

CONSTITUTION
Special Needs Advisory Committee
Lester B. Pearson School Board

1. NAME

The name of the Committee shall be Special Needs Advisory Committee (SNAC) of the Lester B. Pearson School Board.

2. MEETING PLACE

SNAC meets at the School Board Head Office located at 1925 Brookdale Avenue, Dorval.

3. RECORDS

All official documents (e.g., accounting records, official minutes) shall be kept in Student Services on behalf of SNAC.

4. MEMBERSHIP

4.1 Composition:

The Committee's membership is in accordance with the stipulations of articles 185, 186, 187 of the Education Act regarding the establishment of an advisory committee for educating students with special needs.

SNAC shall be made up of not more than 13 voting members with the composition as follows: 8 parent members, 5 non-parent members, and up to 5 alternate parent members. All regular members are entitled to vote; alternate members will be permitted a vote if 1 or more of the parent members are not present at a meeting. Representatives from the Council of Commissioners and the Directorate also sit on the Committee but do not vote.

4.2 Election/Selection:

Parent membership will be decided at an Annual Public Meeting of all parents of students concerned held each fall (ideally in mid September) at the school board head office. If necessary, parents will solicit nominations and elect parent members. The term of office for parent members will consist of 4 2-year terms that are staggered such that there are 4 returning members in any given year. Alternate positions have a 1-year term.

All terms shall begin as of the date of the Annual Public Meeting in which the member is elected, and terminate as of the Annual General Meeting one year later for 1-year terms and two years later for 2-year terms. Any open positions will be filled by acclamation or election at the Annual Public Meeting.

In accordance with the Education Act, the names of the parents will be forwarded to the CPC each fall.

Non-parent members will be selected by the respective associations represented (e.g., P.T.U., P.A.S.A., I.A.S.S., P.E.P., W.I.A.I.H.). Non-parent members will normally serve a term of 1 year, or as determined by their association.

4.3 Resignation:

A member may resign in writing to the Chair of SNAC.

4.4 Removal:

Any parent member of SNAC may be removed for any of the following reasons:

- a) Conflict of interest and duties that are not declared to the Committee.
- b) Impeachment: Any member of the Committee may be removed prematurely by way of a resolution passed at a regular meeting or at a special meeting of parent representatives called for this purpose. The member in question must be notified in advance of said resolution or meeting for the purpose of defending his/her actions. A minimum of 4 parents must vote in favor of removal of the Committee member. The member in question may not vote on this resolution.

4.5 Vacancies:

At the next regularly scheduled meeting or at a special meeting called for this purpose, the Committee will elect to replace a member who has resigned or who has been removed. In the case of a parent member, the committee will replace the member by approaching the alternate members, contacting parents who attended the Annual General Meeting, or calling a meeting of interested parents of students concerned. In the case of other members, the appropriate association will be contacted to suggest a replacement.

5.0 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING (AGM):

The Annual General Meeting of SNAC shall be held each fall (ideally in mid September) and will be open to all parents of children with special needs within LBPSB. The meeting will be conducted by the Chair and the school board administrator representing the Director General. All guests will be encouraged to sign the attendance sheet, and provide their contact information.

At this meeting, the Committee composition will be explained and any open parent positions will be filled. Interested parents may nominate themselves for an open position; elections will be held should the situation warrant. The election will be conducted by the school board administrator representing the Director General and any attending School Board Commissioners. All nominees will be encouraged to sign the attendance sheet, and provide their contact information, in the event that a future vacancy need be filled.

6.0 MEETINGS:

Any interested parties/guests may attend a meeting or may attend on invitation of the Chair of SNAC. Meetings are open to the public but guests must sign the attendance sheet.

Regular meetings shall be held monthly, with the calendar of meetings to be set following the Annual Public Meeting. The calendar of meetings is published in the SNAC area of the LBPSB website.

The Chair may call a special meeting of the Committee.

6.1 Quorum

A minimum of 4 parent members is needed to reach Quorum.

Quorum is attained when 7 voting members are present, one of whom must be either the Chair or Vice-Chair.

7.0 DECISIONS:

Decisions and resolutions of the Committee shall be made by a simple majority of the votes cast in the affirmative. If a voting member chooses to abstain from a vote, they are considered "absent", and the votes of remaining voting members are counted in determining the results of the vote. In the event of a tie, the Chair may cast an additional deciding vote.

7.1 Email Voting:

When possible, voting should be done in person and during regular or special meetings. However, at the discretion of the Chair, SNAC shall be permitted to conduct votes via email. An initial email from the Chair should state the motion to be voted upon and the deadline for response and vote (minimum of 48 hours). Any correspondence via email between the members should be sent to ALL members and not only to the Chair. This includes, but is not limited to, questions, responses and votes. The lack of a response or vote by a SNAC member before the prescribed deadline shall be considered as an absence of said member for the purposes of quorum. The Chair must verify if quorum is reached. Rules for email decisions are identical to those at meetings. All email motions, approved or not, should be ratified at the following SNAC meeting and reported in the minutes.

8.0 PROCEDURES:

In all cases not provided for in this constitution, “Roberts Rules of Order” shall govern the proceedings of all meetings of the Committee.

