

**Legal Basis****125A.24 PARENT ADVISORY COUNCILS.**

*In order to increase the involvement of parents of children with disabilities in district policy making and decision making, school districts must have a special education advisory council that is incorporated into the district's special education system plan.*

*(1) This advisory council may be established either for individual districts or in cooperation with other districts who are members of the same special education cooperative.*

*(2) A district may set up this council as a subgroup of an existing board, council, or committee.*

*(3) At least half of the designated council members must be parents of students with a disability. When a nonpublic school is located in the district, the council must include at least one member who is a parent of a nonpublic school student with a disability, or an employee of a nonpublic school if no parent of a nonpublic school student with a disability is available to serve. Each local council must meet no less than once each year. The number of members, frequency of meetings, and operational procedures are to be locally determined.*

**Statement of Purpose**

According to Minnesota Statute 125A.24, school districts must have a special education advisory council that is incorporated into the district's special education system plan. The purpose of the parent advisory council that is established through this statute is to:

- Increase the involvement of parents of children with disabilities in district policy-making and decision-making.
- Advise the district on decisions affecting and/or related to special education.
- Recommend ideas to be addressed by the district in their annual and long-term strategic planning.

The following may be addressed by the SEAC:

- Support of activities on behalf of students with disabilities.
- Development of cooperative relationships between general and special education.
- Training and support for parents, families and students with disabilities.
- Develop strategies so district and parent groups can work together to advocate for current and future legislation including, but not limited to, the implementation and/or reauthorization of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).
- Serve as a forum for the expression of concerns and recommendations pertaining to the education of students with disabilities in the district.
- Support and encourage involvement of families of learners with disabilities in their school and educational programs.
- Promote an attitude of respect towards all learners and an appreciation of their unique differences.

The purpose of Independent School District 200's Special Education Advisory Council is to represent the interests of district learners with disabilities from birth through age 21, by:

- Advising the ISD 200 Special Services Department on current issues, program needs, parental concerns and involvement, and department priorities;



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## Special Education Advisory Council (SEAC)

- Serving as an advocate for high quality special education programs;
- Promoting communication between family, school and community;
- Actively seeking input from students and parents;
- Hosting many informational workshops for parents, students, and community members on current special education topics and services.

We do this by:

- Informing and educating parents, school staff, students and community members through workshops, websites, and printed materials.
- Providing opportunities for parents and caregivers to connect with the schools, community resources and each other.
- Promoting collaboration as a means to improve the education process for all learners.
- Influencing change, policy and procedures through researching needs and advocating for solutions.

### Membership

The Special Education Advisory Council shall consist of 10 council members: Assistant Director of Special Services, ISD 200 Principal or other ISD 200 administrator, five parent representatives (one non-public parent) and two special education teachers. The Director of Special Services will also serve as an ex-officio member of the council and will ensure that the legal requirements of the SEAC meeting are being met. A Secretary will be named or appointed, and that member will be responsible for taking meeting notes.

### Terms of Office

Parent, teacher, & principal/administrator council members shall be appointed, by the Director of Special Services, to a term of two years and may serve a maximum of three terms. The Director and Assistant Director of Special Services will serve as ongoing members of the SEAC.

### Attendance

In order to promote cohesiveness and enable all members of the council to be part of an informed decision-making process, members are encouraged to attend each of the council meetings. The Director of Special Services will contact any member who misses 2 meetings in any given year to determine if that member remains interested in council membership.

If a member is unable to attend a council meeting, it is expected that they contact the Special Services Department at 651-480-7016 before 12:30 p.m. on the day of the meeting.

In case of inclement weather, a council meeting may be canceled. Every effort will be made to contact council members via a phone call to alert them to the cancellation. Please also check your emails for cancellations.

**Meetings**

The Special Education Advisory Council will meet two times a year within the District and one time a year within the Dakota County SEAC (comprised of nine member districts). Meetings will be limited, as much as possible, to two hours in length.

**Discussion and Information Sharing**

In order to facilitate discussion among all council members, all members will be asked to limit their comments so as not to prohibit others from speaking. Agendas will be timed so that meetings can be efficient and end on time. If a particular agenda item requires more discussion or more information is needed to make an informed decision, an agenda item may be carried over to the next meeting.

If a council member wishes to bring an item to the council for discussion, they are encouraged to provide the membership with all necessary information to aid in the discussion. If more information is needed, as stated above, the member may be asked to bring it to the next meeting and discussion will be tabled until that time.

If a member wishes the council to discuss an issue that requires outside expertise, they are encouraged to contact the chair prior to the meeting so that the item can be placed on the next agenda and need be, an appropriate speaker can be contacted.