provided recommendations and a list of effective practices. A statement, **PAAC on SEAC recommends that the following action**, is highlighted through bolding and indicates that members of PAAC on SEAC strongly encourage the action or activity.

The effective practices lists have been generated from the experience of provincial parent associations and SEAC members across the province. Each list includes examples of potential activities for consideration. Each SEAC member, or each school board SEAC, is encouraged to look at the list of examples and consider whether they could improve SEAC effectiveness by adopting the practice.

The handbook has been deliberately written in a generic style and specific school board or parent association examples have not been identified.

The information, recommendations and effective practices included in this handbook belong to the members of the Provincial Parent Associations Advisory Committee on Special Education Advisory Committees (PAAC on SEAC) and do not necessarily reflect those of the Ministry of Education.

Section 2: Membership

The composition or membership of SEAC is a key component of Regulation 464/97. (See Appendix 1 for a complete copy of the Regulation.) School boards and school authorities have developed various practices regarding membership selection, but all SEAC membership must include Trustees and Local Association representatives, and may include additional members, and, if required, representatives for the interest of First Nations pupils.

To be eligible for nomination as a SEAC member the nominee must be:

- At least 18 years old
- A Canadian Citizen
- A resident of the school board or authority jurisdiction
- An elector or tax payer for the school board

A SEAC member cannot be an employee of the school board or authority.

2.1 Local Association Representatives

In Regulation 464/97, Section (1) a “local association” is defined as:

“an association or organization of parents that operates locally within the area of jurisdiction of a board and that is affiliated with an association or organization that is not an association or organization of professional educators but that is incorporated and operates throughout Ontario to further the interests and well being of one or more groups of exceptional children or adults.”

There are three key concepts in this definition.

1. The local association of parents must operate locally within the school board jurisdiction.
2. The local association must be affiliated with an incorporated provincial organization that works on behalf of one or more group of exceptional students.
3. The local or provincial association cannot be an association or organization of professional educators.

The Ministry of Education document, *Special Education: A Guide for Educators (2001)* provides school boards with further guidelines (not in the regulation). In Part A, *Subsection, Advisory Committees on Special Education*, page A27, it states:

- “1) The SEAC seats for representatives of local associations should be used to bring to the committee the perspective of parents of children with a wide range of exceptionalities. Note that the ministry provides school boards with definitions of exceptionalities for use in the identification, placement, and review process. As many as possible of these exceptionalities should be represented on the SEAC.*
 - 2) Representatives of local associations should be persons who can express the concerns of the parents of the exceptional pupils of the board.*
 - 3) Representatives of local associations should bring the perspective and resources of a provincial or a national association that is incorporated and that operates throughout Ontario to further the interests of one or more groups of exceptional pupils.*
 - 4) The representative of the local association nominated by the association is normally the person appointed by the board.*
- As long as the association selects as its representative a member who lives within the jurisdiction of the board, the actual address of the “branch” of the association should not be significant.”*

Effective Practices to identify qualified local associations include:

- a. Finding out the names and contact information for provincial associations that represent the interests of exceptional students from the PAAC on SEAC website or on the Ministry of Education Website.
- b. Contacting provincial parent associations to identify local groups or chapters within the school board boundaries and/or to request nomination of eligible members of local associations or chapters.
- c. Maintaining an up-to-date list of local organizations that provide support to families of exceptional children or adults.

The maximum number of local association representatives that can be appointed is 12 (Regulation 464/97, Section 2 (2)) and in many school board jurisdictions there are many more than 12 eligible local associations.

Effective Practices for when a school board has received more than 12 nominations for appointment as local association representatives include:

- a. Selecting from within the list of nominees to ensure that there is a representative for each of the exceptionalities.
- b. Asking representatives from similar groups, who represent the same group(s) of exceptional children or adults, to consider working together and nominating a single representative.
- c. Developing a policy or process to allow additional associations to be nominated to SEAC when a vacancy occurs within the four year term of SEAC.

In some areas of the province SEACs have had difficulty recruiting SEAC members who represent local associations. These SEACs may have to try new strategies to attract nominees.

Regulation 464/97 (Section 3 (2)) addresses the situation where there are no local associations and permits a board to appoint two members and two alternates who are not members of the board. For additional strategies see Section 2.4 regarding additional members of SEAC.

2.2 Trustees

The number of Trustee members of SEAC is determined by Regulation 464/97 and the size of the board. School Authorities usually have one Trustee member and school boards may have one to three Trustee members.

PAAC on SEAC recognizes that Trustee members of SEAC are in a unique position to participate in discussions as members of SEAC and also in discussions at the Board table when decisions are made. Trustees are elected officials and are ultimately responsible for making decisions about special education programs and services and the special education budget. Trustees who are well informed and knowledgeable about special education are better able to make decisions that benefit students with special education needs.

Effective Practices to involve Trustees in SEAC include:

- a. Appointment of alternative Trustees.
- b. Inviting all Trustees to attend SEAC meetings when important presentations or discussions will take place.
- c. Providing regular written updates from SEAC to the Trustees.
- d. Making presentations to Trustees on specific activities or topics.
- e. Asking one of the Trustee members of SEAC to provide an update on board activities at each SEAC meeting.

2.3 First Nations Representative

Regulation 464/97 Section 2 (3) and Section 4 requires that boards appoint one or two representatives for “Indian pupils” if the school board or school authority has a Trustee representing “Indian pupils”. The regulation also says that the representative shall be nominated by the councils of the bands with which the board has agreements. First nations representatives are voting members of SEAC and do not fill one of the 12 local association SEAC memberships.

2.4 Additional Members

Regulation 464/97 provides only limited direction about the appointment of additional voting members, sometimes called members at large. In Regulation 464/97, Section 2 (5) the board may appoint one or more additional members who are not:

- Representatives of a local association
- Trustee members of the board
- Members of another committee of the board

PAAC on SEAC recommends that all school boards and school authorities develop policies for SEAC that clearly define the number of additional members and the criteria that will be used to select additional members.

Effective Practices for the selection of additional members include:

- a. A policy that clearly outlines that the number of additional members is not to exceed the number of local association members.
- b. A policy that outlines the attributes or connections required for additional members of SEAC.
- c. Appointment of an individual from a community agency or organization that supports any group(s) of exceptional children that are not represented by an existing local association representative.
- d. Appointment of a representative from a community organization that supports the needs of one or more groups of exceptional children, but does not meet the criteria as a local association.
- e. Promoting the need for additional SEAC members, and associated requirements, in the local and community newspaper or media, to school councils, and through the school board website.

2.5 Alternate Members

Within Regulation 464/97 it is recommended that the board appoint alternate members for SEAC members who are local association representatives, Trustees and First Nations representatives. Alternate members can ensure that a voting member is available in the absence of the SEAC member, and can assist the SEAC member in preparing for meetings and connecting with the local association and provincial parent association.

Effective Practices to involve alternates in SEAC activities include:

- a. Providing all communications and meeting resources to the alternate members.
- b. Making it clear during training that the SEAC member is responsible to provide information to the alternate and to be in regular communication.
- c. Encouraging all alternate members to attend every SEAC meeting.
- d. Nomination, by local associations, of an alternate member who is able to extend the reach of the SEAC member by covering a different geographical area, or bringing specific knowledge or skills.
- e. Nomination, by local associations, of alternative members who have an interest in becoming the SEAC member in the future.
- f. Having the SEAC member and alternate maintain an on-going relationship with the local association to highlight the value of the SEAC role and increase parent awareness about opportunities to become a SEAC member or alternate.

2.6 School Board Personnel

Under Regulation 464/97, the school board is required to make available the “personnel and facilities” for the “proper functioning of the committee”. (Section 10 (1)). In most school boards this means, at least, a staff for administrative support, including recording and distributing Meeting Minutes, providing notification of Meetings, and other communications, and ensuring meeting rooms are available and refreshments provided, if necessary. (For further discussion on administrative support for SEAC meetings, see Section 5.1.)

SEAC Meetings are usually attended by a supervisory officer responsible for special education. In addition, some school boards assign additional staff to attend SEAC on a regular basis as a resource to the committee.

Effective Practices to provide resource staff to SEAC include:

- a. Inviting senior staff responsible for professional services at the school board to attend SEAC meetings on a regular basis.
- b. Inviting special education staff to attend SEAC meetings on a rotating basis.
- c. Inviting Principal Associations to assign a representative Principal or Vice-Principal to attend SEAC meetings.
- d. Inviting teacher federations and employee unions to have a representative attend SEAC meetings as an observer.

2.7 Membership Nomination Process

The term of SEAC is the same as the term of the elected Trustees, and it lasts four years. Election of Trustees occurs during the municipal election process held every four years, usually in late October or early November. The current SEAC term started after the October 2014 elections, with subsequent elections to be held in 2018 and 2022. The SEAC membership is appointed by the newly elected Trustees at one of their first official meetings.

The process for inviting nominations and appointing SEAC members varies between school boards. Some school boards invite nominations as early as September of an election year. Other school boards ask for nominations after the Trustees hold their first meeting and others accept nominations for several months following an election.

Effective Practices to solicit nominations for local association representatives include:

- a. Sending letters regarding the nomination process to all eligible local and provincial parent associations that represent exceptional students.
- b. Providing community groups, or organizations that support children who have special education needs, with information about SEAC eligibility, and the nomination process.
- c. Posting information about SEAC and the nomination process on the school board website.
- d. Advertizing for SEAC nominations in the local or community newspapers.
- e. Sharing information about SEAC and the nomination process with school councils and home and school associations.
- f. Increasing awareness about SEAC with the development of a SEAC brochure or fact sheet.
- g. Making the SEAC brochure available at every school, or providing copies to all parents of students who have an Individual Education Plan, or who receive special education programs and services.

As many executives of local associations and some of the provincial parent associations are unpaid volunteers, **PAAC on SEAC recommends that School Boards adopt a flexible approach in accepting nomination letters as long as the letters include the elements noted below in effective practices.**

Effective Practices to Support Nominations for Local Association Members include:

- a. Providing clear information about:
 - Where the letter of nomination should be sent
 - To whom the letter should be addressed
 - Timelines for nomination process
 - Deadline for letters to be received
- b. Defining the elements of an acceptable nomination letter as:
 - Name of the association and what exceptionality it represents
 - Term covered by the nomination, usually 4 years or until the next municipal election
 - Name of the nominee and/or alternate nominee
 - Statement that the nominee and/or alternate meets the qualifications defined in Regulation 464/97, Section 5 in Appendix 1, including that the nominee is:
 - A Canadian Citizen
 - Over the age of 18 years
 - A Resident in the jurisdiction of the school board
 - A supporter of the school board
 - Statement that the nominee and/or alternate is not an employee of the Board
 - Basic contact information for the nominee and/or alternate nominee, consistent with privacy legislation
 - Signature and title of the officer of the local or provincial association
- c. Providing additional contact information about the approved SEAC member and/or alternate, as required by the school board and consistent with privacy legislation, to the school board administration prior to the first meeting
- d. Appointing as local association SEAC members only those individuals who are nominated by the local association and/or the provincial association
- e. If a SEAC nominee is unable to provide proof of their membership/affiliation with the local association and/or provincial association they should not be considered for local association positions, but rather as Additional Members (See Regulation 464/97 Section 2 Clause 5 in Appendix 1)

2.8 Replacing SEAC Members and Filling Vacancies

In Regulation 464/97, Section 7 is very clear about the situations in which a member of SEAC vacates his or her seat, and Section 8 concerns how the vacant seat should be filled. In Section 7 (1) “ a member vacates his or her seat if he or she:

- (a) is convicted of an indictable offence;*
- (b) absents himself or herself without being authorized by resolution entered in the minutes from three consecutive regular meetings of the committee; or*
- (c) ceases to hold the qualifications to be appointed to the committee.”*

PAAC on SEAC recommends that each school board have a written process regarding vacancies and how they will be filled.

