



**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: Ashley Ward, Brenda Natala, Jackie Kelly, Larry Wren, Lisa Carrigan, Mayra Mariscal, Melissa Weeks, Michele Silvester, Nicole Warner, Rachael Sewell, RaShonda Muhammad, Uriah Ward.

12 people: 4 of 10 members, 4 staff, 4 guests

Special Education Advisory Council (SEAC) Minutes Approved

Date: 04-11-22

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

Location: Virtual meeting via Zoom

[SEAC April 2022 Agenda](#)

[Meeting slides](#)

[Meeting audio recording](#)

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.

6:05 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 [March minutes](#)-

The minutes were not approved due to the lack of a quorum.

Action: approve March minutes at May meeting.

6:15 p.m. Inclusion Activity "My Vision for a Good IEP"-

6:05 p.m. Brenda Natala asked members and guests what the vision of a good IEP meeting: What you want to happen and What you don't want to happen. Using Charting the LifeCourse tool which is for planing throughout all life stages. Helps create a vision for what you want.

To be used with teacher training, mentoring and coaching. The objective is to have families feeling like valued members of the IEP.

What you want: For members to share clear expectations of how meeting will go, who will be there and what their role is, clear roles. Team listens to me. Efficient/effective solution/s to situations that provide clarity. Staff that can support families before meeting in order for parents to feel they understand and will be comfortable during meeting. Being cognizant that parents may still be struggling with diagnosis. The meeting to build a strong relationship. Easing difficult conversations by staff prepping before meeting. Always sharing some positives about student. Creating the feeling we are all on the same team. Transition IEP that has multiple goals: Plan A

(student's first choice and possibly most difficult to achieve) , B and C (easier goal to achieve) with some steps to achieve goals.

What you don't want: To feel I wasn't heard. Teacher not allowing parent perspective to be heard. Not allowing parents to share recommendations. Not allowing families to create solutions. Meetings that create feeling there is a parent team and school team. Transition IEP often have one goal that is too broad. Feeling like there are no positives shared about child.

Action: Brenda will be using input for new teacher trainings, mentoring and coaching.

6:30 p.m. Special Education, Brenda Natala, Director Specialized Services

- **Covid Updates**

No change in masking policy in March, next Board Education Meeting 4/19/2022.

- **Legislative Update-Action Alert**

The House omnibus education finance bill would allocate \$1.1 billion to early education through grade 12 for fiscal year 2023 and \$2.2 billion for fiscal years 2024 and 2025. The Senate unfortunately did not put forward any new funding for priorities such as special education or English Learner programs. The Senate bill would allocate only \$30.7 million for fiscal year 2023 and \$1.4 million for fiscal years 2024 and 2025. Often Special Education funding comes from city property taxes.

Action: SPPS Policy Liaison, Mary Gilbert, shared legislative information and action items for members interested via email with letter templates for follow up with legislators. Encouraging the Senate from outside of the city to vote for special education funding.

- **2018-19 SEAC Report & March 2020 Response Follow Up**

6:32 p.m. Jackie Kelly. The objective of looping back to 2018-19 SEAC Report is to provide information as to where we are now with recommendations. Why is this report significant? SEAC does not typically write an annual report, SEAC has not typically had an administrative response, SEAC's reports have not typically aligned with the District's Strategic Plan.

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. SEAC's 2018-19 Report was well received and the Response detailed the District's support and action items.

SEAC Recommendation #1: District continues to commit to collaborate with Ramsey County or other relevant organizations to improve service delivery for SPPS students who happen to need Special Education transition services.

Response: The District agrees to commit to continued collaboration with Ramsey County and other organizations to support students in special education who are in need of transition services. This includes connecting with local colleges and employment sites to develop partnerships.

