



**Saint Paul Public Schools
Special Education
Advisory Council**

Sec. 8 Minnesota Statutes 2004, section 125A.24 (PACs)

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

Attendees: Amy Eelkema Baxter, Amy Johnson, Ashley Ward, Brenda Natala, Calton Sims, Dana Abrams, Heather Ninow, Jackie Kelly, Laura, Mayra Mariscal, Melissa Weeks, Michele Silvester, Mouakong Vue, Nicole Warner, Oanh Nguyen, Rachael Sewell, RaShonda Muhammad, Tonya Long.

18 people: 7 of 10 members, 4 staff, 7 guests

Special Education Advisory Council (SEAC) Minutes Approved

Date: 06-06-22

Time: 6:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.

Location: Virtual meeting via Zoom

Link to [SEAC June 2022 Agenda](#)

5:50 p.m. Optional Pre Meeting Chatter - Join us if you can for an informal check in.

6:00 p.m. Housekeeping, Welcome & Introductions.

6:07 p.m. Melissa Weeks went over some housekeeping items. Introductions/ Share/ Connect: Your name, your child, why you are here.

6:10 p.m. Approve [SEAC May 2022 Minutes](#)

6:10 p.m. Rachael Sewell moved to approve SEAC meeting minutes, Amy Eelkema Baxter seconded. Minutes were approved and passed.

6:15 p.m. Meet Dana Abrams, Family Engagement and Community Partnerships Director

6:15 p.m. Dana introduced herself as the Director of the Family Engagement office.

6:25 p.m. [Critical Ethnic Studies Overview](#), Mouakong Vue, Ethnic Studies Program Manager in the Ethnic Studies Department in OTL.

6:36 p.m. Mouakong informed SEAC of the new Critical Ethnic Studies course in SPPS.

On December 14, 2021, the Board of Education passed a new graduation requirement for Saint Paul Public Schools. Critical Ethnic Studies (CES) is a required course for all SPPS students beginning with the class of 2025.

Ethnic Studies means the critical and interdisciplinary study of race, ethnicity, and indigeneity with a focus on the experiences and perspectives of people of color within and beyond the United States. ES analyzes the ways in which race and racism have been and continue to be powerful social, cultural, and political forces, and their connections to other axes of stratification, including gender, class, sexuality, legal status and disability. Analyzes the intersectionality of identity, including race, ethnicity, gender identity, class, sexuality, and belief systems, amongst others. As a community-focused program, we highlight the local narratives and history of Saint

Paul-Minneapolis and greater Minnesota, and make connections with national and global events.

Critical Ethnic Studies is an interdisciplinary course that examines students' identity, heritage, culture and communities in relation to various power structures, forms of oppression and inequalities that have an impact on their lives. With an emphasis on stories and lived experiences of Black, Indigenous and People of Color in the United States, the course explores the collective struggles, resilience and triumphs of their communities.

Resources:

Website: [Ethnic Studies Department](#)

[Critical Ethnic Studies Framework SY 2021 - 2022](#)

[Ethnic Studies Collaboration Circle](#)

[CES Student Survey: 21-22](#)

[SPPS Ethnic Studies Summer Institute](#)

Contact:

Ethnic Studies Department

Mouakong Vue, Ethnic Studies Program Manager, mouakong.vue@spps.org

Xue Xiong, Ethnic Studies Specialist, xue.xiong@spps.org

Action item: CES Curriculum Suggestions

Together with SPPS students, families, teachers, staff and community members, we can create a shared knowledge on Critical Ethnic Studies course topics, teaching resources, lesson plans and activities. We highly encourage curriculum suggestions from SPPS students, teachers, staff, parents/ guardians, alum, and/or programs that directly serve SPPS students and families.

CES Curriculum Suggestion Form: Click [here](#).

([Spanish](#), [Hmong](#), [Karen](#) and [Somali](#) Versions Available)

6:55 p.m. Special Education, Brenda Natala, Special Education Director-

● ASD/DCD Program Update

SPPS is in process to have Elementary classrooms be more cross categorical, there are a couple of reasons.

- Moving from separate classrooms/programs to cross categorical services for elementary/secondary schools
- Similar curriculum, instruction, professional development
- Classrooms may be determined by student communication/cognitive needs rather than label

● SEAC Report Response Follow Up-

In January 2020 SEAC shared their [18-19 SEAC Report](#) with the Special Education Director, Superintendent, BOE members and District Staff as well as hosted a World Cafe to hear feedback about their report, in March 2020 Marcy Doud, Special Education Director gave her [Response to SEAC Report](#), the next day SPPS schools were closed due to a teacher's strike, the following week SPPS was closed due to the Pandemic.

Recommendations: 2, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8

Transition Toolkits:

Pacer Center's

[MN Secondary Transition Toolkit for Families: A Guide to Preparing Your Child with a Disability for Life Beyond High School](#)

Ramsey County Disability Services & Supports'

[Disability Hub's CtLC](#)

[Arc's Guide to Transition Checklist](#)

[Pacer's Ntl. Parent Center on Transition and Employment](#)

7:25 p.m. Review 2021- 2022 SEAC Report -

The forum allows for the expression of concerns and recommendations pertaining to the education of students with disabilities in SPPS. SEAC members strive to discuss & advise on issues of broad importance to SPPS as a whole. Personal stories & reflection can be used to inform the group's understanding of broad issues. Perspectives and confidentiality will be respected. Members are encouraged to bring forth stories of what is working well, concerns, and or recommendations for discussion within the group. We respectfully ask that names of people are not used.

Action Item: Review 2021-2022 SEAC Report and share feedback with Co-Chairs or Jackie @ jackie.kelly@spps.org

7:55 p.m. Meeting Wrap Up -

- Announcement, Event or Resource to share

Resources:

- [Special Edition Safe Summer Nights](#) June 7 at Focus Beyond, food, giveaways, fire trucks, bike giveaway, adaptive activities.
- [True Friends](#) Camp, Respite, Therapy & Adaptive Riding
- [4H Club House](#)
- [Pacer Center's Inclusive Recreation, Adaptive Sports and Summer Camps](#)
- [Pacer's Symposium on Children's Mental Health & Learning Disabilities](#) is back! August 16.
- [SPPS Resources for Families of Students with Disabilities](#)
- [Protected Tomorrows](#) Parent University
- [Dakota County Disability Supports for Young Adults](#)
- [MN Autism Resource Portal- Training and Events](#) monthly events
- [Mad Hatter Wellness](#)- supporting Sex Ed for All
- [Portico Healthnet](#)- bilingual (Eng, Span, Somali, Vietnamese and Hmong) MN Sure navigators support enrollment in MN healthcare programs
- [Educational Opportunity Center](#) Free services to help people apply for postsecondary programs, career decision making, apply for financial aid, search for scholarships. Mission to support low income and 1st generation adults 19+

8:00 p.m. Adjourn

8:00 p.m. Meeting adjourned

8:05 p.m. SEAC Executive

Next SEAC meeting: Monday, September 12, 2022 6-8 p.m.