



**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, Joel Van Valin, Oanh Nguyen, Christina Locke, Christina Nicholas, Ashley, Mike Shepperd, Calton Sims, Choua Xiong, Nicole Warner, Amina Abdullahi, Rhonda Morrison, Kathleen Morrison, Rachel Sewell, Sarah Thompson, Jackie Kelly, Mayra Mariscal, Sarah Zielinski, Amy Johnson, Heidi Nistler, Kimberly Adams, Angelo Dungey, Jodie Danielson, Maria Vincent, Laura Walb, Cynthia Burke, Dr. Hsu.

**27 people: 13 of 17 members, 6 staff, 8 guests**

### **Special Education Advisory Council (SEAC)**

**Date: 11-11-2024**

**Time: 6:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m. meeting (5:30-6:00 p.m. light meal and connecting).**

**Location: Hybrid via Microsoft Teams and Administration Building, 360 Colborne Street  
Meeting room F, Childcare room J**

**5:30 p.m. Meal and Connecting**

**6:00 p.m. Housekeeping, Welcome & Member & Guest Introductions**

#### **What is SEAC:**

SEAC is a group of parents, guardians, staff and community members that meet monthly "to increase the involvement of parents of children with disabilities in policymaking and decision-making".

#### **How does SEAC work:**

At SEAC meetings members are informed and share input to improve programs and systems for students with disabilities and their families.

#### **What are Parents Supposed To Do At SEAC?**

- **Learn** something that will benefit your child.
- **Share** what you learn with people in your community (neighbor, friend, child's teacher....).
- **Ask questions and share input.**

Introductions/ Share/ Connect

- Share a time when you felt welcomed at your child's school

### **SEAC November 2024 Agenda**

**6:15 p.m. Approve October minutes**

6:15 p.m. Rachel Sewell moved to approve SEAC meeting minutes, Nicole Warner seconded. Minutes were approved and passed.

**6:20 p.m. District Engagement**

Cell Phone Use Policy- Jodi Danielson, Director Teaching and Learning

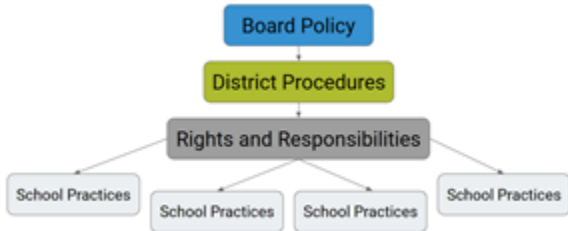
**Purpose:**

- To gather feedback.
- To inform the creation of a district cell phone policy.

**State Requirements**

- MN legislature made a law in spring 2024 that all school districts must have a district policy regarding cell phones
- SPPS schools currently have rules around cell phones
- What will be different?
  - SPPS School District will have an official school board policy

**Policy and Procedures in SPPS**



**Why?**

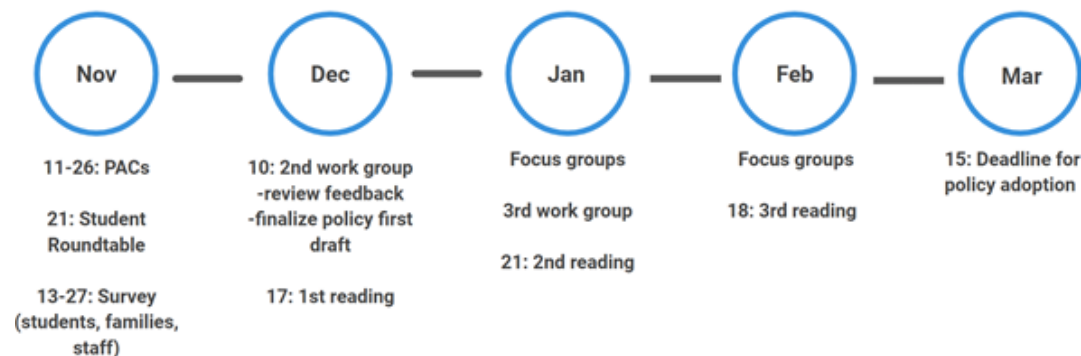
There are tons of reasons around the impact the phones have on students.

- **Academic Performance:** cell phone use in the classroom correlates with lower academic performance
- **Mental Health:** high cell phone use is linked with increased anxiety, stress, social isolation, and depression
- **Learning Environments:** cell phones in classrooms are related to increased cheating and reduced classroom participation
- **Effective Teaching:** teachers report more effective instruction and more empowerment when district policies limit cell phone use

**Discussion**

- Do you feel cell phone use in schools has been a distraction from your student's learning?
- When and how would you prefer to communicate with your children?
- Does the way the school manages cell phones work for you?
- What would you like to see in a district-wide policy?

**Timeline**



**7:20 p.m. SpEd Update- Heidi Nistler, Director Special Education. Policy 509 update**

**Policy 509 is a new Policy for SPPS:**

- Required per [Minnesota Statute 121A.55\(f\)](#)
- This statute states "Each school district shall develop a policy and report it to the

commissioner on the appropriate use of peace officers and crisis teams to remove students who have an individualized education program from school grounds."

**Overview:**

- Designed to protect the rights of students with disabilities
  - Students with disabilities need additional protections
  - Restates what is written in law and adds additional requirements for IEP teams (which include parents)
- If a student is removed, this policy requires parental notification and outlines responsibilities of the IEP team
  - Parents notified as soon as possible (same day)
  - Outlines when an IEP team meeting must take place
- Repeated removal **MUST** be reviewed by an IEP team for consideration in developing the IEP
- SEAC role: Provide recommendations on communication to families about this new policy

**When may a student be removed:**

- Student **MAY** be removed if their behavior endangers or may endanger the health, safety, or property of the student, other students, staff members, or school property
  - School crisis team
    - Goal is to de-escalate the situation
    - Educators with a relationship with the student
    - Removal by school crisis team (School Support Liaison)
  - Rare occasions - law enforcement **may** be called (extremely rare)

[Rights and Responsibilities Handbook](#)

[Handbook in other languages](#)

**What will change as a result of this policy? Nothing.**

- Most of the language in this policy was already in state statute or federal law
- Many sections use the word "may" - important wording because it does not require students to be removed
- By having it in one Policy, the information will be easier for families to find and know what is - and is not - allowed
- **This policy will NOT result in an increased presence of law enforcement in our schools.**

[Draft of current proposed Policy 509](#)

SEAC's Input for Communicating with Families

Policy 509 Question & Answer to support parents' understanding of policy.

Sections such as What to know, Updates, how the Policy 509 fits with the bigger picture

Policy 509 attached as PDF

Question:

Does the policy state that an adult must be home to greet student?

Many Somali families do not read or write. How will this policy be shared with them?

Booklet update: [Introduction to Special Education for SPPS Families](#)

Being reviewed by Legal Department to ensure booklet matches the law.

Is Early Childhood information included in booklet?

Attach welcome letter to booklet.

Students and their families receive booklet upon entering SpEd

Can booklet be shared in the community? Via Headstart, SPPL, Ramsey County, Rec Centers/ tot times

Action: Jackie share link to booklet for SEAC to review

**7:50 p.m. SEAC Business**

- Review and update: [Organizational Guidelines](#)
  - Action- Jackie will share link, SEAC review and provide input
- What is the [District map](#)?
  - Shows where schools are located in neighborhoods throughout Saint Paul. The district is divided into 7 different areas. Each are has elementary, middle and high schools.
  - Information is available about each of our schools is available on our [school choice website](#).

**8:00 p.m. Adjourn**

**Next meeting December 09, 2024 Virtual only**