



**SPECIAL EDUCATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE
Report No. 23-005**

**1 March 2023
7 March 2023**

Revisions to Policy P.019.GOV Special Education Advisory Committee

**Key Contact: Janice McCoy, Executive Officer, Corporate Services,
613-596-8211 ext. 8310**

PURPOSE:

1. To revise Policy P019.GOV Special Education Advisory Committee to provide for the appointment of up to two voting members to represent Indigenous students with special education needs to the Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC).

STRATEGIC LINKS:

2. Appointing Indigenous representatives to the SEAC supports the District's commitment to promoting and protecting Indigenous rights, human rights, and equity as well as implementing sound governance structures.

CONTEXT:

3. Ontario Regulation 464/97, *Special Education Advisory Committees*, requires all school boards in Ontario to establish a Special Education Advisory Committee for the board, and sets out the requirements and limitations on the membership of the committee. The members of the SEAC are appointed by the Board for the term of the Board.

4. The Indigenous Education Council (IEC) has made a request that the composition of SEAC be amended to include members who represent the interests of Indigenous students with special education needs. This change would require revisions to the current policy and Board approval. Staff has reviewed the request and the legislative authority and believes that the policy change can be made and that this is a step towards the Board's commitment to supporting our commitment to addressing the recommendations of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission.

KEY CONSIDERATIONS:

5. Special Education Committee Composition

In accordance with sections 2 of the regulation and as outlined in sections 4.2 to 4.13 of Board Policy P.019.GOV: Special Education Advisory Committee (Appendix A), the OCDSB SEAC currently consists of:

- a) Three trustees appointed by the Board;
- b) One representative, as well as an alternate, from each of nine (9) local associations that operate within the jurisdiction of the Board, as nominated by the local association and appointed by the Board, as follows:
 - i) Association for Bright Children, Ottawa Region Chapter (ABC)
 - ii) Down Syndrome Association, National Capital Region (DSA)
 - iii) Learning Disabilities Association of Ottawa-Carleton (LDAO-C)
 - iv) Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD/ONE)
 - v) Autism Ontario, Ottawa Chapter
 - vi) Inclusion Action in Ontario (IAO)
 - vii) VOICE for Hearing Impaired Children (VOICE)
 - viii) Easter Seals Ontario
 - ix) Ontario Parents of Visually Impaired Children (OPVIC)

The regulation and the Board's policy provides for up to a maximum of twelve local associations to be represented on SEAC. A local association is defined in the regulation 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".

- c) One representative, as well as an alternate, nominated by the Ottawa-Carleton Assembly of School Councils (OCASC), and appointed by the Board, pursuant to s. 2(5) of the Regulation, which provides that the board may appoint one or more additional members who are neither

representatives of a local association (as defined above) nor members of the board or another committee of the board.

- d) Three community members to advocate in the interest of all students with special needs, and do not represent the interests of any particular exceptionality, who are also appointed pursuant to s. 2(5) of the Regulation as additional members.

6. The Board has the authority under section 2(5) of the Regulation to add additional members to the SEAC. Such members may not be a representative of a local association, as that term is defined in the Regulation, or a member of another committee of the Board.

7. The changes required to Policy P.019.GOV to effect this change are shown in the attached draft (Appendix B). More specifically, the voting member composition of SEAC has been amended to reflect the inclusion of up to two members representing Indigenous students with special education needs, and delegates the authority for selecting the Indigenous representatives to IEC, followed by approval of the Board. The specific language related to this change follows:

4.5 The following additional **voting** members who are neither representatives of a Local Association nor members of the Board or another committee of the Board **shall be appointed by the Board for the duration of the term of the Board:**

- a) A representative nominated by the Ottawa-Carleton Assembly of School Councils (OCASC);
- b) Up to three (3) community representatives to represent the interests of all students in the District with special education needs, **upon the recommendation of the SEAC selection committee; and**
- c) **Up to two (2) members to represent the interests of Indigenous students with special education needs, upon the recommendation of the Indigenous Education Council.**

8. The proposed revisions to Policy P.019.GOV are considered a Tier 2 Policy Review. The revised policy is being presented to the Indigenous Education Council (16 February 2023), the Special Education Advisory Committee (1 March 2023) and to Committee of the Whole (7 March 2023) for discussion purposes in advance of bringing it forward to the Board, through Committee of the Whole, for approval in April.

RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS:

9. There are no significant resource implications with this report or the proposed changes to the composition of SEAC. Any costs, associated with the expansion of the committee and the selection of the two representatives would be minimal and covered through existing budgets.

COMMUNICATION/CONSULTATION ISSUES:

10. The proposed changes to the policy were scheduled for presentation to the Indigenous Education Council on 16 February 2023 and to the Special Education Advisory Committee on 1 March 2023 for their input and feedback. The draft policy will also be posted to the District's website to invite feedback from the community and will be shared when the policy is presented to the Board for approval.

GUIDING QUESTIONS:

- Does the revised policy effectively address and allow for Indigenous voice and participation on the Special Education Advisory Committee?

Janice McCoy
Executive Officer,
Corporate Services

Michèle Giroux
Director of Education and
Secretary of the Board

APPENDICES:

Appendix A: Policy P.019.GOV: Special Education Advisory Committee

Appendix B: Draft Policy P.019.GOV: Special Education Advisory Committee