

LDAO Public Policy Manual 2002

Section A: SEAC Policies

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Policy A1 – SEAC Representatives and alternates

LDAO advocates that all LDAO nominated SEAC representatives and alternates abide by and act in accordance with all LDAO policies as set out in the Public Policy and Procedure Manual 1999.

Rationale

LDAO nominated SEAC representatives and alternates represent the interests of all students with learning disabilities. It is important that LDAO, its chapters, and representatives present a united face and uniform set of goals to the various institutions, including school boards, with which they work to better the situation of people with learning disabilities throughout Ontario. Compliance with this policy is a requirement for chapter/satellite charter retention.

References

- Education Act, s57.1
- Regulation 464/97
- LDAO bylaws and policies, including charter retention requirements

Policy A2 – Appointment of SEAC Representatives and Alternates

LDAO advocates that all SEAC representative and alternate candidates who meet the eligibility requirements set out in Regulation 464/97 and who are duly nominated by the local association in accordance with the requisite sections of the Regulation be appointed to the local SEAC by the school board.

Rationale

Regulation 464/97 is ambiguous in its description of the obligation of school boards in appointing local association nominees to their SEACs. In the document which sets out the

standards for school board special education plans and processes this is not adequately clarified. During the training sessions offered by the Ministry of Education to school boards in the spring of 2001, it was stated that “school boards have an obligation to appoint duly nominated and eligible alternates and representatives of Indian pupils”. It was further stated that it is the intent of the Ministry and the Regulation that school boards appoint eligible and duly nominated SEAC representatives. There is no clear rationale for this differentiation in the appointment process. Ministry personnel stated that this will be addressed and the Regulation will be amended to clarify the appointment process.

Until such time that this clarification and amendment are made, there is a need for this policy for the purposes of consistency and accountability.

References

Education Act, s57.1

Regulation 464/97

Standards for School Board Special Education Plans, 2001

LDAO bylaws and policies, including charter retention requirements

Policy A3 – SEAC Representatives to Abide by Legislative Requirements

LDAO advocates that LDAO nominated SEAC representatives or alternates who at any time cease or consider that they may cease to meet the legislative requirements for membership of a SEAC advise their nominating body immediately.

Rationale

Continuity of representation on a SEAC is important to ensure that the interests of people with learning disabilities are addressed by school boards. A SEAC representative or alternate must be familiar with and act in accordance with the policies of LDAO and the legislated requirements for SEAC representatives.

References

Education Act, s57.1

Regulation 464/97

LDAO bylaws and policies, including charter retention requirements

Policy A4 – Active Participants

LDAO advocates that all LDAO nominated SEAC representatives and alternates be active participants on their SEAC and represent the interests of all exceptional students as well as students with learning disabilities within the board. As such, SEAC representatives and alternates will ensure that they:

- have a working knowledge of the special education programs and services provided by the board
- are knowledgeable of the board’s policies and procedures in the area of special education

- are knowledgeable of and act in accordance with LDAO policies as set out in this manual
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SEAC representatives (and alternates, as appropriate) shall be actively involved in the annual review of the board's special education plan, the budget process and review of financial statements by the SEAC as mandated by legislation. SEAC representatives (and alternates, as appropriate) shall, preferably with the prior consent of the chapter board of directors, sit on other committees of the board.

Rationale

The role of the representative and alternate is to represent the interests of all students with learning disabilities in the board. It is imperative that representatives and alternates be active participants to ensure effective representation of these interests.

References

Education Act, s57.1

Regulation 464/97

LDAO bylaws and policies, including charter retention requirements

Policy A5 – Active Members of Chapter

LDAO advocates that SEAC representatives be active members of their local chapter, preferably as a member of the chapter's board of directors or, if so decided by the chapter, as a staff member.

Rationale

A SEAC representative is a representative of the nominating chapter and must be actively involved in the chapter to ensure accurate and consistent representation of the interests of the members and facilitate an effective flow of information between the chapter or satellite and the SEAC and board.

References

Education Act, s57.1

Regulation 464/97

LDAO bylaws and policies, including charter retention requirements

Policy A6 – Chapter and LDAO to be Informed

LDAO advocates that SEAC representatives (and alternates, as appropriate) ensure that their chapter or satellite are made aware of SEAC and board recommendations and/or decisions which affect special education programming and services to exceptional students in the board. A SEAC report should be a regular component of chapter or satellite meetings.

SEAC representatives (and alternates, as appropriate) shall:

- regularly consult with and seek chapter input into matters to be considered by the SEAC

- ensure that the concerns or questions of the chapter are brought before the SEAC
- plan for their own succession
- where appropriate, consult with and seek input from the LDAO Educational Policy and Legislation Committee and staff
- report all relevant SEAC and board recommendations and/or decisions to the LDAO Educational Policy and Legislation Committee

Rationale

The representative and alternate are members of the SEAC as representatives of their chapter and satellite and LDAO. As such, the chapter or satellite and, where appropriate, LDAO must be involved in the SEAC process and informed of the workings of the SEAC and board.