Effective Practices for a policy regarding SEAC vacancies and how they will be filled include:

- a. Making clear to members, or have a written policy, on the requirement of the member to notify the Chair of SEAC if they are convicted of an indictable offense.
- b. Formalizing the process for authorizing extended absences for SEAC members who need to miss two or more meetings, for example due to illness, family emergencies or employment changes.
- c. Formalizing the process for the school board or SEAC Chair to notify the member and also the relevant local association, when the member has missed meetings.
- d. Providing a description of the qualifications required to be appointed to the SEAC.
- e. Developing a process for the school board or SEAC Chair to invite local associations to provide a replacement.
- f. Developing a policy and procedure to fill a vacant seat during the term of SEAC.

Section 3: SEAC Roles and Responsibilities

Sections 10, 11 and 12 of Regulation 464/97 outline the main responsibilities of SEAC. Under the regulation SEAC:

“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” (Section 11 (1))”

and the board shall ensure that:

“its special education advisory committee 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.” (Section 12 (1))”

“its special education advisory committee 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.” (Section 12 (2))”

“its special education advisory committee 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.” (Section 12 (3))”

In addition, SEAC has the right to be heard, as the Regulation says:

“Before making a decision on a recommendation of the committee, the board shall provide an opportunity for the committee to be heard before the board and before any other committee of the board to which the recommendation is referred.” (section 11(2))”

In plain language this means that SEAC should be given the opportunity to provide advice about:

- Special Education Programs and Services;
- Special Education Plan or Report;
- Special Education Budget and Financial Statements; and
- Any matter affecting special education.

SEAC has the right to make presentations to the Board in support of any recommendations they make to it. SEAC should also have opportunities to comment on policies or programs that will impact students with special education needs, and make presentations to any related committees.

Effective Practices to ensure that SEAC has the opportunity to be heard by the Trustees include:

- a. Providing copies of the SEAC monthly meeting Minutes to all Trustees.
- b. Providing Trustees with a short written report highlighting the key events of each SEAC meeting at the next meeting of Trustees.
- c. Allowing the chair of SEAC, or a Trustee member or a SEAC representative, to provide a short verbal report on each SEAC meeting during Trustee meetings.
- d. Requesting the opportunity for a delegation from SEAC to make a presentation to the Trustees on important topics, such as:
 - I. Special Education budget
 - II. Special Education Report
 - III. Special Education Program reviews
 - IV. Policies that may affect special education
- e. Inviting the Trustees to attend SEAC meetings when discussion of the special education budget or Special Education Report is being considered.
- f. Creating a SEAC Annual Report that highlights activities and recommendations from the past year.
- g. Increasing the public awareness of SEAC through a SEAC brochure, presentations and website materials.

3.1 Annual Planning

Each year SEAC will address the development and review of the Special Education Plan, the Board Improvement Plan for Student Achievement and the Special Education Budget. Each of these activities has a specific deadline and, in order to allow time for adequate planning and review by SEAC members, these items should be scheduled into SEAC Agendas. **PAAC on SEAC recommends that SEAC develop an annual plan to support effective SEAC member participation in the school board planning cycle.** In Table 1, some key dates that will impact SEAC activities are listed.

Table 1: Important Dates or Deadlines	
August 31	Year end for School Board Financial Statements
PD Days	Typically late August, November, February, April and end of June
September 15	Draft Board Improvement Plan for Student Achievement to be submitted to the Ministry of Education Regional office

Table 1: Important Dates or Deadlines	
October 31	Board Improvement Plans for Student Achievement to be submitted to Ministry of Education Regional Offices
October/November	EQAO local results for Grade 3 and 6 tests and Grade 9 Mathematics provided to schools and boards
March	Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test (OSSLT)
June	EQAO Results for Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test (OSSLT)
July 31	School Board to submit balanced Budget for following year to Ministry of Education Special Education Plan Checklist to be submitted to the Ministry of Education Regional Office

Effective Practices to Support Annual Planning by SEAC include:

- a. Developing an Annual Calendar for SEAC showing what activities SEAC will focus on at each monthly meeting. (Check the PAAC on SEAC website at www.paac-seac.ca for PAAC on SEAC Annual Calendar for current year.)
- b. Indicating in the SEAC annual calendar a column for the information SEAC members will need prior to each meeting.
- c. Using an annual calendar to make sure that the development, or review, of the Special Education Report is considered throughout the year, rather than rushed at the end of the year.
- d. Listing SEAC training or professional development activities in the annual calendar.
- e. Orientation or information sessions on the special education budget, prior to the meeting when decisions about budgets need to be made.
- f. Identifying important deadlines or events, such as the results from Education and Accountability Office (EQAO) and the semi-annual (October and March) Reports of Elementary and Secondary Students, in the calendar.
- g. Considering new or special initiatives from the Ministry of Education to make sure information is provided to SEAC members.
- h. Identifying the dates of school board Professional Development or Professional Activity Days, especially those that include a focus on special education, to allow SEAC participation in planning and during the activities.

PAAC on SEAC develops and shares an annual calendar of SEAC activities each fall for distribution to SEAC members, and a sample calendar is included in Table 2. The most recent

PAAC on SEAC annual calendar is available on the PAAC on SEAC website at www.paac-seac.ca or from members of PAAC on SEAC, and is usually distributed each September.

Table 2: PAAC on SEAC Annual SEAC Calendar

ANNUAL CALENDAR OF SEAC ACTIVITIES		
Month	Annual Activities	Activities
SEPTEMBER	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review special education component of Draft Board Improvement Plan for Student Achievement Review school board Accessibility Plans Develop or review SEAC annual agenda/goals Share information on process for nomination of new SEAC members 	<p>Request information on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Board Improvement Plan for student achievement special education goals and performance indicators for past year and public awareness plan
OCTOBER	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop process for review/development of Special Education Plan for following school year Request update on last EQAO results: including deferrals, exemptions, participation rates, accommodations provided for special education students and achievement levels 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Special Education PD Day plans for current year Assessment processes/tools for special education students not participating in EQAO New Ministry initiatives Board Budget Process
NOVEMBER	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Presentations on new initiatives or program reviews Start/continue work on review of Special Education Plan Start/continue work on SEAC annual goals 	<p>Request information on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Numbers of exceptional students, placement data, suspensions expulsions data as submitted to Ministry on October 31st Confirmation that all first term IEP reviews are completed

ANNUAL CALENDAR OF SEAC ACTIVITIES		
Month	Annual Activities	Activities
DECEMBER	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If meeting held, finalize goals for SEAC • Start discussions on Special Education Program and Services_changes being considered for next year • Confirm details of training sessions for new SEAC members and review SEAC Orientation Manual Contents 	Request presentation on School Effectiveness Framework and Board Improvement planning processes
JANUARY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financial Update: on previous year's special education revenue, expenditures and reserve fund amount and budget process for following year • SEAC participation/report on school board accessibility planning 	Check the EduGains website to see all of the IEP Samples. http://www.edugains.ca/newsite/SpecialEducation/index.html
FEBRUARY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review proposed changes to special education programs and services being considered for next school year • Update on IEP quality improvement planning 	Review parent resources to ensure they are user friendly and easy to understand
MARCH	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue discussion of Special Education Programs and Services 	
APRIL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Request preliminary special education budget forecast for next school year 	Monitor and participate in public consultations on Special Education Plan
MAY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information update and discussion on special education plan and budget 	
JUNE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SEAC recommendations regarding special education plan and budget • Request Special Education statistics (including IEP and IPRC) for September meeting • Develop draft SEAC annual agenda and goals for next school year 	

3.2 Annual SEAC Goals

Many school boards identify priority goals on a regular basis, either annually or as part of a multi-year strategic plan. School board plans are usually consistent with the Ministry of Education priorities. Currently, the Ministry of Education has four key goals:

- **Achieving Excellence**: Children and students of all ages will achieve high levels of academic performance, acquire valuable skills and demonstrate good citizenship. Educators will be supported in learning continuously and will be recognized as among the best in the world.
- **Ensuring Equity**: All children and students will be inspired to reach their full potential, with access to rich learning experiences that begin at birth and continue into adulthood.
- **Promoting Well-Being**: All children and students will develop enhanced mental and physical health, a positive sense of self and belonging, and the skills to make positive choices.
- **Enhancing Public Confidence**: Ontarians will continue to have confidence in a publicly funded education system that helps develop new generations of confident, capable and caring citizens.

SEAC members need to be aware of the Ministry goals and Board plans to support these goals. **PAAC on SEAC recommends that SEAC also establish annual or priority goals.** The goals may be in support of Ministry goals or boards plans, or may be focused on actions specific to SEAC. The identification of SEAC goals will help members to be clear about what they are trying to achieve. Development of measurable goals, and their completion, will enhance members' sense of accomplishment and reinforce the value of SEAC.

The goal setting process can be scheduled at the end of the school year or the start of the next. **PAAC on SEAC recommends that the goal setting process includes an accountability or evaluation component.** The annual goal setting process includes identification of:

- Measurable outcomes – What will be accomplished? For example, a specific special education program or service review will be completed, or three information sessions will be delivered;
- Responsibilities – Who will be responsible for activities? For example, will all SEAC members be involved, or will a school board staff member or ad hoc committee lead the activity;
- Time lines – When will activities occur? For example, a new parent guide will be drafted in the fall, for review over the winter and printing and distribution in the spring;
- Interim measures – How will we know we are making progress on the goal? For example, participant evaluation forms from the first session will provide feedback to modify and improve the subsequent workshops;
- Evaluation process – How will we know what we did was worthwhile? This may include evaluation of both the outcomes and the process. For example, all the participants provide positive evaluations, but only 10 parents attended. SEAC may conclude that it was a lot of work, created worthwhile resources, but was an ineffective method to reach the majority of parents.

Developing an accountability mechanism within the goal setting process will ensure that information will be collected that can inform the evaluation of the current goals, and help to inform goal setting for the following year.

Effective Practices to support SEAC annual goals or actions include:

- a. Holding a special SEAC session, or schedule time in a meeting agenda, to identify priorities for the next year, or the whole four year SEAC term.
- b. Holding planning sessions, facilitated by staff or volunteers, to identify priorities and foster member participation.
- c. Approaches such as, pair and share, or small groups, to encourage participation by all members.
- d. Focusing on small projects that are achievable within the school year, such as review or development of parent resources, or development of a SEAC brochure, or communication strategy.
- e. Annual goals for training and professional development for SEAC members.

3.3 Special Education Programs and Services Development and Delivery

Research and knowledge about special education, and information about effective intervention, teaching and assessment strategies, is constantly evolving. This means that school boards should be continuously reviewing their special education programs and services to make sure they are evidence-based, meeting student needs and improving student achievement.

Effective Practices to support SEAC participation in planning of special education programs and services include:

- a. Providing SEAC members with a brief outline of the school board's special education programs and services in the SEAC manual and at orientation and training sessions.
- b. Planning regular presentations to SEAC about special education programs and services, the needs of exceptional students, and the latest research on effective interventions.
- c. Allowing time on each SEAC agenda for a short presentation, or discussion, on specific exceptionalities or special education programs and services.
- d. Encouraging feedback on presentations from all SEAC members by providing discussion questions as part of the presentations and providing time for pair and share, or small group discussions.
- e. Inviting SEAC members to participate in working groups and sub-committees involved in program reviews, or new initiatives.
- f. Inviting SEAC members who are local association representatives to make annual presentations on the parent association, exceptionality specific educational needs, and the latest research on effective interventions.
- g. Inviting local association representatives to make presentations, or work with school board staff on joint presentations, regarding specific exceptionalities or special education programs and services.
- h. Promoting connections between SEAC, Parent Involvement Committees (PIC) and school councils to share information, and invite consultation, about special education programs and services.

