



# ORIENTATION INFORMATION

## *Special Education Advisory Council*

PUBLISHED BY NEBRASKA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION OFFICE OF SPECIAL EDUCATION, JULY 2021

P.O. Box 94987 | LINCOLN, NE 68509-4987

(402) 471-2471 | FAX: (402) 471-5022

FUNDED BY NEBRASKA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION FEDERAL GRANT H027A150079

THIS DOCUMENT WAS PREPARED TO ASSIST SPECIAL EDUCATION ADVISORY COUNCIL MEMBERS AND TO PROVIDE SPECIAL EDUCATION ADVISORY COUNCIL INFORMATION TO INTERESTED PERSONS.

**SPED**  
SPECIAL EDUCATION



## SEAC PRIORITIES\*

*2020 through 2025*

1. To participate in the development, review, and revision of The State Systemic Improvement Plan Process with input on the Targeted Improvement Plan implementation at the local level to improve results for students with disabilities in the following areas:
  - Impact Area 1: Improving Academic Achievement, Functional Outcomes and Child Outcomes in Natural and Inclusive Environments
  - Impact Area 2: Improving Communication and Relationships Among Families, Schools, Communities and Agencies
  - Impact Area 3: Improving Transitions from the Early Development Network to Preschool and School to Adult Living
2. To review the effectiveness of the current State Performance Plan (SPP) through the analysis of data in the Annual Performance Report (APR) to determine that Nebraska is demonstrating continuous improvement in the compliance and results indicators. To inform the NDE in the development and improvement of The LEA level Determinations.
3. To monitor state and federal legislation, including the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) to assure the linkage between ESSA and IDEA.
4. To inform NDE – The Office of Special Education in initiatives that are relevant to both federal and state priorities within special education, specific to:
  - Health/Medical
  - Family and Professionals Support
  - Discipline/Behavior - - - Suspension/Expulsion
  - Mental Health
  - Social/Emotional Learning
  - Transition Supports

*\* Approved by SEAC – August 2019*

## **SEAC MEMBERSHIP REQUIREMENTS**

Excerpts from the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act – IDEA Regulatory Authority for Committee

### *Sec. 1412(21)(A) State Advisory Panel*

- A. The State has established and maintains an advisory panel for the purpose of providing policy guidance with respect to special education and related services for children with disabilities in the State.

## **COMMITTEE DUTIES**

### *Sec. 1412(21)(D)*

- (D) The State Advisory Panel shall –
  - (ii) Advise the State education agency of unmet needs within the state in the education of children with disabilities;
  - (iii) comment publicly on the state plan and rules or regulations proposed for issuance by the state regarding the education of children with disabilities;
  - (iv) advise the State educational agency in developing evaluations and reporting on data to the Secretary under section 618.
  - (v) advise the State educational agency in developing corrective action plans to address findings identified in Federal monitoring reports under this part; and
  - (vi) advise the State educational agency in developing and implementing policies relating to the coordination of services for children with disabilities.

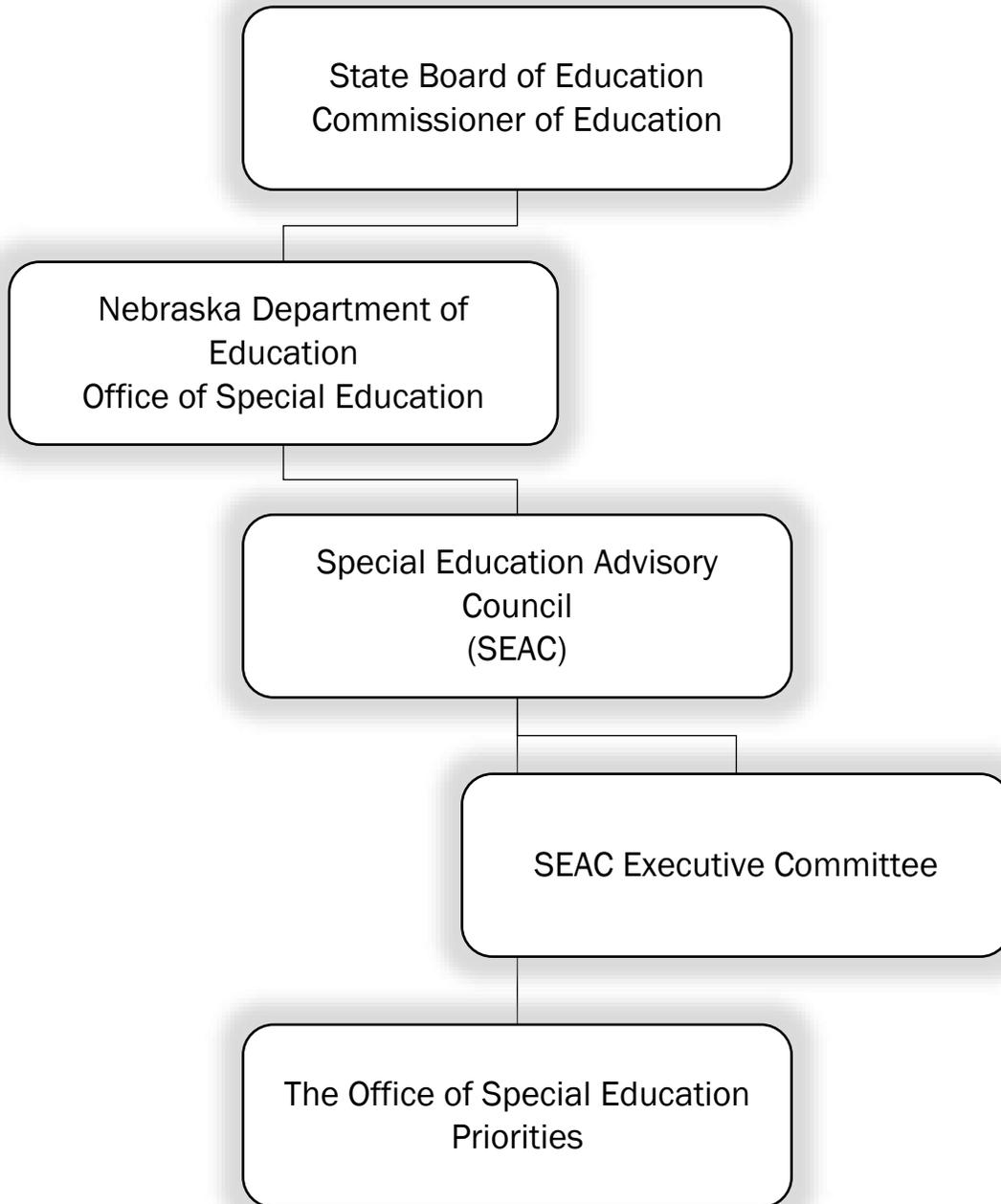
## CATEGORIES OF REQUIRED REPRESENTATION