References

Education Act, s57.1

Regulation 464/97

LDAO bylaws and policies, including charter retention requirements

Policy A7 – Continuing Education

LDAO advocates that all SEAC representatives and alternates be required to:

- participate in all orientation provided for SEAC representatives by the board, LDAO and/or their chapter
- participate in all continuing education provided for SEAC representatives by LDAO
- participate in all relevant continuing education provided by the board

Rationale

It is imperative that SEAC representatives and alternates have an up-to-date knowledge of education law and policies, board procedures and policies and LDAO policies. Continuing education is the best way of ensuring this.

References

Education Act, s57.1

Regulation 464/97

LDAO bylaws and policies, including charter retention requirements

Policy A8 – Relationship with SEAC and Board

LDAO advocates that SEAC representatives and alternates shall to the greatest extent possible:

- develop a good working relationship with the other members of the SEAC and the school board and personnel with whom they work on a regular basis
- foster a good working relationship between the SEAC and school councils in the board

- develop effective communication skills
- work with other local association representatives on the SEAC to improve services to all exceptional students in the board

Rationale

Maintaining a good working relationship with the other members of the SEAC, the board and school councils is essential to facilitate effective representation of the interests of the chapter, LDAO and exceptional students in the board. Effective communication skills will also assist in this process.

References

Education Act, s57.1

Regulation 464/97

LDAO bylaws and policies, including charter retention requirements

Policy A9 – Conduct of Meetings

LDAO advocates that SEAC representatives and alternates shall be actively involved in the conduct of SEAC meetings. Representatives and alternates shall ensure that they receive and read all agendas, minutes and other documentation provided to representatives in relation to the conduct of the SEAC. Where documentation is only provided to representatives, the representative shall ensure that these documents are forwarded in a timely manner to the alternate.

A representative elected as chair or vice-chair shall ensure that he or she is familiar with procedures for the conduct of meetings and shall carry out their duties to the best of their ability.

A representative who is unable to attend a meeting shall advise the alternate in sufficient time to enable the alternate to attend the meeting. The representative should also send his or her apologies to the chair of the SEAC.

Rationale

Active involvement in meetings is essential to ensure effective representation of the chapter, LDAO and exceptional students in the board.

References

Education Act, s57.1

Regulation 464/97

LDAO bylaws and policies, including charter retention requirements

Policy A10 – Presentations and Submissions to SEAC or Board

LDAO advocates that representatives (and alternates, as appropriate) shall when necessary prepare and submit briefs and make presentations to the SEAC and board. Before submitting a brief or making any presentation to the SEAC or board, the representative or alternate shall:

- obtain the approval the chapter, to be recorded in the minutes of the approving body
- provide the chapter with a copy of any written documentation proposed to be presented to the SEAC or board

The representative or alternate shall also in a timely manner provide LDAO with a copy of all written documentation presented to the SEAC or board.

Rationale

In some instances, a written submission or presentation to the SEAC or board will be the most effective means of addressing a given concern. The chapter and, where appropriate, LDAO must be involved in this process and be aware of any outcome to ensure consistent representation of LDAO policy and to advise other chapters and SEACs in the province of the policies and procedural in other boards.

References

Education Act, s57.1

Regulation 464/97

LDAO bylaws and policies, including charter retention requirements

Policy A11 – Act as Resource for Parents and Community

LDAO advocates that SEAC representatives and alternates, upon request and with the prior approval of the chapter board of directors, shall:

- act as a resource to and assist parents and students in understanding and utilizing board procedures relating to exceptional students, including the IPRC and appeal processes
- provide information about assessment and support services, including assisting parents and students to gain access to these services
- act as a resource to schools and the community
- be available to discuss their role on the SEAC, board services for students identified as having learning disabilities
- as appropriate, undertake public education regarding learning disabilities and LDAO (for example, through seminars or workshops)

Rationale

SEAC representatives and alternates have detailed and up-to-date knowledge of the policies and procedures of the board. Parents must be able to access this information and be provided with assistance in accessing procedures to assist their children.

In addition, if appropriate in light of the wishes of the chapter and abilities of the representative or alternate, a representative or alternate may become involved in the public education process.

References

Education Act, s57.1

Regulation 464/97

LDAO bylaws and policies, including charter retention requirements

See also: Policy A11

Policy A12 – SEAC Representatives as Advocates

LDAO advocates that SEAC representatives and alternates to the greatest extent possible not act as advocates for parents or students at an IPRC or a special education appeal board hearing. Where it is necessary for a SEAC representative or alternate to act as an advocate at an IPRC, he or she shall not do so unless he or she has undertaken the advocacy training provided by LDAO.

Rationale

It is important that SEAC representatives and alternates avoid any situation which results in or suggests a conflict of interest between his or her duties to the SEAC and to parents or students in an individual case. As such, to the greatest extent possible, SEAC representatives and alternates should refrain from acting as advocates at an IPRC or appeal board. It is the responsibility of the chapter or satellite to ensure that other people are available and qualified to act as advocates.

LDAO recognizes that in some situations, it will be necessary for a SEAC representative or alternate to act as an advocate. Specialized advocacy training is required to act effectively as an advocate for parents or students. As such, a SEAC representative or alternate, as with any other person, may only act as an advocate after completing the advocacy training provided regularly by LDAO.

References

LDAO bylaws and policies, including charter retention requirements

See also: Policy A10