SEAC has an important role to play in providing advice to school board administration and Trustees regarding special education programs and services. SEAC members can provide important community input about the impact of programs and availability of services. Some school boards have a regular cycle for reviewing special education programs, and other school boards review or plan changes in response to Ministry of Education initiatives, or funding challenges. **PAAC on SEAC recommends that SEAC take a systematic and pro-active approach to special education program and service planning, and conduct regular reviews.**

3.4 Special Education Plan

Since 2010, the Ministry of Education has required school boards to complete a Special Education Plan Checklist to identify areas of the Special Education Plan that have been changed. The Special Education Plan Checklist is submitted to the Ministry by July 31st each year. The Special Education Plan should include information on the available special education programs and services as defined in Standards for School Boards' Special Education Plans (2000).

The school board responsibilities under Regulation 464/97, and Regulation 306, *Special Education Programs and Services*, require SEAC to have a role in the development and review of the Special Education Plan. This means that SEAC should have input in the review of the Special Education Plan and provide advice to the Trustees.

Effective Practices to review the Special Education Plan include:

- a. Reviewing key documents, including Regulation 486/97, Regulation 306, the Standards for School Boards' Special Education Plans (2000) and the components of the Special Education Plan Checklist.
- b. Developing an annual process for review of the Special Education Plan. This may include:
 - o Establishing a sub-committee that includes representatives from SEAC to review each section and make recommendations for changes
 - o Including a review of each section as part of the regular SEAC meetings
 - o Having presentations on specific programs and identifying what section of the Special Education Plan will need to be changed with changes and/or implementation of the program.
- c. Ensuring that the review process includes updating of statistical information, staffing, program locations and other information that may change annually.
- d. Providing SEAC an opportunity to review all of the changes and updates to the special Education Plan in conjunction with the special education budget before the end of each school year.
- e. Making a recommendation or motion regarding the Special Education Plan to create a record in the SEAC Minutes about SEAC participation in the review of the Special Education Plan. (See also Section 4.5 on making motions)
- f. Sharing of any comments, concerns or motions related to the Special Education Plan with the Trustees through the SEAC meeting Minutes, or a presentation to the Trustees. (See also Section 3.0 on right to be heard)

Directives from the Ministry of Education, regarding the Special Education Plan, strongly encourage the school board to make the Special Education Plan accessible to the public in user-friendly format, on their public website.

Effective Practices to ensure the Special Education Plan is accessible and easy to understand include:

- a. Promoting the opportunity for public consultation on the special Education Plan. (See also Section 3.8)
- b. Providing suggestions as to how the information can be made accessible to parents, students and the general public.
- c. Making sure the Special Education Plan on the school board website is easy to find; providing printed copies at key locations, including school libraries, school offices, information displays and parent resource centers; and, developing a flyer or handout for parents.
- d. Translating the special Education Plan into other languages and formats, such as audio and Braille and/or providing information on who to contact for translated materials.

As part of *Regulation 181/98, Identification and Placement of Exceptional Pupils*, school boards are required to make available a parent guide that provides information about the Identification, Placement and Review Committee (IPRC) process. Some school boards also provide additional parent resource guides or brochures about the Individual Education Plan (IEP) process, or specific special education programs and services. **PAAC on SEAC recommends that SEAC should be part of the process to develop or review the parent guides and other resources for parents.**

SEAC can play an important role in the development of these parent resources to make sure they are easy to read, and that they provide information on additional resources for students or parents who want more information. SEAC can also provide advice on how the resources can be distributed or made available to students and parents.

Effective Practices to support the development and distribution of parent guides about the IPRC and IEP include:

- a. Establishing a sub-committee or *ad hoc* group to review all special education communication materials for parents.
- b. Requesting SEAC volunteers to join staff committees that are responsible for developing parent resources.
- c. Reviewing new parent guides and brochures as they are developed.
- d. Developing a glossary of special education terms that is parent friendly and easy to understand.
- e. Assisting to develop a list of community organizations that are available to help parents who have children with special education needs.
- f. Partnering with staff to develop a DVD or Webcast with information for parents on the IPRC or IEP process.
- g. Monitoring parents' experiences concerning IPRCs and IEPs by designing a parent survey, overseeing its implementation, and analyzing results. Survey results can inform SEAC and may lead SEAC to recommend changes in policies and practices.
- h. Developing a list of Frequently Asked Questions about IPRCs and IEPs and including the questions and their answers in the parent guide, as well as on the website and in other parent resources.

3.5 Board Improvement Plans for Student Achievement

Board Improvement Plans for Student Achievement (BIPSA) were initially developed by the Literacy and Numeracy Secretariat to support improved student outcomes in literacy and numeracy for elementary students. Over the last few years Board Improvement Plans for Student Achievement have been expanded to include all students from Kindergarten to Grade 12, including those with special education needs.

The annual Board Improvement Plan for Student Achievement is linked to School Improvement Plans and the Special Education Plan, and should include indicators and measures to support and document improved achievement by students with special education needs. **PAAC on SEAC recommends that SEAC members be provided orientation and training about the School Effectiveness Framework and the Board Improvement Plan for Student Achievement in order for them to participate in the Board Improvement planning process.**

Effective Practices to support SEAC involvement in Board Improvement Planning include:

- a. Appointing a representative of special education programs and services as part of the Board Improvement Planning for Student Achievement team.
- b. Holding regular presentations to SEAC about the annual Board Improvement Plan for Student Achievement process and the completed plan.
- c. Involving SEAC in the goal setting for improvement of outcomes for student's with special education needs
- d. Involving SEAC in the development of a school board communication plan about the Board Improvement Plan for Student Achievement.
- e. Involving SEAC in the development of user friendly communication materials for the public about special education and the Board Improvement Plan for Student Achievement.

3.6 Special Education Budget and Financial Statements

The development of the annual budget and review of financial statements is an on-going process and SEAC should be kept informed about the process and have an opportunity to participate and provide advice to the Trustees. Special education funding is complex and SEAC members need to understand how school boards are funded for all students, as well as the components of the Special Education Grant, intended to cover the incremental costs of special education programs and services.

Each year the Ministry of Education releases information on the school board funding, including special education grants and related guidelines. This information can be found on the Ministry website at: <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/policyfunding/funding.html>

There are currently 6 components to the Special Education Grant and SEAC members need to be familiar with all of them. The components are:

- Special Education Per Pupil Amount (SEPPA)
- Differentiated Special Education Needs Amount (DSENA)
- Special Equipment Amount (SEA)
- Special Incidence Portion (SIP)
- Behaviour Expertise Amount (BEA)
- Facilities Amount (FA)

In addition, Measures of Variability (MOV) and the Special Education Statistical Prediction Model (SESPM) are parts of the DESNA. **PAAC on SEAC recommends that orientation and on-going training for SEAC members includes information on special education funding.**

Effective Practices to support SEAC participation in budget planning for special education programs and services include:

- a. Providing SEAC members with orientation and training regarding financial statements, the Special Education Grant, revenues and expenditures.
- b. Providing timely information on the Special Education Grant each year when Ministry of Education releases the grant regulations.
- c. Inviting SEAC members to participate in Budget Committee or working groups.
- d. Providing regular updates on Financial Statements and the budget process at SEAC meetings.
- e. Analyzing special education budget information, program staffing and statistical information about students with special education needs.
- f. Planning a SEAC presentation to Trustees as part of public consultation on the annual school board budget.

Effective Practices to support financial literacy of SEAC members include:

- a. Sharing of Ministry of Education resource materials regarding special education funding, including Power Points and Webinars, with SEAC members.
- b. Providing SEAC members with written materials about special education funding, including definitions of key terms, in SEAC Orientation Manuals.
- c. Regular presentations on the school board budget and financial statements at SEAC meetings.
- d. Presenting financial information to SEAC members in easy to understand language with visuals and graphics.

Under Regulation 464/97, SEAC members are to have the opportunity to participate in the special education budget planning process. Each school board has a different process for the development of budgets, often including the establishment of a budget committee or ad hoc group. **PAAC on SEAC recommends that SEAC members be kept informed of the budget process and timelines.**

3.7 Public Access and Consultation

Under standard 1 of the Standards for School Boards' Special Education Plans (2000) the school board is expected to consult the public about the Special Education Plan and proposed changes.

Effective Practices to promote public consultation on the Special Education Plan include:

- a. Providing an e-mail address or other mechanism for parents and members of the public to comment on the Special Education Plan.
- b. Promoting the opportunity for public consultation on the school board website.
- c. Holding community meetings to provide presentations on the Special Education Plan and/or proposed changes to special education programs and services.
- d. Conducting a survey of parents/guardians of students with an Individual Education Plan (IEP) about the special education programs and services.

One of the key goals of the Ministry of Education is “public confidence in education” and parent engagement in the school system is an important component. There is considerable evidence to show that parent engagement contributes to student success. SEAC has an important role

to play in supporting parents of students with special education needs to be engaged in the school system.

As discussed in Section 3.5, SEAC can support the development of information about special education, including in the Special Education Plan and Parent Guides, that is easy to understand and readily accessible to families. SEAC also has an important role in public consultations about special education and changes in programs and services. **PAAC on SEAC recommends that SEAC members work with the school board staff to increase awareness of SEAC and its role as an advisory committee to the Trustees.**

SEAC is a standing committee of the school board and the meetings of SEAC are open to the public. The school board is responsible to provide access by holding the meetings in a location that can accommodate the public and by making information about the meetings available. Typically, the time and date of meetings is posted on the school board's website.

PAAC on SEAC observes that public awareness of SEAC is generally quite poor and only a small percentage of parents of students with special education needs are aware of SEAC or the important role that SEAC plays in special education. Increased public awareness of SEAC is also necessary in order to attract and recruit new members.

Effective Practices to increase awareness of SEAC include:

- a. Providing information on dates, time and location of SEAC meetings on the school board website.
- b. Posting Minutes and meeting highlights on the school board website.
- c. Providing an up-to-date list of SEAC members, and contact information (with member consent), on the school board website.
- d. Providing information on the role of SEAC members and how they can help parents.
- e. Providing links to the SEAC section of the school board website from student and parent portals.
- f. Providing a live webcast of SEAC meetings, as some school boards do for their meetings of the Trustees.
- g. Moving the location of meetings to different schools and inviting members of school councils or other parent groups to attend the SEAC session.
- h. Developing a SEAC brochure and providing copies to all students with special education needs.
- i. Featuring stories or events related to SEAC on the opening page of the school board website.

The Ministry of Education has reconfirmed the commitment to parent engagement in education with the release in September 2010 of a new Parent Engagement Policy. SEACs are an example of effective parent engagement.

Effective practices to enhance parent engagement in special education include:

- a. Having cross representation between SEAC and the Parent Involvement Committees (PIC) through common membership, with a member of SEAC also being appointed as a member of PIC.
- b. Sharing copies of PIC and SEAC Minutes or developing a process to share meeting highlights through the committee Chairs.
- c. Inviting PIC members and members of School Councils to public consultations about special education.
- d. Making presentations to PIC members on an annual or regular basis about SEAC, special education and annual planning for special education programs and services.
- e. Requesting PIC help to organize, or hold, joint workshops or parent conferences.
- f. Requesting PIC members, and School Council Chairs, to share important information about SEAC or special education with families.

All school boards have a Parent Involvement Committee (PIC) and every school has a School Council. Both PICs and school councils have been developed to foster parent engagement by providing information to parents and inviting their input to school and board activities. PAAC on SEAC recommends that SEAC have a strong connection with PICs and School Councils to strengthen parent engagement in special education.