- **MDE Pilot Project**

6:40 p.m. Lisa Carrigan presented the project. Person Centered Planning Pilot Project

Purpose: Gather information between agencies to gather data to be used to increase collaboration. 2 Year Project- cut short by COVID added 1 more year. VRS, State, County, Health, Schools (results pending 6/30). Tools and resources given to use in IEP meetings. Discussion on how other team members can be a part of using the tools. Identified 21 family

members to help give feedback. Changed during COVID. Working with our school social workers to get a better system in place. School and County trying not to duplicate services. County presented on 3/4/2022 to staff with resources. Discussion of a tool called the Vault. Feedback regarding IEP Process in general how to make it better. Transition to Adulthood-Student Led IEP's. Charting the Life Course-Good Day Bad Day. Pathways to ASD Services and Supports

Collaborations: Ramsey County Disabilities Services and Supports Advisory Committee attended by Jackie Kelly and Amy Eelkema, Office of College and Career Readiness. Gateway to College, PSEO, Focus Beyond Transition Program.

Employment Partnerships, STEPS. Favorite resource: [Minnesota Career Wheel](#),

New Opportunities: Miracle League (September 2022), Fresh Grounds Coffee Shop, Garden Grant.

SEAC Recommendations #6: SEAC collaborate with District and Assistant Superintendent to develop resources about Special Education transition services over the 2019-2020 school year. Create a central location for resources about in school, out of school time and peer to peer resources. Create a method of communicating about resources to families. Make sure families are informed and aware of resources. Consider a Transition Road Map or Tool kit for families.

Response: The OSS Administrative team will develop resources on Schoology for staff regarding transition. They will work with a subgroup of SEAC members to develop a "toolkit" for families. Both resources will be made available on the district website.

- **Lisa's favorite Transition Toolkit:**
 - [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' Recommended Transition Toolkit:**
 - [Disability Hub's CtLC](#)
 - [Arc's Guide to Transition Checklist](#)
 - [Pacer's Ntl. Parent Center on Transition and Employment](#)

Action: Follow up on remaining recommendations in May.

- **Suspension and Dismissal data and process, Sept 2021-March 2022, Sept 2019-March 2020.**

The Minnesota Department of Education reviews disproportionality in discipline data.

Indicator 4 measures disproportionate rates of suspension/expulsion for children with IEPs.

SPPS is has significant disproportionality for the following student groups:

- Black or African American (previous 4 years)
- Two or more races (new in 2021)

In 2021-2022 Black students who are in special ed were 4.3 times as likely as other students to receive 1 or more days of suspension or dismissal as other students, and students who are not in special ed were 2.5 times as likely as other students to receive 1 or more days of suspension or dismissal as other students.

American Indian students in special ed are 2.3 times more likely to be suspended.

Hispanic students in special ed are 1.5 times more likely to be suspended.

2021-22 compared to 2019-20 September through March:

- General education suspensions are higher in 21-22
- Special education suspensions are lower in 21-22
 - [SPPS Website: Rights & Responsibilities](#)
 - [Rights & Responsibilities Handbook 2021-22 \(Full Handbook\)](#)

- **Positive School Culture.**
 - [Positive Behavioral Interventions & Supports](#)
 - [Restorative Practices](#)
 - [Social-Emotional Learning](#)
 - [Mental Health & Wellness](#)

7:45 p.m. SEAC Forum-

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.

7:55 p.m. Meeting Wrap Up -

- Announcement, Event or Resource to share

[MN Autism Resource Symposium](#)

[Charting the LifeCourse Training](#)

[Down Syndrome Assoc. Of MN Statewide Conference](#)

[DiscoverAbilities Adaptive Sports Clinics](#)

[The Ultimate Resource Guide for STEM Students with Autism](#)

[SPPS Resources for Families of Students with Disabilities](#)

[Dakota County Disability Supports for Young Adults](#)

[Pacer's ExCITE Camp](#)

- Tip to share on SEAC Facebook Group

8:00 p.m. Adjourn

8:00 p.m. Meeting adjourned

8:20 p.m. SEAC Executive

Next SEAC meeting: Monday, May 2nd, 2022 6-8 p.m.