### *Sec. 1412(21)(B)*

- (B) Membership – Such advisory panel shall consist of members appointed by the Governor, or any other official authorized under State law to make such appointments, be representative of the State population, and be composed of individuals involved in, or concerned with, the education of children with disabilities, including –
- (i) Parents of children with disabilities (ages birth through 26); or individuals with disabilities
  - (ii) Teachers;
  - (iii) representatives of institutions of higher education that prepare special education and related services personnel;
  - (iv) State and local educational officials who carry out activities under
  - (v) Homeless Assistance Act;
  - (vi) administration of programs for children with disabilities;
  - (vii) representatives of other State agencies involved in the financing or delivery of related services to children with disabilities;
  - (viii) representatives of private schools and public charter schools;
  - (ix) not less than one representative of a vocational, community, or business organization concerned with the provision of transition services to children with disabilities; and
  - (x) a representative from the State child welfare agency responsible for foster care; and
  - (xi) representatives from the State juvenile and adult corrections agencies.

*Special Rule* – a majority of the members of the panel shall be individuals with disabilities or parents of children with disabilities.

# COUNCIL STRUCTURE



# COUNCIL ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITIES

## *Advisory Role*

The role of the Special Education Advisory Council is to gather information based on research and data available through the Nebraska Department of Education to become knowledgeable about current issues in the delivery of Special Education services to children with disabilities.

Members also seek information from the perspective of their constituency group. Based on these factors, SEAC serves in an advisory capacity to the Nebraska State Board of Education. The responsibility of the Council members is to advise (i.e. inform, counsel, recommend, suggest, or guide) the Department of Education, not to advocate for an individual position. Recommendations are made by SEAC for consideration and possible action by the State Board.

Expectations for members during Council meetings include the following:

- Attend and participate in the entire meeting.
- Respect differences in opinions.
- Use “People First” language.
- Limit discussion to items on the proposed agenda. (Additional items may be added to the agenda by a majority vote of the Council at the beginning of each meeting.)
- Gather information from and provide information to constituency groups represented.

## *Effective Membership*

To be effective, SEAC members need to have:

- History of association with special education programs;
- The capability to gather concerns from and to report back to organizations or constituencies which are involved in the various aspects of the provision of special education services.
- A broad view of the system of special education services; and
- The ability to make time available to actively participate in at least four (4) Special Education Advisory Council meetings each year.

## *Terms of Office*

Members are appointed to the Council for a term of four years beginning in September of the first year and ending on August 31st of the fourth year. Members serve for one full consecutive four-year term. Upon recommendation by the Executive Committee, members may request to apply for a second term.

Any member appointed by the State Board to replace a resigning member will complete the resigning member’s remaining term on the Council. At the end of that remaining term and on

the recommendation of the Executive Committee, the State Board may choose to reappoint that member for an additional full four-year term

### *Council Leadership*

A five-member SEAC Executive Committee will be elected from the Council membership to include one member from each Council term as well as the outgoing SEAC Chair. When elected to the Executive Committee the elected members term will become a 5-year term with the year precluding the 4-year membership term. An Executive Committee member is elected from the new members at the second meeting of the year by a vote of the entire Council. To provide continuity, Executive Committee members serve throughout their tenure on SEAC. The most senior Committee member is the Chair for the Council, conducting meetings and calling the Executive Committee together when needed. The Executive Committee meets face-to-face or through conference calls before each SEAC meeting to develop the agenda and consider possible Council action.

