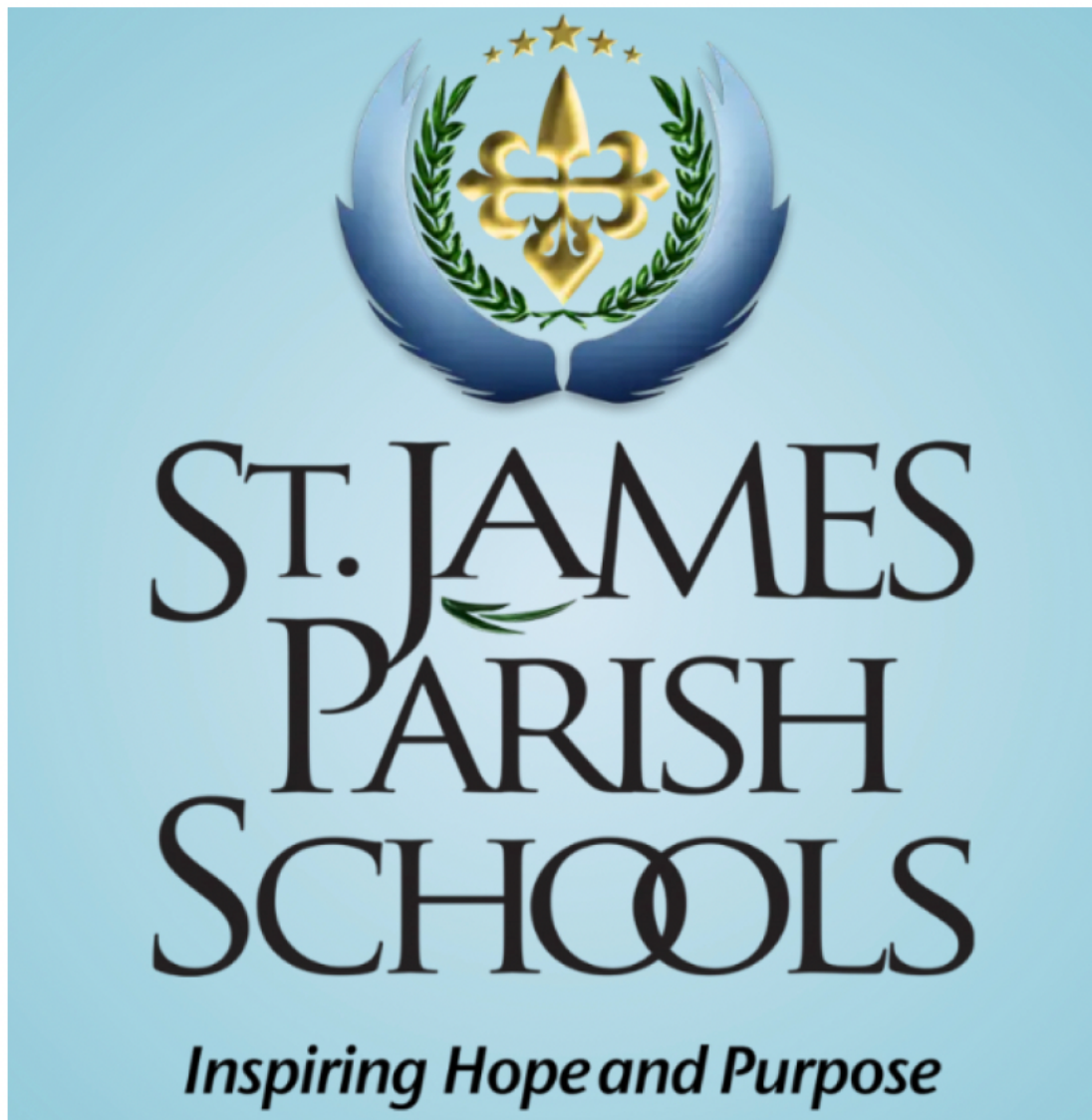


St. James Parish

2023-2024 Annual Special Education Advisory Council (SEAC) Report



5/27/2024

What is the purpose of St. James Parish's Special Education Advisory Council?

