



BHNCDSB Special Education Advisory Committee Guide for Committee Chairs & Committee Members

Functions of the Committee

The primary function of the committee is to contribute to positive learning and wellbeing outcomes in relation to special education. The committee will also provide input on the efficient operation of the organization. The committee will determine the best solutions through its collective wisdom. The Committee is guided by Ministry and Board policies relating to special education and in particular Ontario Reg. 464/97, s. 10. 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.

Committee Meetings

Day of the week: Tuesday
Time: 1:00pm
Length: 2 hours
Number of meetings/year:10

Meeting Agenda

Agendas are developed and sent to all members of the committee prior to the meeting. Any supporting or background material to further explain or detail the items on the agenda will also be included.

Generally accepted sequence of business for each meeting:

1. Call the meeting to order, welcome and opening prayer
2. Confirm attendance/regrets
3. Review the minutes of the previous meeting
4. Discuss and resolve agenda items as they are listed for current meeting
5. Correspondence
6. Presentation (Schoolboard or community)
7. Community Round Table
8. Staff Reports
9. Summary of any next steps and adjournment

Notable Agenda Items

- September: Orientation and election of Chairs
- October: Review of SEAC communication and webpage
- November: Feedback for the Minister's Advisory Council on Special Education (MACSE)
- December: Accessibility compliance update
- January: Feedback for the Minister's Advisory Council on Special Education (MACSE)
- February: Update on professional learning, new programming, and initiatives
- March: Budget consultation survey input
- April: Considerations for the summer break for students
- May: Review of the Board's annual budget process as it relates to special education. Planning forward for next year
- June: Review of the Board's annual Special Education Report

Members

- Are appointed because they are knowledgeable and have an interest in the committee's area of activity.
- Will know the specific responsibilities of committee.
- Have an understanding of Board's practices, policies, and procedures.
- Assist in reporting to the Board of Trustees.
- Work to achieve realistic and attainable goals.

- Read the meeting agenda and any supporting material carefully before each meeting.
- Feel free to respectfully comment, criticize constructively, question, advocate, or disagree.
- 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.
- 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.

Committee Chairs

The members of the committee shall, at the first meeting, elect one of our members as Chair and Vice-Chair. The Vice-Chair shall assist the Chair and shall act for the Chair at meetings in his or her absence. The Chair or, in the absence of the chair, the Vice-Chair, shall preside at meetings.

- Create the meeting agendas with the Superintendent.
- Facilitate the meetings.
- Seek out member representatives from important community partners.
- Periodically review the committee's charge relative to its objectives.
- Make sure minutes are kept of each meeting and that they are distributed to all committee members.
- Guide, mediate, probe and stimulate discussions.
- Keep discussions on track; periodically restate the issue and the goal of the discussion.
- The Committee Chair and staff liaison are responsible for keeping leadership and appropriate staff fully informed of committee activities. Minutes will be provided to the Board of Trustees.
- The committee Chair and staff liaison are responsible for keeping committee members fully informed, with timely reports of all committee meetings and committee work.

Staff Liaisons

Staff representatives serve as an informed resource person to the Chair and members of the committee. They assist the Chair in facilitating committee discussions and activities which address the committee's charge. They:

- Provide orientation for each new committee Chair and assist the Chair in providing orientation for new and continuing committee members each year.
- Work with the Chair to develop a plan of work that will allow the committee to effectively and efficiently, discharge its responsibilities for the year.
- Work with the Chair to develop agendas and conduct effective meetings of the committee.
- Provides administrative support, including but not limited to, planning and execution of meetings.
- Drafts reports of committee meetings for review and approval by the committee Chair for the Trustees.
- Be thoroughly familiar with all aspects of the committee's work, including the scope of work, subjects under discussion, and policies related to the committee's work.
- Answer questions, offer suggestions and raise questions.

Minutes

- Include the name of the committee, date, time, and place of the meeting. Note the chairperson's name, members present and absent, and other key people in attendance.
- Note all decisions reached, including any motions and follow-up actions to be taken, with deadlines for implementation.
- Include a summary of discussions. Do not attribute comments to members, except possibly where formal motions are introduced.
- Provide information on the time and place of the next meeting.
- Distributed to all committee members, including those who did not attend.
- Sent out with a statement to contact the staff liaison if errors are noted.

