



OPERATING POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

SPECIAL EDUCATION ADVISORY COUNCIL
(SEAC)

Revised: April, 2013

PURPOSE

The Special Education Advisory Council (SEAC) shall advise St. Cloud Area School District 742 on the education of children with disabilities. The essence of the Council's purpose is to provide a broad base of input to District 742 policies, practices, and issues related to the education of children and youth with disabilities who are between the ages of birth to twenty-one.

FUNCTIONS

The Special Education Advisory Council shall:

1. Support, advocate, and advise District 742 on special education matters.
2. Advise the Executive Director of Student Services/Special Education on special education-related issues and engage in at least one substantial project each year.
3. Provide a forum for parents and staff to share ideas, identify concerns, and advise District 742, in order to improve services for children with disabilities.
4. Provide input into the decision-making process of the special education department. Provide a communication link with the community at large. Advocate for high-quality educational programs for all learners.

MEMBERSHIP

The SEAC shall be comprised of up to twenty (20) members appointed by the Director of Student Services/Special Education. A majority of the members must be individuals with disabilities or parents of children with disabilities. Membership on the council should closely represent the District population and be composed of individuals involved in, or concerned with the education of children with disabilities and may include:

1. Parents of children with disabilities;
2. Individuals with disabilities;
3. Teachers;
4. Representatives of institutions of higher education that prepare special education and related services personnel;
5. Local education officials;
6. Administrators of programs for children with disabilities;
7. Representatives of private schools and public charter schools;
8. Representative of a vocational, community, or business organization concerned with the provision of services to children with disabilities; and
9. Representative from area juvenile and correction agencies.

TERMS OF MEMBERSHIP

1. The term of each member shall be for four years and expire on June 30th of the fourth year. In cases where a replacement member has not been appointed, an existing member may continue into the next term until the new appointment is made.
2. Appointments to the SEAC shall be staggered to assure that only one fourth of the membership would terminate activities at the end of any given year.
3. Members in good standing may reapply and be reappointed at the discretion of the Director.

MEETINGS

1. The SEAC shall meet as often as necessary to conduct its business, but not less than three (3) times during each fiscal year at a time and place determined by the Director of Student Services/Special Education. Meetings are open to the public.
2. Workgroups may be delegated to work on projects related to goals. Workgroups will report to the large group.
3. A draft of the meeting minutes will be sent to members for review.
4. The Director of Special Education shall provide an annual SEAC report to the District School Board summarizing the goal(s) and outcome.

PARTICIPATION BY NON-COUNCIL MEMBERS

Individuals who are not SEAC members are welcome to attend meetings and may address an issue on the agenda only after being recognized by the Chair.

NOTICE OF MEETINGS

Notice of the Special Education Advisory Council meetings shall be sent prior to the meeting. SEAC members may submit agenda items for consideration. A central telephone information number of the Student Services/Special Education Department will also be listed in the announcement to assist individuals who wish additional information regarding meeting agendas.

QUORUM

A quorum shall consist of a majority of the current active members. An active member will be defined as a member who has attended at least one meeting in the current fiscal year.

DEALING WITH CONFLICT

SEAC members come from a variety of backgrounds and perspectives. As a result, differences of opinion will inevitably arise. Resolution of conflict will be accomplished with members using flexibility, compromise, and respect.

SEAC Meeting Norms:

- Attend every meeting
- Model good listening – no side bar conversations
- Participate positively – no sarcasm or demeaning comments
- Attack the problem not the person
- Agree to disagree
- Problem solve rather than problem admiration
- Listen actively – don't work on other projects
- Laugh a lot with each other

COMPENSATION

Members of the Council shall serve without compensation but be reimbursed for reasonable and actual expenses incurred in attending meetings within the limits provided in State rules.

ATTENDANCE

Members are expected to attend meetings for the length of their tenure in order to represent their constituency, organization and/or agency, and to enhance the effectiveness of the Council. Should Council members be unable to participate in a meeting, it is their responsibility to notify the Department of Student Services/Special Education staff liaison of their anticipated absence. Notification is requested as early as possible, but not later than 48 hours preceding the meeting.

If necessary, SEAC members may, for information purposes only, opt to send a substitute to meetings. If a substitute is sent to an Advisory Council meeting, it is the responsibility of that member to fully inform the substitute of the work of the Council and to also notify the Director of Student Services of the anticipated participation of the substitute. Since the work of the Advisory Council is dependent upon consistent participation of the members, it is anticipated that the use of substitutes by members will be limited. Substitutes may be reimbursed at the same level as Advisory Council members.

REPLACEMENT

Advisory Council members shall be replaced when the following occurs: the member sends a letter of resignation to the Director of Student Services/Special Education or the member does not attend three consecutive meetings. After two absences, the Director, or designee will contact the Advisory Council member to verify interest and ability to serve as a Special Education Advisory Council member.

MODIFICATIONS: Changes of Policies and Procedures

The members may review the operating policies and procedures of the Special Education Advisory Council and make recommendations to the Director or designee.