3.8 Evaluation of SEAC

Evaluation of SEAC, by its members, is helpful in supporting SEAC member engagement and sense of accomplishment. **PAAC on SEAC recommends that each SEAC should periodically conduct a self-evaluation.**

In order to evaluate the committee, all members must agree on the framework or criteria to be used to measure SEAC effectiveness. The evaluation could be framed around the roles and

Effective Practices for evaluation of SEAC effectiveness include:

- a. Utilizing school board staff expertise, or research department, to help SEAC members design an evaluation process.
- b. Considering the PAAC on SEAC list of discussion questions in Table 3 as part of the evaluation process.
- c. Inviting an external facilitator or consultant to assist SEAC in designing and conducting an evaluation process.
- d. Developing a survey or key questions for SEAC members to answer.
- e. Allocating time within the regular SEAC Meetings for a facilitated discussion.
- f. Holding a special meeting of SEAC Members to focus on evaluation.

responsibilities of SEAC based on Regulation 464, and the annual goals that SEAC has established for itself. (See Section 3.1 and 3.2 for more information on goal setting.)

Table 3: SEAC Evaluation Discussion Questions

Topic	Membership Questions
Membership	Does the current membership represent all of the exceptionalities? Does the current membership include parents of exceptional students? Is it necessary to recruit additional members?
Special Education Programs and Services	How do SEAC members get information to improve their understanding of the school board’s special education programs and services? How have SEAC members been consulted as part of the annual review of special education programs and services?
Special Education Plan	How was SEAC involved in the development or review of the Special Education Report? Is the Special Education Plan available in an easy to understand language and accessible to parents?
Special Education Budget	How did SEAC members get the information they needed to make informed decisions? Do all the members of SEAC have a good understanding of school board budgets and budget process? Do SEAC members need more help to understand and evaluate financial information?
Board Improvement Plans for Student Achievement	Do SEAC members have a good understanding of Board Improvement Plans for Student Achievement? How is SEAC involved in board improvement planning process?
Meetings	How does the Agenda support SEAC members’ information needs and decision making? Do SEAC members have adequate time at meetings for discussion on each topic? Are SEAC meetings well attended and do all members contribute?
Motions	How is the advice of SEAC documented? What is the process for Motions to the Trustees? Who reports back from the Trustees to SEAC? How does SEAC share information and recommendations with the Trustees?
Member Orientation, Training and Recognition	How are new SEAC members supported? How are training and orientation provided? How are members’ contributions recognized? Do SEAC members require additional training? Are there additional items that could be included in the SEAC Orientation manual?

Topic	Membership Questions
Collaboration and Decision Making	How do SEAC members collaborate and work on common goals? What else can we do to build trust and enhance collaboration? How are differences resolved?
Public Consultation and Parent Engagement	How is information about SEAC, its members and meetings, made accessible and easy to understand by parents? Is there anything more that can be done to improve awareness of SEAC?

Section 4: Information and Knowledge Transfer

Special education is one of the most rapidly changing aspects of education. Knowledge about the special education needs of students; effective instructional and assessment strategies; as well as new initiatives from the Ministry of Education with related legislation, regulations, policy and resource guides, is constantly changing. SEAC members need to be engaged in a process of continuous learning.

PAAC on SEAC recommends that, consistent with Regulation 464/97 Section 10 (2), all members of SEAC have continuous access to relevant information, and further, that SEAC orientation and training includes comprehensive information about special education.

This includes information about:

- **History and development of Special Education Advisory Committees (SEACs)**
 - Education Act: Bill 82
 - Evolution of SEACs
- **Roles and Responsibilities**
 - Ministry of Education
 - School Boards and School Authorities
 - Minister's Advisory Council on Special Education (MACSE)
 - Special Education Advisory Committees (SEACs)
 - Principals and Teachers
 - Parents and Students
- **Legislation, Regulations and Policy including:**
 - Education Act
 - Regulations, particularly 181/98 and 464/97
 - Policy/Program Memoranda
 - Standards and Resource Guides
- **School Board Obligations and the Special Education System**
 - School Boards' and School Authorities' Roles
 - Ministry Priorities and Key Ministry Initiatives
- **Funding of Special Education and Accountability**
 - Education Funding and the Special Education Grant components
 - Special Education Plans and Reports
 - Board Improvement Plans for Student Achievement
 - School Effectiveness Framework
 - Education Quality and Accountability Office (EQAO)

Effective Practices to provide SEAC members with relevant special education information include:

- a. The Ministry of Education website section on Special Education at www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/parents/speced.html
- b. Ministry of Education: SEAC Website www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/general/elemsec/speced/seac/
- c. Ministry of Education Memo Summary site www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/policyfunding/memos/
- d. Ministry of Education conferences and workshops for SEAC members
- e. SEAC Orientation Manuals created by each school board and provided to every member of SEAC.
- f. SEAC training sessions provided annually by the school board to all SEAC members.
- g. SEAC training sessions provided by local or provincial parent associations to their SEAC representatives.
- h. Regular updates provided by provincial associations to their SEAC representatives.
- i. Section of the school board and provincial parent association websites dedicated to special education and SEAC.

SEAC members also require information about the special education programs and services provided by their specific school board. **PAAC on SEAC recommends that SEAC members be provided information about:**

- School board philosophy
- Organizational structure of staff and committees
- Special education program delivery model
- Individual Education Plan (IEP) and identification, Placement and Review Committee (IPRC) Processes
- Related school board policies and procedures
- School board finances and budget development process related to special education
- Accountability processes, including development of annual Special Education Plan and Board Improvement Plans for Student Achievement

Some of this information is available in the school board annual Special Education Plan and each member of SEAC should be provided with a copy of the Plan, or information on how to access it on-line. Additional information may be summarized or copied and included in a school board Orientation Manual for SEAC members, as well as at SEAC member orientation and training sessions.

4.1 SEAC Orientation and Training

Regulation 464/97 Section 10 requires the school board to provide SEAC members, and their alternates, with information and orientation respecting:

- a. *The role of the committee and of the board in relation to special education; and*
- b. *Ministry and board policies relating to special education.*

This is to be provided “*within a reasonable time*” after the SEAC members are appointed. (Regulation 464/97 Section 10 (2)).

Special education is complex and Ministry and board policies and practices, as well as research and understanding about special education, are evolving rapidly. In addition, membership of SEAC can change within each SEAC term.

PAAC on SEAC recommends that school boards provide SEAC orientation and training on a regular basis and that professional development for SEAC members should be on-going.

Effective Practices to support SEAC member orientation and training includes:

- a. Providing orientation sessions for new SEAC members.
- b. Holding annual training sessions for all SEAC members.
- c. Holding joint SEAC orientation or training sessions with other school boards, for example the co-terminus school boards.
- d. Developing a SEAC orientation manual and providing all SEAC members with a copy.
- e. Matching new SEAC members with a mentor who is a more experienced SEAC member.
- f. Presenting information or training items within each SEAC meeting Agenda or within the annual schedule of SEAC meetings.
- g. Providing informal opportunities for SEAC members to meet and network during a meal break or special activity.
- h. Holding joint professional development sessions for school board staff and SEAC members.
- i. Inviting SEAC to send a representative, or attend as a group, professional development opportunities provided to the school board by the Ministry of Education or other Ministries or community organizations.

4.2 SEAC Member Skills and Relationships

Many SEAC members are volunteers, who may be parents of students with special education needs. SEAC members may have diverse backgrounds in terms of education, culture and experience and some may have limited committee experience. SEAC members need to be clear about meeting expectations and meeting processes in order to become effective participants in SEAC meetings. (See also Section 5 on Meeting Processes).

PAAC on SEAC has identified some of the key skills that are useful for SEAC members, including:

- **Communication**
- **Presentation**
- **Team Building**
- **Problem Solving**
- **Time management**
- **Note taking**
- **Listening**
- **Assertiveness**
- **Decision Making**
- **Negotiation**
- **Research**
- **Organization**

SEAC training sessions, a SEAC Orientation Manual and meeting strategies can all be used to help SEAC members improve their participation and contribution.

Effective Practices to support SEAC Member participation include:

- a. Developing or sharing a Code of Conduct for members, or meeting norms, that outline expectations and if necessary, consequences. (See also Table 5 for examples of meeting expectations.)
- b. Providing SEAC members with meeting documents 5 business days before the meeting.
- c. Indicating on the Agenda when an item is presented for decision making and providing templates or tools to help identify options and implications of choices.
- d. Providing SEAC members, staff and guests who are making presentations with clear direction on purpose and content as well as time limits. For example, linking the presentation to the Special Education Plan, BIPSA or Board Strategic Plan.
- e. Requesting presenters provide handouts with summary information with key ideas or facts in bold print or bulleted lists.
- f. Encouraging presenters to organize information into blocks with frequent stops to check that members have heard and understood materials.
- g. Ensuring presenters are clear about what they want from SEAC by providing discussion questions or options, including time for discussion or small group activities.
- h. Including time limits for presentations, or a time keeper, to make sure presentations are not too long or detailed.
- i. Providing SEAC members with a feedback form to complete for each presentation.
- j. Assisting SEAC members to make presentations at SEAC by providing an outline or list of questions to frame the presentations; a presentation template, opportunities to present to smaller groups.

The Ministry of Education has developed a resource guide that can be used at SEAC, *Shared Solutions, A Guide to Preventing and Resolving Conflicts Regarding Programs and Services for Students with Special Education Needs (2007)*. This document includes information and strategies to understand conflict, build positive climates, to listen and communicate effectively. Many of the charts and tips can be shared with SEAC, included in a SEAC Orientation Manual or used in training sessions. Some school boards have developed training activities using Shared Solutions for staff, and many of the same exercises can be used in SEAC training.

In Table 4, there is a list of questions for SEAC members to ask themselves when they are preparing for a SEAC meeting.

Table 4: Preparation Checklist for SEAC Meeting	
The “W” Questions	The “HOW” Questions
Where is the meeting?	How do I contribute to SEAC?
When is the meeting?	How do I acquire information?
What is the purpose of the meeting?	How do I share information?
Why am I going?	How do I use the information?
What do I want to accomplish at the meeting?	How do I encourage others to participate?
What information should I take with me?	How do I learn and listen effectively?
What issues do I want discussed?	How do I encourage the board and other SEAC members to investigate all options?
What am I going to report about my association?	How do I acquire feedback?
What information do I want to leave with after the meeting?	How do we support a process which will encourage feedback and follow through by SEAC members and the school board administration and Trustees?
What will I do with the information I have gained?	

SEAC members should arrive at SEAC meetings on time, and prepared with relevant information, having read the Agenda and support documents provided at least 3 days prior to the meeting. To help set the tone at meetings, the school board can prepare or share materials on a Code of Conduct, or meeting norms. Table 5 shows some examples of meeting expectations or meeting norms.

Table 5: Examples of Meeting Expectations or Norms	
Establish Expectations for Members	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Arrive on time 2. Review Agenda before meeting and bring any relevant information 3. Turn off all cell phones and pagers, or set to vibrate, for the duration of the meeting. 4. Raise your hand to indicate your request to speak 5. Listen to others 6. Be courteous 7. Do not interrupt other speakers or dominate discussion
Establish Procedures for the Meeting	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Determine break times, or agree that members can leave room or get refreshments, as needed 2. Agree whether members can walk around during meeting 3. Discourage side meetings or conversations 4. Identify time keeper for Agenda items 5. Identify critical items or tasks for the Meeting 6. Agree on the use of a facilitator or rotating facilitator for discussions 7. Establish time frame and process for discussions (may include allowing a facilitator to have discretion on extending time limits to allow every member an opportunity to speak) 8. Obtain agreement on items that may require voting by members
During Presentations or Discussions	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Use a facilitator or ask members to facilitate parts of discussion 2. Agree to reserve judgment on ideas generated during brainstorm 3. Stay focused and on time 4. Discourage rehashing or repetition of positions or statements 5. Allow for breakout into teams for discussion of components or alternatives 6. Identify relevant issues, and state all related concerns at the meeting 7. Table or record in “Parking Lot” issues or items for future discussion
At end of meeting	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. End on time or ask for a Motion to extend the Meeting 2. Review Meeting action items, include dates and times 3. Determine what will be included in Meeting Minutes

4.3 Member Recognition

An important element of effective volunteer management is volunteer recognition. It is important that SEAC members are recognized for the significant contribution that they make to the school system. Many school boards have formal volunteer recognition programs and hold annual events to recognize all volunteers. Other school boards have processes in place to track years of volunteer services and recognize outstanding contributions. **PAAC on SEAC recommends that SEAC develop a policy or process, or use existing school board recognition programs, to recognize the contribution of SEAC members.**

Effective Practices to recognize the contribution of SEAC members include:

- a. Recognition of SEAC members with other volunteer recognition events held by the school board.
- b. Holding an event during April, Volunteer Recognition Month, to recognize the contribution of SEAC members.
- c. Recognizing SEAC contributions and years of service at the last meeting of each term of SEAC.
- d. Holding an annual event to recognize and thank SEAC members, such as a seasonal luncheon, or a year end meal.
- e. Presenting certificates, or small tokens, to recognize SEAC members on an annual basis, or when SEAC members leave.