R.S. 17:1944 requires local public school systems to create a special education advisory council to provide advice and feedback regarding special education policies, procedures, and resources. The council shall also engage in outreach activities to the community at large to increase the level of knowledge, support, and collaboration with respect to special education.

Members and Roles

Member	Role
Dr. Melissa Cook	Parent
Ashley Harrell (presently); Brittney Trosclair (formerly)	Parent
Keion Laurant	Parent
Ciara Gardner	Parent
Kimberly Notto-Lockley (presently); Heidi Trosclair (formerly)	SPED Compliance Supervisor
Brooklyn Bourgeois and Kaiyah Bejoile	High School Students with a Disability
Senecca Boudreaux	Director of Special Education - Chair

The SEAC was unable to secure someone from an outside entity that services students with disabilities.

2023-2024 Meetings, Agendas, Minutes

September 7, 2023 at 5:30 PM	SJP Board Room	<u>Agendas:</u> https://www.stjames.k12.la.us/cms/One.aspx?portalId=3331997&pageId=49197671
November 8, 2023 at 5:30 PM	SJP Board Room	
January 10, 2024 at 5:30 PM	SJP Board Room	<u>Minutes:</u> https://www.stjames.k12.la.us/cms/One.aspx?portalId=3331997&pageId=48393274
April 17, 2024 at 5:30 PM	SJP Board Room	

All meeting agendas and minutes are posted on the district's website and can be viewed under Departments – Special Education – Advisory Council. Parents are invited to participate in SEAC meetings through quarterly special education newsletters, robocalls and text messages.

Executive Summary

There were four SEAC meetings held during the 2023-2024 school year. For each meeting, there was a quorum present. The 2023-2024 SEAC wanted to seek out resources for parents/guardians of students with disabilities. Therefore, SEAC meeting agendas included resources that would be beneficial to parents/guardians of students with disabilities. The chair ensured that any new or updated state and local policies and procedures that affect students with disabilities were shared at SEAC meetings under

District Agenda items. The chair also demonstrated how to access the Special Education Department information on the district's webpage. Partnerships with the Special Education Department and outside agencies/consultants currently offered in the district, and any new partnerships being proposed for the 2024-2025 school year were shared with the council in reference to identified needs in special education. State accountability data were shared during SEAC to celebrate the 3 percent growth made by students with disabilities last school year.

Highlights from discussion of the Council included the following:

- Advocacy for students with disabilities – training for parents/guardians
- Adequate assistance for parents/guardians on students with disabilities (e.g., signs to help with the identification of disabilities at early ages; what should parents be asking healthcare systems; parent support groups)
- Differentiated instruction for sped students and training for regular and special educators on differentiated instruction
- Resources to support students with Autism and Applied Behavior Analysis training for teachers and paraprofessionals
- IEP placement decisions – how do they occur?

Areas of Improvement, Next Steps, and Timeline of Upcoming Activities

- The SEAC wants to have dialogue with the Parish President and with the new Recreation Director on making sure public parks are handicap accessible and include inclusive playground equipment.
 - The SEAC would like to also see inclusive playground equipment on K-6 school playgrounds.
- ***Both agenda items will be on the first 2024-2025 SEAC agenda.

Parent Engagement

Parents/Guardians are invited to participate in all IEP meetings through Prior Written Notification Letters. In addition, they are also invited and encouraged to participate in our Special Education Advisory Council Meetings, Transition Fairs, Special Olympics, and any other activities that include and/or impact students with disabilities. Quarterly Special Education Newsletters are sent out to all parents/guardians of students with disabilities via robotext messages, and hard copies are also handed out at SEAC meetings. The SPED Newsletter captures all activities with dates and times, and also encourages the parents to be active participants in their child's education. The district's Facebook page, SJP Special Olympics Facebook page, and flyers, etc. are also utilized as a means to communicate with parents/guardians to encourage parental participation.

How to Join

SJP SEAC 2024-2025 Applications can be access via the district's website at www.stjames.k12.la.us – DEPARTMENTS – SPECIAL EDUCATION – ADVISORY COUNCIL.