### *Open Meeting Act*

SEAC meetings will be conducted in accordance with the Nebraska Open Meetings Act (NRS 84-1407 through 1414). Public participation is allowed during the designated comment period on the agenda.

### *SEAC Committee Membership*

SEAC members are encouraged to serve on SEAC Committees when deemed appropriate. The committees may be comprised of parents and practitioners from across the state, and could potentially meet throughout the school year, focusing on activities and initiatives related to the committee's assigned area of emphasis.

SEAC Committees will be created upon need and based on the NDE Special Education Office Priorities.

### *Attendance*

If any member misses three meetings in a given year, the Executive Committee may forward a recommendation to the State Board that the member be replaced. Any member unable to be in attendance for a regular meeting may send a substitute. A substitute will not be permitted voting privileges. Substitutes shall represent the same constituency as the Council member being replaced. Members may attend meetings virtually when allowed.

### *Meeting Schedule*

Meeting dates are determined during the last meeting of each term year for the following term year. The Council meets four times each year. Additional meetings may be called by the Executive Committee if necessary to conduct Council business.

### *Cancellations for Inclement Weather*

When the weather creates hazardous driving conditions, SEAC meetings may be canceled. Cancellations will be announced, whenever possible, the day before the meeting. An e-mail will be sent as soon as a cancellation is determined to be necessary. Be certain to check with the Council Facilitator or the NDE Special Education Office at 402-471-2471 if there is any question about the meeting being canceled

### *Robert's Rules of Order*

SEAC uses Robert's Rules of Order to propose motions, discuss motions, and vote. Roll call votes are conducted for all action taken by the Council. Each member's vote is recorded in Council minutes.

### *Taking Action*

When SEAC is voting on a motion, a roll call vote will be taken by the SEAC Recorder. Appropriate votes include "yes," "no," or "abstain." Abstain should be used when there is a conflict of interest and when choosing not to vote.

Following the making of a motion, the second, and discussion, the Council may not yet be ready to vote. If more information is needed to make a decision, a motion can be made to:

- Refer the question to the Executive Committee or another appropriate group;
- Move to table the motion until a specified time;
- Amend the motion to add a certain provision or conditions under which it would be acceptable; or
- Move to postpone consideration of the motion indefinite

To end the discussion and speed up the action, a motion can be made to:

- Limit debate,
- Call the question, or
- Close debate.

### *Preparing for Council Meetings*

Information pertaining to the meeting will be shared electronically as it becomes available via email, calendar invites, and the SEAC Google Site (<https://sites.google.com/education.ne.gov/seac/home>).

Information will include:

- Agenda
- Agenda Support Items (when appropriate or available)
- SEAC Committee(s) Reports (when available)
- Minutes from the previous meeting
- Due Process Update

When possible, please review the materials provided before each meeting. This will help ensure that the Council offers quality advice to the State Board of Education and Special Education Office. If you have questions, comments, or concerns, contact the SEAC Facilitator or a member of the Executive Committee.

### *Claiming Expenses*

Voting SEAC members who live outside of Lincoln (60 miles or more one way) are eligible for reimbursement of their travel expenses. When applicable the SEAC Recorder will create an expense claim form for the eligible members.

- SEAC members are reimbursed at the current Department of Education Per-Diem rates.

### **LODGING**

- Lodging arrangements for eligible members are made by the SEAC Recorder.

### **TRANSPORTATION**

- Automobile mileage - reimbursed at the approved state rate for SEAC members. Staff members will verify mileage claims as legitimate according to the most direct route, or detour information available from the SEAC member.
- Privately owned airplane – reimbursed with **PRIOR** approval of the Commissioner of Education.
- Personally rented airplane – reimbursed actual cost with **PRIOR** approval of the Commissioner.
- Airfare, bus, or train tickets purchased by the SEAC member – reimbursed with **PRIOR** approval. Original receipt is required for reimbursement.

### **PARKING**

- If you park in a city of Lincoln garage (city garages have circular orange Park & Go signs), your ticket will be validated at the meeting and you will not be charged when leaving the garage.
- Valet Parking – NDE is UNABLE to reimburse for valet parking.
- If you must park elsewhere while attending the meeting and the parking fee is \$10.00 or greater, a receipt will be required for reimbursement.

Expense Reimbursement Documents along with all-expense documentation will be sent to eligible members after each quarterly meeting via Adobe EchoSign for approval via certified signature. When necessary members may submit documentation during the SEAC meeting or mail to:

Special Education Office  
Nebraska Department of Education  
PO Box 94987  
Lincoln, NE 68509-4987  
Attn: Leslie Galloway