Section 5: SEAC Meeting Processes

5.1 Administrative Support

Under Regulation 464/97, Section 9 (8) *“The committee shall meet at least 10 times in each school year.”* Typically, school boards hold SEAC meetings each month during the school year from September to June.

Section 10(1) the school board is required to make available the “personnel and facilities” for the “proper functioning of the committee.” SEAC members require a number of supports to effectively conduct business.

For most school boards, SEAC members meet together in one location on a monthly basis; for others, face to face meetings are less frequent, and business is conducted via teleconferences. Some SEACs also rotate locations in order to enable SEAC members to visit different facilities and programs within the school board, or to facilitate members who live in different parts of the board.

Effective Practices to support SEAC members in remote locations include:

- a. Providing teleconference facilities for some or all of the SEAC members to participate from their homes, or locations distant from the meeting.
- b. Distributing materials well in advance of the meeting.
- c. Allowing SEAC members access to schools or school board facilities equipped with high speed internet, teleconference and/or webcast capacity.
- d. Alternating SEAC Meeting locations within the school board boundaries.
- e. Providing travel expenses to compensate volunteers for costs associated with travelling to meetings.
- f. Promoting car pooling with staff or other SEAC members to reduce travel costs.
- g. Identifying alternate meeting dates for inclement weather.

In planning for SEAC Meetings it is also important to support SEAC participation by providing audio-visual equipment, microphones and sound systems, computers, desks or work spaces.

The school board must also provide the additional accommodations that individual SEAC members with a disability may require in order to participate in the meeting. School boards may need to ensure that meetings are held in accessible locations, and that specialized

resources, including large print, electronic or Braille versions of documents, closed captioning or sign language interpreters, are obtained to accommodate SEAC members.

5.2 SEAC Agendas

The Agenda is a key document in driving the activities of SEAC. **PAAC on SEAC recommends that the Agenda should be provided to members 5 business days in advance of meetings and should be developed collaboratively.**

Effective Practices for the development of SEAC Agenda's include:

- a. Inviting all members of SEAC to identify future agenda topics or to forward agenda items to the Chair at the end of each meeting, or following each SEAC meeting.
- b. The Chair and Vice-chair to work with board administration staff to develop the Agenda.
- c. Establishing a sub-committee or an executive committee, to be responsible for developing the Agenda and planning meetings.
- d. Following the PAAC on SEAC Annual Calendar, or one developed by the SEAC, to be proactive about agenda items and information requirements expected in the course of each school year.

The Agenda can also be used to identify the expectations for each agenda item or to make sure important items have sufficient discussion time. For example, in the sample SEAC Agenda in Table 6, columns have been included to indicate whether there is a relevant attachment, or whether an item is being received for information only, for discussion or for resolution or recommendation.

Effective practices to format the Agenda and support SEAC roles include:

- a. Establishing a start and end time for each item on the agenda or selected items.
- b. A column on the agenda to indicate whether an item is being presented for “information only”, “discussion” or “decision”.
- c. A column on the agenda to identify who will be responsible or presenting the agenda item.
- d. A column on the agenda to indicate relevant documents that may be attached and related to particular topics.
- e. A “Business Arising” section on the agenda to track the follow up on action items from previous meetings.
- f. Listing “Association Reports” and “Correspondence” as standing agenda items.
- g. A “Future Agenda Items” section on the agenda, to track topics of interest to SEAC members.

Table 6: A sample SEAC Agenda

SEAC Agenda						
1st Tuesday of the month, 2016						
Meeting: 6:30 to 9:00pm			Location: Education Centre			
Time	Item	Att.	Info.	Disc.	Res.	Responsibility
6:30 p.m.	Call to Order					Chair
6:31 p.m.	Confirmation of Agenda		√			Chair
6:35 p.m.	Disclosure of Conflicts of Interest					Chair
6:40 p.m.	Approval of Minutes from last meeting				√	Chair
6:45 – 7:00 pm	Business Arising from the Minutes	√		√		
Timed Item 7:00 – 7:30	Presentation by the Staff about new program		√			Program Staff

SEAC Agenda						
1st Tuesday of the month, 2016						
Meeting: 6:30 to 9:00pm			Location: Education Centre			
Time	Item	Att.	Info.	Disc.	Res.	Responsibility
7:30 p.m.	Special Education Update - Program review update - Proposed changes			√		Special Education Superintendent or Principal
8:00 p.m.	Special Education Plan review update		√			Sub-committee Chair
8:30 p.m.	Board Improvement Plan update		√			Special Education Staff
8:45 p.m.	Association Reports		√			All
8:50 p.m.	Correspondence		√			Chair
8:55 p.m.	Future Agenda Items			√		Chair
8:57 p.m.	Date, time and location of Next Meeting		√			Chair
9:00 p.m.	Adjournment					Chair
Note: Column Abbreviations:						
	Att.	Attachments to the agenda		Disc.	Item for discussion	
	Info.	Item for information only				
	Res.	Item for resolution or recommendation				

5.3 SEAC Motions

Procedures may be different depending on Board by-laws; please refer to the rules for committee meetings at your specific board. Some SEACs make only a few Motions each year related to the Special Education Plan and/or the Special Education Budget. Other SEACs make Motions regularly either to make sure important information is shared with Trustees or to request specific information or resources to assist the work of SEAC. (See Appendix 4 for more information on making motions and an example template.) See Table 7 for a sample template for a SEAC Motion and Table 8 for a sample script for making motions.

Table 7: Sample Template for a SEAC Motion

<p>XYZ District School Board</p> <p>Special Education Advisory Committee</p>	
<p>Be it Resolved that SEAC recommends to the Board of Trustees that.....</p>	
Moved by:	SEAC Member's Name
Seconded by:	SEAC Member's Name
Date:	

As an accountability mechanism, SEAC members need to know what happens to their motions and what the response was from the Trustees and board administration. This is especially true for the motions related to the Special Education Plan and the Special Education Budget, to which SEAC is required, by regulation, to provide input. These motions are often made in June at the end of the school year, and as SEAC does not meet again until September, SEAC members need to be informed about how the motions were received by the Trustees.

Effective Practices to track motions and the school board or Trustee response include:

- a. Trustee members have a role in sharing information between the board and SEAC.
- b. Tracking past motions through the Business Arising section of the agenda and identifying who will report on the motion, either verbally or in writing.
- c. Creating an action chart attached to each Agenda to track past motions and prepare for new motions.
- d. Providing SEAC members with a written response to motions from the Trustees and/or board administration staff.

Table 8: Sample Script for Motions at a Meeting

Who Speaks	Action	Script
SEAC Member 1	Reading the Motion	"I would like to move the motion. Be it resolved that SEAC recommends to the Board of trustees that..."
Chair	Asking SEAC members	"Is there a seconder for this motion?"
SEAC Member 2:	Raising Hand	"I second the motion"
Note: Only after the motion has been made and seconded should the motion be discussed.		
Chair	Addressing members	"Is there any discussion?"
Note: When discussing the motion, members should start their remarks with a statement on whether they are for or against the motion.		
Chair	Members raise their hands, if they want to speak to the motion.	"I have a list of speakers. Please start, SEAC member 1."
SEAC Member 1		"I support the motion for the following reasons...."
Chair		"SEAC member 5"
SEAC Member 5		"I speak against the motion because...."
Chair		"SEAC member 6 do you want to comment on the motion?"
SEAC member 6		"I would like clarification about...."
Chair		"It sounds like there is support to make a change to the motion. SEAC member 2"
SEAC member 2	Reading the amended motion	"I wish to make a friendly amendment to the motion to address these concerns, by adding the following words and changing the motion to read..."
Chair		"Is this change agreeable to the mover, SEAC Member 1?"
SEAC Member 1		"I agree to the change to the motion."
Chair	Addressing the Secretary	"Can we please hear the amended motion?"
SEAC Secretary	Reads the amended motion	"Be it resolved that SEAC recommends to the Board of Trustees....."
Chair	Looking at members. The Chair and Secretary count all the raised hands.	"Is there any further discussion? Seeing none, I will call for a vote on the motion. All those in favour, please raise your hands."
Chair	The Chair and Secretary count all the raised hands.	"All those opposed to the motion, please raise your hands."
Chair	The Chair and Secretary count all the raised hands.	"Are there any abstentions from the vote? Please raise your hands."
When there are more members who support the motion than voted against the motion, the motion will be passed.		
Chair		"The motion is carried."

5.4 Quorum

Under parliamentary procedures a committee meeting must have a quorum to be recognized as a valid meeting. In Regulation 464/97 Section 9 (1) the quorum for the SEAC is defined as:

“A majority of the members of a special education advisory committee is a quorum, and a vote of a majority of the members present at a meeting is necessary to bind the committee.”

In practical terms this means that the SEAC meeting can only take place if the number of SEAC voting members is equal to half of all the voting members plus one. For example, if SEAC has 16 members, including local association Members, Trustees, First Nations and Additional Members, 9 members (half of 16 = 8 plus 1) must be present for the meeting to proceed. Alternate members are only considered to be voting members when the local association representative is absent.

SEAC Motions are considered to have been approved or passed by SEAC if the majority of those present approve or support the motion and the attendance at the meeting met the required quorum for the committee. In the previous example, this means a motion can be approved by SEAC with 5 votes in favour from the 9 Members present at the meeting. This demonstrates why it is important for SEAC members, or their Alternates, to attend every meeting

5.5 Minority Reports

Committee parliamentary procedures allow members who do not agree with the majority position on Motions to submit a Minority Report. Minority Reports are usually related to the process or content of the annual Special Education Plan or Special Education Budget. There is a lot of confusion and misunderstanding about Minority Reports, how to write them, how to present them and what happens afterwards. **PAAC on SEAC recommends that SEAC training sessions and the school board SEAC Orientation Manual include information about Minority Reports.**

Table 9: Sample Minority Report

<p>RE: Motion from the Special Education Advisory Committee of the District School Board dated _____ that said:</p> <p>“Be it Resolved that the Special Education Advisory Committee recommends that.....”</p>							
<p>The following members of SEAC disagree with this motion and have filed a Minority Report to provide a record of their disagreement with the motion:</p> <table border="0"> <tr> <td>Name of Representative</td> <td>Name of Provincial Organization</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Name of Representative</td> <td>Name of Provincial Organization</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Name of Representative</td> <td>Name of Provincial Organization</td> </tr> </table>		Name of Representative	Name of Provincial Organization	Name of Representative	Name of Provincial Organization	Name of Representative	Name of Provincial Organization
Name of Representative	Name of Provincial Organization						
Name of Representative	Name of Provincial Organization						
Name of Representative	Name of Provincial Organization						
<p>The above disagree with the motion for the following reasons: (these are just examples)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Range of placements not adequate for exceptional students identified as..... 2. Number of professional staff inadequate to meet needs. Specifically, 3. Unqualified staff being used inappropriately to develop and implement programming which should only be developed by a Professional based on an assessment of needs. For example, 4. Special education budget inadequate to provide adequate numbers of special education teachers or staff for..... <p>In conclusion, we ask the Board of Trustees to consider these issues carefully and to:</p> <p>- do the following..... (not approve the plan, reconsider the budget, etc)</p>							
<p>Signed by:</p> <table border="0"> <tr> <td>Name</td> <td>Signature: _____</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Name</td> <td>Signature: _____</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Name</td> <td>Signature: _____</td> </tr> </table>		Name	Signature: _____	Name	Signature: _____	Name	Signature: _____
Name	Signature: _____						
Name	Signature: _____						
Name	Signature: _____						
Date:	Day Month Year						
<p>Provide Copies to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chair of SEAC • SEAC Members • President or Executive Director of Local and/or Provincial Parent Association 							

Effective practices related to Minority Reports include:

- a. Information about Minority Reports in SEAC training and school board SEAC orientation manual (See Table 9 for sample template for Minority Reports).
- b. A template for Minority Reports in the school board SEAC Orientation Manual.
- c. Development of a school board protocol for submitting Minority Reports and sharing them with Trustees. Protocol should include sharing copies of Minority Reports with all SEAC members.
- d. Development of a school board process to share with SEAC the outcome of presenting the SEAC Motion and related Minority Reports to the Trustees.
- e. Development of a SEAC process to document past Minority Reports for consideration at future meetings and as part of annual planning.
- f. Development by provincial and local parent association of guidelines regarding the form and development of Minority Reports, to include as part of their SEAC resources and during SEAC orientation and training sessions.

