

UGDSB Safe Equitable and Inclusive Schools Steering Committee

Membership and Responsibilities

BACKGROUND

In 2012 the Ministry of Education passed Bill 13 - the Accepting Schools Act. This Act requires that all students should feel safe at school and deserve a positive school climate that is inclusive and accepting, regardless of race, ancestry, place of origin, colour, ethnic origin, citizenship, creed, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, age, marital status, family status or disability.

In the fall of 2012, the UGDSB established a Safe, Equitable and Inclusive Schools Steering Committee. The first meeting of the committee was held on December 4th, 2012 with 3 main mandates:

- To receive updates from and provide feedback to staff working committees related to Safe and Inclusive Schools and Equity.
- To receive updates on Ministry Initiatives and Board Policies related to Safe and Inclusive Schools and Equity.
- To meet with the community to receive feedback on our Board's policies related to Safe and Inclusive Schools, Equity and Religious Accommodation Guidelines.

The SEISSC committee was to act as an umbrella committee to receive reports and provide feedback to the following staff working committees:

- Character Education
- Safe, Equitable and Inclusive Education
- Whole School Approach

The committee met 3-4 times annually and was made up of the following participants:

- Two trustees,
- Safe Schools / Equity Superintendent,
- 2 Parent Representatives (Parent Involvement Committee/ Special Education Advisory Committee),
- 2 Student representatives,
- Staff representation (Equity Officer, Aboriginal Lead, Special Education Lead, Communications Department, Community Use of Schools, Safe Schools representatives, Program Department)

RECOMMENDATIONS – June 2020

At the June 23rd meeting of the Board of Trustees it required “That the Safe Equitable and Inclusive Schools Steering Committee meet to discuss the Terms of Reference, the process of recruiting agency/organization members/voices, and discuss and come to consensus on Committee membership, terms, voting rights, and the reporting process.”

SEISSC is mandated as an advisory committee through Bill 13 – The Accepting Schools Act as a standing committee of each school board

ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITIES – SEISSC WILL

- Play a significant role in the review of the Equity and Inclusive Education Policy, Bullying Prevention Plan, Mental Health Plan, Equity Plan and Safe Schools Policy
- Bring and receive updates and information from community groups with regard to Safe, Equitable and Inclusive environments in order to advise board plans and policies
- Respond to the needs of all students to ensure a safe, equitable and inclusive school environment
- Use WHY (previous Climate Survey) and diversity data to identify needs and desired outcomes with regard to Safe, Equitable and Inclusive school environments
- Acquire and maintain a knowledge of the needs of all groups as it relates to a safe, equitable and inclusive school environment
- Inform the community association/agencies and members about SEISSC activities/information
- Provide input to the chair for the SEISSC agenda

MEETING FREQUENCY

- The SEISSC will meet four times a year at the beginning of each of the following months (October, January, April, June)
- Meetings may be called by the Chair between these times, as required by matters that arise within the community

MEMBERSHIP OF SEISSC

- Members are appointed by the Trustees for a 4-year term and are formed every 4 years, to coincide with the terms of the Board of Trustees

- When selecting members for the SEISSC Committee every effort will be made to ensure that the Board's geographical diversity is equitably represented

Membership includes

- 2 Trustees
- 1 Student Trustee
- Representatives from community associations/agencies serving the UGDSB region
- 1 representative from each of the First Nations Metis Inuit Advisory Committee, Parent Involvement Committee and Special Education Advisory Committee
- Board personnel - Equity Lead, First Nation Metis Inuit Lead, Mental Health Lead
- Superintendent with Equity and Inclusion portfolio or Designate
- Other staff as deemed appropriate based on the topics being covered in each meeting, additional staff expertise will be included as required
- Administrative support (preparation of agendas, minutes, reports)

CHAIR OF SEISSC

- A Member of SEISSC
- Not Staff or Trustee
- Elected by SEISSC members
- Presides at all meetings

VICE CHAIR OF SEISSC

- A Member of SEISSC
- Not Staff or Trustee
- Elected by SEISSC members
- Presides at meetings when chair unavailable

PROCESS FOR ELECTING CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR

- Elected during the first meeting following the inaugural Board meeting
- Two-year term, with no consecutive terms
- Nominations can be made by any voting member of SEISSC
- Each nomination requires a seconder by a voting member of SEISSC
- Each member may make only one nomination
- Self-nomination is permitted
- Each nominee is allowed up to 5 minutes to outline their reasons for standing for office
- Voting is done by ballot

- Superintendent and Board personnel collect and count the ballots
- Majority of votes becomes Chair and Vice Chair
- In the event of a tie, a ballot for each candidate is placed in a ballot box, and the Superintendent does a blind draw for the winner
- In the case of a tie with more than two applicants, another vote will be called for those members who have tied
- If the Chair or Vice-Chair position become vacant during the term, an election for the replacement will take place at the meeting following the announcement of the vacancy

PROCESS FOR RECRUITING NEW MEMBERS FOR SEISSC

- Place ad in local papers to invite applications
- Send letters to local community associations/agencies serving the UGDSB region
- Post notices of vacancies for at least 60 days on Board website
- Send a letter to FNMIAC, PIC and SEAC inviting them to select one-member representative and one alternative

PROCESS FOR FILLING MID-TERM VACANICES

- If a vacancy is from a community association/agency, the alternate may be used, and if no alternate, the association can nominate a new representative

REPORTING PROCEDURES

- Meeting minutes will be taken at each of the quarterly SEISSC meeting, posted on the Board website and presented to the Board of Trustees at the next subsequent Board meeting