9.0 REMUNERATION AND EXPENSES:

Members of SNAC shall not receive any remuneration for their services, except for the Commissioner members who receive remuneration as members of the Council of Commissioners, according to the stipend structure determined by the Ministry of Education and approved by Council. Expenses incurred relating to the operation of the Committee (e.g., printing, refreshments) can be reimbursed by presenting the receipts to the Treasurer. Special situations involving reimbursement (e.g., conference fees, babysitting) must be approved by committee discussion and resolution. If time does not permit, an email request can be submitted to the Chair and Treasurer, with the resolution being ratified at the next regular Committee meeting.

10.0 POWERS AND RESPONSIBILITIES:

SNAC is mandated by the Education Act (section 187) to engage in the following:

- a) advise the school board on a policy for the organization of educational services for students with special needs;
- b) advise the school board on the allocation of financial resources for the services intended for those students;
- c) may also advise the school board on the implementation of an individual education plan for a student with special needs.
- d) shall request from the school board information that is required to be reported to SNAC, as outlined in the Education Act, as follows:
 - i. Section 187.1: Each year, the school board shall inform SNAC of the amount of the financial resources available for services intended for those students and of the allocation of those resources in light of the policies defined by the Minister.
 - ii. Section 187.1: The school board shall report each year to the committee and the Minister on requests for reconsideration made under section 9 relating to services for students with special needs.
 - iii. Section 15: If a student is excused by the school board from compulsory school attendance, at the request of his parents and after consultation with SNAC, by reason of a physical or mental handicap which prevents him from attending school.

11.0 EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF SNAC:

The Executive Committee shall be composed of the Chair, Vice-Chair, Treasurer, Secretary and Special Needs Parent Commissioner.

Executive positions must be held by parent members and elected from the parent body (including alternates) at the first regular meeting of the committee. In the event of a tie, a second election shall be based on votes from both the parent body and the remaining voting non-parent members.

The term of office for an Executive Committee member, except the Special Needs Parent Commissioner, shall be one year and may be renewed. The term of office for the Special Needs Parent Commissioner shall be two years.

If a position on the Executive Committee becomes vacant, the Committee shall elect a replacement.

12.0 DUTIES OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE:

12.1 Chair:

The Chair shall preside over all regular and special meetings of SNAC. S/he shall establish the agenda of meetings. The Chair, or his/her designate is expected to attend any Board level and external committee meetings requiring SNAC representation (e.g., Education Committee, Council meetings, CPC meetings) and share information with the Committee. The Chair takes responsibility for soliciting input from the Committee and submitting responses to school board consultations.

12.2 Vice-Chair:

The Vice-Chair shall, in the absence of the Chair, perform the duties and exercise the powers of the Chair and shall perform any other duties as directed by SNAC.

12.3 Secretary:

The Secretary shall keep an accurate record of all SNAC meetings. S/he shall keep attendance of members and shall advise the Chair when any member has been absent for two consecutive meetings of the Committee. The secretary will work with Student Services personnel to maintain records of meetings.

12.4 Treasurer:

The Treasurer shall verify all accounts and provide punctual, financial statements at all regular SNAC meetings. The Treasurer will work with Student Services personnel concerning the reimbursement of allowable expenses.

12.5 Special Needs Parent Commissioner:

The Special Needs Parent Commissioner shall be a non-voting member of the school board's Council of Commissioners, and will endeavor to represent the needs of the special needs parents, as prescribed by the Education Act # 145. The Special Needs Parent Commissioner will also participate in other school-board based and external committees in this capacity. The term of office is 2 years.

13.0 EXTERNAL SNAC REPRESENTATIVES :

SNAC representatives may participate in external committees to bring information to that committee, and report back to SNAC. In addition, communication with the LBPSB special needs parent community is to be encouraged.

13.1 Central Parents' Committee:

Elected by and among the SNAC parent body, one SNAC representative will have full voting rights on the Central Parent's Committee, and an Alternate may be designated as a replacement.

13.2 Education Committee:

Elected by and among the SNAC parent body, one SNAC representative will have full voting rights on this standing committee of the Council of Commissioners.

13.3 Communications Liaison/Webmaster

The Communications Liaison will endeavor to increase communications between SNAC and the parents of students with special needs throughout LBPSB using various methods including: updating the SNAC Website, responding to SNAC emails, maintaining and operating the SNAC Mailing List, and social media outreach. The role of Communications Liaison may be a shared responsibility amongst several parent members.

13.4 QESEC:

SNAC has officially endorsed the establishment of QESEC (Quebec English Special Education Parent Commissioners) and supports its efforts to work in the spirit of collaboration with other English School Board members to support our most vulnerable students by sharing best practices among the Special Needs parent communities, and presenting a unified voice to the Ministry. The Special Needs Parent Commissioner is a voting member of QESEC, and the SNAC Chair and Vice Chair are invited to participate as non-voting members. The SNAC members of QESEC will endeavor to represent the views of the Special Needs parents throughout LBPSB.

14.0 AMENDMENTS TO THIS CONSTITUTION:

Modifications of this constitution must be made by resolution with the assent of the majority of voting Committee members.