5.6 Chair and Vice Chair Appointment and Roles

Section 9 (3) of Regulation 464/97 deals with the election of Chair and Vice-chair of SEAC. The regulation says:

“The members of the committee shall, at their first meeting, elect one of their members as chair and one of their members as vice-chair.”

SEAC practices related to the Chair and Vice-chair vary across the province and many school boards have policies or by-laws regarding the process for electing or appointing Chairs and Vice-chairs. The process for electing SEAC Chair and Vice-Chair must be compliant with the regulation and the school board policies and procedures.

PAAC on SEAC recommends that each school board SEAC have a policy in place that describes:

- **The term and qualifications of the Chair and Vice-chair;**
- **The responsibilities of the Chair and Vice-chair;**
- **The process of electing the Chair and Vice-chair;**
- **The process for holding a meeting in the absence of the Chair and Vice-chair.**

Effective Practices related to the roles and responsibilities of the SEAC Chair and Vice-chair include:

- a. Provide all members of SEAC with the opportunity to be considered for election as Chair or Vice-chair.
- b. Assign the Chair and Vice-chair joint responsibility for setting the Agenda and reviewing the Minutes.
- c. Include time keeping during meetings and tracking future agenda items as responsibilities of the Vice-chair.
- d. Provide information and training to SEAC members on the process of electing the Chair and Vice-Chair, including the process for nominations, sample motions related to nominations, destroying the ballots, etc.

5.7 Meeting Evaluation

PAAC on SEAC recommends regular evaluation of SEAC meetings. Meeting evaluation does not have to be complicated and can be either formal or informal. Evaluation should, however, be conducted on a regular or annual basis.

Effective Practices to evaluate SEAC meetings include:

- a. Inviting SEAC members to comment at the end of the meeting, or at selected meetings once or twice a year.
- b. Conducting meeting evaluation as a regular Agenda item at each meeting.
- c. Establishing a sub-committee to design and recommend a meeting evaluation process.
- d. Asking members to provide feedback on the meetings to the Chair or Vice-chair.
- e. Working with the school board research department to conduct regular or annual SEAC meeting evaluations.

A simple tool that has been used successfully by a number of SEACs is the Stop, Start and Continue template, shown in Table 10. This form can be copied and completed by each member individually, or can be a facilitated activity for small groups or the whole membership. Another example of a meeting evaluation form can be found in Appendix 4.

Accountability is one of the most important parts of meeting evaluation, and follow-up is essential. The SEAC leadership, including the Chair, Vice-chair and school board supervisory staff, need to listen to members and act on suggestions for change. Accountability requires that activities to evaluate meetings are taken seriously and result in improvements to the meeting process.

Table 10: Meeting Evaluation Form – Stop Start and Continue

Meeting Date:	
I would like to see this activity at SEAC	STOP
I would like to see this activity at SEAC	CONTINUE
I would like to see this activity at SEAC	START
Comments or suggestions:	

Section 6: Local and Provincial Associations

In Regulation 464/97, Section (1) a “local association” is defined as:

“an association or organization of parents that operates locally within the area of jurisdiction of a board and that is affiliated with an association or organization that is not an association or organization of professional educators but that is incorporated and operates throughout Ontario to further the interests and well being of one or more groups of exceptional children or adults.”

All local association SEAC members should be affiliated with both a local group or chapter and a provincial association. Local associations and provincial parent associations vary considerably in the programs and services they offer, and whether they have a staff or volunteer responsible for providing SEAC support. Regardless of the organizational structure, the SEAC member, who is a local association representative, has a responsibility to both report about SEAC to the local association, and/or provincial parent association, and to share information from the local association and provincial parent association with other SEAC members.

6.1 Local and Provincial Associations Support

A local association member is nominated to SEAC as a representative for a particular association, which may represent families of children with one or more specific exceptionalities. However, a member of SEAC is expected to consider special education programs and services

Effective Practices for the local association to provide support to SEAC members include:

- a. Identifying a contact within the local association that will be a liaison for the SEAC member.
- b. Designating a staff or volunteer, within the local association, to communicate with SEAC reps, and provide administrative support for nomination process, orientation and training.
- c. Providing the SEAC member with an outline of their responsibilities to the local association and/or to the provincial association.
- d. Providing the SEAC members with a forum to share information with local association members and families.
- e. Sharing a report from the SEAC member in a section of the local association newsletter or bulletin.
- f. Providing the SEAC member with the opportunity to provide a report at local association meetings.
- g. Holding a regular or annual meeting of members focused on special education and SEAC.
- h. Providing SEAC members with an opportunity to gather input from local association members, when necessary, through a survey or meeting of members.

and make recommendations that are in the best interests of all students with special education needs. This requires the members to both understand the unique needs of a specific group of children and be able to consider and make recommendations in the interests of all students with special education needs.

PAAC on SEAC recommends that the SEAC member, representing a parent association, should be provided with training and orientation by the local association and/or the provincial parent association. The training and resources should include copies of all of the relevant association special education policies and position statements of the parent association.

Effective Practices for provincial associations to provide support to SEAC members

include:

- a. Developing a screening process to determine the eligibility of volunteers to be SEAC representatives and assess the volunteer's skills and knowledge related to special education and working on a committee.
- b. Describing the expectations for SEAC members, and the consequences for failure to meet expectations, in the SEAC member recruitment documents and process.
- c. Providing an orientation manual or program to help the volunteer understand the role of SEAC and the parent association.
- d. Providing a training program or resources to help the SEAC member be informed about special education, the exceptionality or group of exceptionalities they represent, and their roles and responsibilities as a SEAC representative.
- e. Providing a dedicated section of the parent association website for information on special education. Considering a password protected site for SEAC members to exchange information and network.

Each provincial parent association that is eligible to nominate SEAC members, has a responsibility to develop the capacity to support local associations and their SEAC members. **PAAC on SEAC recommends that each provincial parent association develop mechanisms to provide information and training to the SEAC members who represent them.** The structure and organization of the provincial parent association may vary, but each provincial parent association needs the capacity to provide SEAC members with up to date information about the students they represent; the latest changes in special education at the provincial level; and be able to collect and use the information from SEAC members.

Effective Practices for the provincial parent associations to obtain up to date information relevant to SEAC members include:

- a. Establishing a SEAC or education advisory committee, within the parent association, to support SEAC members, develop position papers and provide input on education consultations.
 - b. Providing parent association contact information to the Minister's Advisory Council on Special Education (MACSE) to be included as a recognized stakeholder for students with special education needs.
 - c. Applying for membership on PAAC on SEAC to obtain updates and network about common issues and concerns.
 - d. Providing SEAC members with regular updates on new initiatives and resources at the Ministry of Education and within the provincial parent association.
 - e. Providing SEAC members with information about on-line resources including:
 - i. Ministry of Education Website section on Special Education
 - ii. Ministry of Education Memo Website
 - iii. Minister's Advisory Council on Special Education Repository with Ministry of Education Special Education Updates, MACSE Meeting Minutes and Annual Report
 - iv. PAAC on SEAC resources, such as this handbook
- (See the References section for websites and additional resources)

6.2 Representing the Local and Provincial Parent Association

The local association SEAC representatives have an obligation to provide information about the SEAC meetings and activities to the local association and/or provincial parent association. The SEAC member is expected to attend 10 regular SEAC meetings each year, and to be involved in the development, and review, of the Special Education Plan and the special education budget. This is a lot of information and the SEAC member may need guidance from the local association and/or provincial parent association about what must be reported and how.

Effective Practices for the SEAC member to represent the provincial/local parent association at SEAC include:

- a. Sending regular updates about the SEAC meeting to the local association or chapter and/or provincial parent association.
- b. Using e-mail to quickly send a short summary of the meeting or recent activities to the local association and/or provincial parent association.
- c. Forwarding copies of the most recent SEAC meeting Minutes to the local association and/or provincial parent association with sections or key items highlighted.
- d. Requesting adequate time from SEAC for consultation with the local association and/or provincial parent association when critical changes or decisions are to be made. This includes clarifying which information is public and can be shared, and requesting that the SEAC Agenda be adjusted to allow adequate time for responsive and responsible feedback.
- e. Listing parent association reports as a regular item on the SEAC agenda. (See Table 11 for sample report form for local association report).
- f. Requesting an opportunity annually, or within each SEAC term, to provide a presentation about the parent association and/or the exceptionality(ies) at a SEAC meeting.
- g. Making presentations about SEAC, and special education, to members of the local association, group or chapter, on a regular basis.
- h. Submitting articles about SEAC, and key special education issues, to be included in local association and/or provincial parent association newsletters.
- i. Developing a mechanism to connect individual parents within the local association, and/or provincial parent association, with SEAC members, which protects the privacy and confidentiality of both parties.

Table 11: Sample Report Form for a Local Association Member

Report from a Local Association Representative	
Name of Association:	_____
SEAC Member :	_____
Date of Meeting:	_____
Association Activities:	
Upcoming Meetings or Conferences:	_____

New programs or services:	_____

Other information:	_____

Copies of the association newsletter are attached.	

References

Ministry of Education Resources available at: <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/>

- [*Caring and Safe Schools in Ontario: Supporting Students With Special Education Needs Through Progressive Discipline, Kindergarten to Grade 12*](#) sets out a framework that system and school leaders may use to strengthen schools' ability to provide a caring and safe environment with respect to students with special education needs.
- [*Learning for All – A Guide to Effective Assessment and Instruction for All Students, Kindergarten to Grade 12, 2013*](#)
- [*Regulation 181/98 of The Education Act, for Identification And Placement of Exceptional Pupils*](#)
- [*Regulation 306/90 of the Education Act, for Special Education Programs and Services*](#)
- [*Regulation 464/97 of the Education Act, for the establishment of Special Education Advisory Committees*](#) (See also Appendix 1)
- [*Shared Solutions, A Guide to Preventing and Resolving Conflicts Regarding Programs and Services for Students with Special Education Needs \(2007\)*](#)
- *Special Education A Guide for Educators (2001)*, Section A, Legislation and Policy, Advisory Committees on Special Education, Page 26-29.
- [*Standards for School Boards' Special Education Plans \(2000\)*](#)
- [*The Individual Education Plan \(IEP\) A Resource Guide \(2004\)*](#)

Other Ministry of Education resources including, Standard Documents and Resource Guides are available on the Ministry of Education Website at www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/parents/speced.html

For more information on SEAC and links to school board SEAC resources, check the SEAC webpage at: <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/general/elemsec/speced/seac/>

For copies of all Memoranda sent from the Ministry to school boards, check the website: <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/policyfunding/memos> Note that Memo are sorted by date, so check the most recent months.

For copies of Minister's Advisory Council on Special Education (MACSE) membership List, Appointment Process and Annual Reports check website at: http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/general/abcs/acse/acse_eng.html

For a copy of the most recent Ministry of Education Special Education Update, check the Special Education page under Additional Information on Special Education at: <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/parents/speced.html>

Additional Ministry of Education developed resources can be found at on the [EduGAINS website](#) including: Autism Spectrum Disorders, Individual Education Plans & Transitions, Learning Disability and SEAC at: <http://www.edugains.ca/newsite/SpecialEducation/index.html>

Other Resources:

- Leading Effective Meetings: Making Basic Parliamentary Procedure Work, Attachment 2, On-line pdf file, Northeast College, Houston Community College, Student Services Department U
- [Procedures for meetings, Fact Sheet, 1996](#), Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs
- *Robert's rules of order: Newly revised, 11th Edition*. To order copies: <http://www.robertsrules.com/>
- *The A-B-C's of Parliamentary Procedures*, A Scriptographic Booklet, (1974) Scriptographic Communications, Ltd. To order copies: <http://shop.channing-bete.com/onlinestore/storeitem.html?iid=165790>

Glossary of Terms

Accommodations are the teaching strategies, supports and/or services (including technology) that are required in order for the student to access the curriculum and demonstrate learning. Accommodations do not alter the provincial learning expectations for the grade level or interfere with the content, expectations, level or validity of the assessment process.

Alternative expectations are not part of the curriculum. Social skills, anger management or organizational skills could come under alternative expectations if someone is specifically teaching them to the student.

BIPSA (Board Improvement Plan for Student Achievement) --

Ministry of Education, Student Achievement Division has developed a comprehensive set of tools and resources to assist school districts in planning, designing and monitoring effective improvement strategies. All of these tools – the *Board Improvement Plan for Student Achievement*, the *Board Improvement Planning Assessment Tool* and the *School Effectiveness Framework* – reinforce the understanding that board improvement planning has two main purposes:

1. To improve student learning, achievement and well-being, and
2. To build capacity and sustainability in the skill and knowledge of educators.

The *Board Improvement Plan for Student Achievement* and its related tools and templates are built on the notion of precise SMART goals based on the analysis of relevant data.

Curriculum: The province of Ontario has outlined the program, or curriculum, that must be followed to educate children at each grade level. The curriculum describes the expectations (skills and knowledge) that students must acquire as well as the achievement level (e.g., mark or grade). The curriculum is divided into different subject areas (e.g., Language, Mathematics, Social Studies) for both elementary and high school students.

Education Act: The Education Act is the provincial law that governs education in Ontario. All school boards must operate according to this law. The Act includes:

- ***Legislation:*** These are the overall laws, passed as Bills by government, regarding education
- ***Regulations:*** These are made by the Minister of Education to expand on the Education Act and give more details about how the Act is to be applied.
- ***Policies, and Policy/Program Memoranda (PPMs):*** These are policy statements issued by the Ministry and prepared in conformity with the Education Act and its regulations, explaining the ways the Ministry prefers the Act and regulations to be carried out.

EduGains -- is the website that houses Ministry of Education resources to support policies and programs to support improved learning and teaching. Website can be found at: <http://www.edugains.ca/newsite/HOME/index.html#>

EQAO – The Education Quality and Accountability Office (EQAO) assesses how well Ontario’s public education system is developing students’ reading, writing and math skills, through province-wide standardized tests.

Exceptional Student: According to Ontario law (the Education Act), an exceptional student is a student who has been formally identified by an Identification and Placement Review Committee (IPRC). An exceptional student has significant needs in behaviour, communication, intellectual, physical or multiple areas and meets the provincial and school board criteria for identification. A student who has been identified as ‘exceptional’ must be provided with the supports and services required to meet the exceptional needs

Individual Education Plans (IEP) are developed for all exceptional students and for those students who require accommodations, modifications or alternative programs.

Local Association: A group or organization that provides support to children with special needs and their families; is based in the school board catchment area; and, that is affiliated with a provincial parent association.

Memoranda: These are instructions issued to schools and boards. They are sub-divided into categories of Policy/Program, Business and Safety. They are issued by the Deputy Ministers of Education and are required to be implemented.

Modifications: These are the changes made to the grade level expectations (higher or lower) for a subject or course in order to meet the needs of the student. Modifications may result in providing the student with different content, a slower pace or by changing the expectations for the amount of material learned or the standards of achievement that are expected to be demonstrated.

ODA Accessibility Plans – Under the Ontarians with Disabilities Act (2001) school boards are required to prepare annual accessibility plans which report on the measures the board has taken and intends to take in the coming year to identify, remove and prevent barriers to people with disabilities.

October Report/OnSIS – Ontario Student Information System is a Ministry system for the collection and management of education related data. OnSIS provides comprehensive, depersonalized qualitative data for the purpose of developing evidence based analysis of

student achievement by the Ministry and school boards. School boards are required to submit student data in October and March, including information on exceptionality, IEPs, suspensions and expulsions. The student data was previously submitted once a year in October and was known as the October Report.

The Ontario Human Rights Code is legislation which provides the right to freedom from discrimination based on “disability” in a number of areas, including services such as education. The Code has precedence over all other legislation, including the Education Act.

Parent Guide: Every school board is required to develop a guide for parents that outlines the IPRC process for determining whether a student is exceptional, deciding the student’s placement and on how parents can appeal these decisions.

Regional Office: An office of the Ministry of Education that covers a geographic area of the province, and relates to school boards in that area

Regulation: A legal document developed by the government, in this case the Ministry of Education, to provide details about how a section of legislation will be implemented.

Special Education Advisory Committee (S.E.A.C.): Every board is required to have a SEAC. This committee is composed of volunteers from parent associations, such as OAFCCD, as well as trustees. The purpose of this committee, which usually meets on a monthly basis, is to advise the school board on special education issues. Meetings are open to members of the public.

Special Education Consultant or Co-ordinator: This is usually a Special Education Teacher who has responsibilities at the school board level to support special education. They may be responsible for supporting a number of schools, or for supporting services for a specific exceptionality.

Special Education Plan: Every school board is required to have a plan for the special education programs and services that they provide. The Special Education Plan must be reviewed annually and a report submitted each year to the Ministry identifying any changes.

Special Education Programs: Educational programs that are based on, and modified by, the results of continuous assessment and evaluation, and that include a plan containing specific objectives and an outline of educational services that meet the needs of the exceptional pupil.

Special Education Services: Facilities and resources, including support personnel and equipment, necessary for developing and implementing a special education program.

Special Education Plan Checklist: The Ministry of Education provides an annual checklist for school boards to complete regarding the Special Education Plan. The checklist requires school boards to note any changes to the plan and may ask specific questions regarding special education.

Special Education, Student Support or Learning Resource Teacher: Special Education Teachers have additional qualifications in the education of students with exceptional learning needs. Some Special Education Teachers work with a specific group of students for the majority of the school day (e.g., learning disabilities, language impairment, mild intellectual disability, etc). In addition, Special Education Teachers may also look after IPRC preparation, arrange case conferences, assist in ongoing assessment, evaluation and reporting, facilitate placements, and act as a liaison with community service providers.

Superintendent: An administrator in the Board of Education who is responsible for either a geographic area or a program area, e.g. Superintendent of Special Education.

Teacher of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing: A professional with post-graduate and specialized training. Teachers of the Deaf are versed in communication, language and literacy development; curriculum and instructional methods; Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing studies; audiology; speech; principles of Auditory Verbal learning and the study of sign languages.

Appendix 1: Regulation 464/97

Education Act

ONTARIO REGULATION 464/97

No Amendments

SPECIAL EDUCATION ADVISORY COMMITTEES

This is the English version of a bilingual regulation.

1. In this Regulation,

"local association" means an association or organization of parents that operates locally within the area of jurisdiction of a board and that is affiliated with an association or organization that is not an association or organization of professional educators but that is incorporated and operates throughout Ontario to further the interests and well-being of one or more groups of exceptional children or adults. O. Reg. 464/97, s. 1.

2. (1) Every district school board shall establish a special education advisory committee that shall consist of,

(a) subject to subsections (2) and (3), one representative from each of the local associations that operates locally within the area of jurisdiction of the board, as nominated by the local association and appointed by the board;

(b) one alternate for each representative appointed under clause (a), as nominated by the local association and appointed by the board;

(c) such number of members from among the board's own members as is determined under subsection (4), as appointed by the board;

(d) where the number of members appointed under clause (c) is less than three, one alternate, as appointed by the board from among its own members, for each member appointed under clause (c);

(e) one or two persons to represent the interests of Indian pupils, as provided by section 4; and

(f) one or more additional members appointed under subsection (5).

(2) The board shall not appoint more than 12 representatives under clause (1) (a).

(3) Where there are more than 12 local associations within the area of jurisdiction of the board, the board shall select the 12 local associations that shall be represented.

(4) The number to be appointed by the board under clause (1) (c) shall be the lesser of,

(a) three; and

(b) 25 per cent of the total number of members of the board, rounded down to the nearest whole number.

(5) For the purposes of clause (1) (f), the board may appoint one or more additional members who are neither representatives of a local association nor members of the board or another committee of the board. O. Reg. 464/97, s. 2.

3. (1) Every school authority, other than a board established under section 68 of the Act, shall establish a special education advisory committee that shall consist of,

(a) two representatives from the local associations that operate locally within the area of jurisdiction of the board, as nominated by the local associations and appointed by the board;

(b) one alternate for each representative appointed under clause (a), as nominated by the local associations and appointed by the board;

(c) one member from among the board's own members, as appointed by the board;

(d) one alternate, as appointed by the board from among its own members, for the member appointed under clause (c); and

(e) one or two persons to represent the interests of Indian pupils, as provided by section 4.

(2) Where no local association or associations have been established, instead of the members and alternates required by clauses (1) (a) and (b), the board shall appoint two members and two alternates who are not members of the board. O. Reg. 464/97, s. 3.

4. (1) Where a board has one member appointed in accordance with a regulation made under section 188 of the Act, the special education advisory committee shall include one person appointed to represent the interests of Indian pupils.

(2) Where a board has more than one member appointed in accordance with a regulation made under section 188 of the Act, the special education advisory committee shall include two persons appointed to represent the interests of Indian pupils.

(3) One alternate shall be appointed for each person appointed in accordance with subsection (1) or (2).

(4) The representatives and alternates shall be nominated by the councils of the bands with which the board has entered into agreements under section 188 of the Act.

(5) The board shall appoint the persons nominated under subsection (4). O. Reg. 464/97, s. 4.

5. (1) A person is not qualified to be nominated or appointed under section 2 or 3 to a special education advisory committee of a board unless the person is qualified to vote for members of that board and is resident in its area of jurisdiction.

(2) Subsection (1) does not apply in respect of persons appointed under section 4.

(3) A person is not qualified to be nominated or appointed under section 2, 3 or 4 if the person is employed by the board. O. Reg. 464/97, s. 5.

6. Subject to section 7, each of the persons appointed to a special education advisory committee of a board shall hold office during the term of office of the members of the board and until a new board is organized. O. Reg. 464/97, s. 6.

- 7. (1)** A member of a special education advisory committee vacates his or her seat if he or she,
- (a) is convicted of an indictable offence;
 - (b) absents himself or herself without being authorized by resolution entered in the minutes from three consecutive regular meetings of the committee; or
 - (c) ceases to hold the qualifications to be appointed to the committee.
- (2)** An alternate for a member of a special education advisory committee vacates his or her position if he or she,
- (a) is convicted of an indictable offence;
 - (b) absents himself or herself without being authorized by resolution entered in the minutes from three consecutive regular meetings of the committee in respect of which the alternate received a notice under subsection 9 (9); or
 - (c) ceases to hold the qualifications to be appointed as an alternate.
- (3)** Where a seat or position becomes vacant under this section, section 8 applies with respect to filling the vacancy.
- (4)** Despite subsection (3), where a member of the committee or an alternate for a member of a committee is convicted of an indictable offence, the vacancy or position shall not be filled until the time for taking any appeal that may be taken from the conviction has elapsed, or until the final determination of any appeal so taken, and in the event of the quashing of the conviction the seat or position shall be deemed not to have been vacated. O. Reg. 464/97, s. 7.
- 8. (1)** If a seat or position on a special education advisory committee becomes vacant, the board that appointed the person whose seat or position has become vacant shall appoint a qualified person to fill the vacancy for the remainder of the term of the person whose seat or position has become vacant.
- (2)** The nomination requirements of sections 2, 3 and 4 apply with respect to appointments under this section.
- (3)** Where a seat of a member of the committee is vacant and has not yet been filled, the alternate for the member, if there is an alternate, shall act in the member's place for all purposes of this Regulation. O. Reg. 464/97, s. 8.
- 9. (1)** A majority of the members of a special education advisory committee is a quorum, and a vote of a majority of the members present at a meeting is necessary to bind the committee.
- (2)** Every member present at a meeting, or his or her alternate when attending the meeting in his or her place, is entitled to one vote.
- (3)** The members of the committee shall, at their first meeting, elect one of their members as chair and one of their members as vice-chair.
- (4)** The vice-chair shall assist the chair and shall act for the chair at meetings in his or her absence.
- (5)** The chair or, in the absence of the chair, the vice-chair, shall preside at meetings.
- (6)** If at any meeting the chair and vice-chair are not present, the members present may elect a chair for that meeting.

(7) The chair may vote with the other members of the committee and any motion on which there is an equality of votes is lost.

(8) The committee shall meet at least 10 times in each school year.

(9) Where a member for whom an alternate has been appointed cannot attend a meeting of the committee, the member shall so notify the alternate.

(10) Where an alternate receives a notice under subsection (9), he or she shall attend the meeting and act at the meeting in the member's place. O. Reg. 464/97, s. 9.

10. (1) The board shall make available to its special education advisory committee the personnel and facilities that the board considers necessary for the proper functioning of the committee, including the personnel and facilities that the board considers necessary to permit the use of electronic means for the holding of meetings of the committee in accordance with the regulations made under section 208.1 of the Act.

(2) Within a reasonable time after a special education advisory committee is appointed, the board shall provide the members of the committee and their alternates with information and orientation respecting,

(a) the role of the committee and of the board in relation to special education; and

(b) Ministry and board policies relating to special education. O. Reg. 464/97, s. 10.

11. (1) 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.

(2) Before making a decision on a recommendation of the committee, the board shall provide an opportunity for the committee to be heard before the board and before any other committee of the board to which the recommendation is referred. O. Reg. 464/97, s. 11.

12. (1) The board shall ensure that its special education advisory committee 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.

(2) The board shall ensure that its special education advisory committee 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.

(3) The board shall ensure that its special education advisory committee 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. O. Reg. 464/97, s. 12.

13. Omitted (provides for coming into force of provisions of this Regulation). O. Reg. 464/97, s. 13.

Appendix 2: Special Education Report Checklist

2016-17 Special Education Plan Checklist
Please submit to your regional office by July 31, 2016

District School Board/School Authority:		
	Report on the provision of Special Education Programs and Services 2015-16	Amendments to the 2016-17 Special Education Plan
Compliance with the <i>Standards for School Boards' Special Education Plans (2000)</i>		
Special Education Programs and Services		
Model for Special Education		
Identification, Placement, and Review Committee (IPRC) Process		
Special Education Placements Provided by the Board		
Individual Education Plans (IEP)		
Special Education Staff		
Specialized Equipment		
Transportation for Students with Special Education Needs		
Transition Planning		
Provincial Information		
Roles and Responsibilities		
Categories and Definitions of Exceptionalities		
Provincial and Demonstration Schools in Ontario		
Other Related Information Required for Community		
<u>The Board's Consultation Process</u>		
The Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC)		
Early Identification Procedures and Intervention Strategies		
Educational and Other Assessments		
<u>Coordination of Services with Other Ministries or Agencies</u>		
Specialized Health Support Services in School Settings		
<u>Staff Development</u>		
Accessibility (AODA)		
Parent Guide to Special Education		
<i>Where programs and services have not been provided as outlined in the 2015-16 Special Education Plan, please provide a description of the variance:</i>		

Additional Information:	
Protocol for Partnerships with External Agencies for Provision of Services by Regulated Health Professionals, Regulated Social Service Professionals, and Paraprofessionals (PPM 149) posted on school board website.	
Special education is included in our ongoing self-improvement with respect to the Board Improvement Plan for Student Achievement.	

Document:	Format:	Please indicate the URL of the document on your website (if applicable)
Special Education Plan	<input type="checkbox"/> Board Website <input type="checkbox"/> Electronic file <input type="checkbox"/> Paper copy	
Parent Guide to Special Education	<input type="checkbox"/> Board Website <input type="checkbox"/> Electronic file	
Protocol for Partnerships with External Agencies for Provision of Services by Regulated Health Professionals, Regulated Social Service Professionals, and Paraprofessionals (PPM 149)	<input type="checkbox"/> Board Website <input type="checkbox"/> Electronic file	

Name of the Director of Education

Signature of Director of Education

Date:

Appendix 3: Additional Resources

Parliamentary Procedures - Robert's Rules of Order Basic Principles

- Parliamentary procedure exists to facilitate the transaction of business and to promote cooperation and harmony.
- All members have equal rights, privileges, and obligations.
 - The majority has the right to decide.
 - The minority has rights, which must be protected.
- A quorum must be present for the group to act.
- Full and free discussion of every motion considered is a basic right.
- Only one question at a time can be considered at any given time.
- Members have the right to know at all times what the immediately pending question is, and to have it restated before a vote is taken.
- No member can speak until recognized by the chair.
- No one can speak a second time on the same question as long as another wants to speak a first time.
- The chair should be strictly impartial.

Adapted from Roberts Rules of Order, 10th Edition

Source: *Leading Effective Meetings: Making Basic Parliamentary Procedure Work*, Attachment 2, On-line pdf file, Northeast College, Houston Community College, Student Services Department

Parliamentary Procedure Language or “Lingo”

Motion

A proposal or resolution by a member that the assembly take a certain action or express a certain view. A motion is considered out of order if it conflicts with the constitution or by-laws of the group.

Main Motion

A motion to introduce a principal subject. Only one main motion may be considered at a time and must be disposed of before another main motion may be considered.

Motion to Lay on the Table (or Tabling)

A motion to lay aside a pending question for an indefinite amount of time.

Motion to Take from the Table

A motion enabling the assembly to resume consideration of a previously tabled item

Point of Order

To object to a proceeding as being in conflict with the rules of procedure. The chair must recognize the point of order.

Friendly Amendment

A small change to an original motion. Those who made and seconded the original motion must agree to the amendment.

Motion to Adjourn

A motion made at the conclusion of a business meeting or at the final business session.

Majority Vote

More than half of the votes, or 50%+1

Quorum

The number of members required in the by-laws to hold a legal meeting.

Adapted from the ABC's of Parliamentary Procedure, Arnold Air Society-Silver Wings

Source: *Leading Effective Meetings: Making Basic Parliamentary Procedure Work*, Attachment 2, On-line pdf file, Northeast College, Houston Community College, Student Services Department

Parliamentary Procedures - Handling a Motion

Three steps by which a motion is brought before the group

1. A member makes a motion.
2. Another member seconds the motion.
3. The chair states the question on the motion.

Three Steps in the Consideration of a Motion

1. The members debate the motion (unless no member claims the floor for that purpose).
2. The chair puts the question to a vote.

A. The chair restates the question.

B. The chair takes the vote:

"All in favor of the motion, say aye."

"Those opposed, say no."

Note: A vote passes with a simple majority, except in cases of suspending the rules; previous question; limit or extended debate; and, amend a previously adopted motion; which require a 2/3 vote.

3. The chair announces the result of a vote. A complete announcement should include:
 - A. Report on the voting itself, stating which side prevailed (and giving the count if a count prevailed).
 - B. Declaration that the motion is adopted or lost.
 - C. Statement indicating the effect of the vote or ordering its execution.
 - D. Where applicable, announcement of the next item of business or stating the question of the next motion that consequently comes up for a vote.

Adapted from Roberts Rules of Order, 11th Edition Source: Leading Effective Meetings: Making Basic Parliamentary Procedure Work, Website: <http://www.robertsrules.org/>

Parliamentary Procedures at a Glance - Chart

To do this...	You say this...	May you interrupt the speaker?	Must you be seconded?	Is the motion debatable?	What vote is required?
Adjourn meeting*	I move that we adjourn	No	Yes	No	Majority
Recess meeting	I move that we recess until...	No	Yes	No	Majority
Complain about noise, room temp., etc.*	Point of privilege	Yes	No	No	No vote
Suspend further consideration of something	I move we table it	No	Yes	No	Majority
End debate	I move the previous question	No	Yes	No	2/3 vote
Postpone consideration of something	I move we postpone this matter until...	No	Yes	Yes	Majority
Have something studied further	I move we refer this matter to committee	No	Yes	Yes	Majority
Amend a motion	I move this motion be amended by...	No	Yes	Yes	Majority
Introduce business (a primary motion)	I move that...	No	Yes	Yes	Majority
Object to procedure or personal affront*	Point of order	Yes	No	No	No vote, chair decides
Request information	Point of information	Yes	No	No	No vote
Ask for actual count to verify voice vote	I call for a division of the house	No	No	No	No vote
Take up a matter previously tabled*	I move to take from the table...	No	Yes	No	Majority
Reconsider something already disposed of*	I move we reconsider our action relative to...	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority
Vote on a ruling by the Chair	I appeal the Chair's decision	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority

*Not amendable

Adapted from Roberts Rules of Order, 10th Edition

Source: *Leading Effective Meetings: Making Basic Parliamentary Procedure Work*, Attachment 2, On-line pdf file, Northeast College, Houston Community College, Student Services Department

Example SEAC Meeting Evaluation Forms

**XYZ District School Board
Special Education Advisory Committee
Meeting Evaluation Form**

The purpose of this form is to obtain feedback from members on the SEAC meeting. This information will assist in seeing how meetings can be improved. Completed forms will be sent to the Research Department for analysis. Do not include your name.

For each of the statements below, please select one response that reflects your view. Use the *not applicable* where necessary.

Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Not Applicable
The Agenda was structured appropriately					
The Agenda items were timed appropriately					
Meeting time was used effectively					
Sufficient background information on issues was provided					
I had an opportunity to voice my opinions					
Decisions, recommendations and next steps were clear					
Members were respectful of each other					
Members worked together in a constructive way					

What suggestions do you have, if any, for improving future meetings?

A Checklist for SEAC Meetings

- ✓ Do the minutes accurately report all key items, discussions and decisions?
- ✓ Do the minutes go to the trustees before they are approved by the members of the SEAC?
- ✓ Is approval of the minutes a regular item on your SEAC agenda?
- ✓ If the minutes need to be amended, then do they come back again for approval?
- ✓ Is a SEAC report a regular item on the school board agenda?
- ✓ Who reports to the board on behalf of SEAC?
- ✓ Who reports back?
- ✓ How frequently does your SEAC pass motions, recommending a specific course of action to the school board?
- ✓ What happens to those motions?
- ✓ Who reports back from the board to SEAC?
- ✓ How frequently does your SEAC appear in front of the school board as a delegation?
- ✓ When do you get major reports in advance of the meeting?
- ✓ Is your SEAC functioning strictly in accordance with the SEAC regulation?

Source: Learning Disabilities Association of Ontario