

St. Mary Parish School Board
Special Education Advisory Council
Meeting Minutes

The Special Education Advisory Council met on Monday, September 23, 2024, at 4:00 p.m., in the Evans Medine Room at the Central Office Complex in Centerville, Louisiana.

The meeting was called to order at the scheduled time and a roll call was conducted by Dr. Fegenbush as follows:

Roll Call:

Present: Ms. Brianna Comeaux, Ms. Walleeta August, Ms. Melissa Lee, Mr. Avery Price, and Dr. Julie Price.

Absent: Ms. Leguya Brown Davis, Ms. Keren Jamison, Ms. Jennifer Collins Lanceslin, Ms. Adrianna Barto, and Ms. Nekima Jack.

A quorum was reached with five members in attendance of the meeting.

Nominations for Committee Chairperson:

Nominations for Special Education Advisory Council chairperson are as follows:

Dr. Fegenbush nominated Dr. Brianna Comeaux, principal of H. A. Watts Elementary School as the Special Education Advisory Council chairperson.

Dr. Comeaux accepted the nomination as the Special Education Advisory Council chairperson.

Approval of Committee Minutes:

Ms. Lee made a motion and Dr. Price offered the second to approve the minutes from the Special Education Advisory Committee held on May 8, 2024, as presented. All in favor and the motion carried.

Introduction of Special Education Advisory Program Council Members 2024-2025.

Members that were present introduced themselves as follows:

- Dr. Brianna Comeaux, principal of H. A. Watts Elementary School
- Dr. Julie Price, parent of Avery Price, junior at Morgan City High School
- Ms. Walleeta August, parent of Terrell August, senior at Centerville High School
- Ms. Melissa Lee, special education teacher at Franklin High School
- Mr. Avery Price, junior high student at Morgan City High School

It was noted that Ms. Leguya Brown Davis will no longer serve as a member of the committee. Despite this change, the committee remains in compliance with its required percentage of membership.

Set Meeting Dates and Times for Next School Year:

The proposed meeting dates and times are as follows:

- Monday, September 23, 2024 at 4:00 p.m. in the Evans Medine Meeting Room at the Central Office Complex in Centerville, Louisiana.
- Monday, November 4, 2024 at 4:00 p.m. in the Evans Medine Meeting Room at the Central Office Complex in Centerville, Louisiana.
- Monday, January 27, 2025 at 4:00 p.m. in the Evans Medine Meeting Room at the Central Office Complex in Centerville, Louisiana.
- Monday, March 10, 2025 at 4:00 p.m. in the Evans Medine Meeting Room at the Central Office Complex in Centerville, Louisiana

Ms. Lee made a motion and seconded by Dr. Price to approve the Special Education Advisory Council as proposed. All in favor and the motion carried.

Ethics, Roles, Responsibility, Confidentiality of Special Education Advisory Program Council Members.

Dr. Fegenbush reported that the Special Education Advisory Council (SEAC) is a State-mandated, district-level committee charged with providing input to the school district regarding special education and related services under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and Louisiana Department of Education (LDE) Bulletin 1706. 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.

Membership:

The members of the board are appointed based upon Revised Statute 17:1944.1

- shall serve a two-year term.
- Members of the current board will be considered in the first year of this cycle.
- The Superintendent shall designate the chairperson of the council, and the chairperson shall call the council's meetings, preside over the meetings, and establish the agendas for the meetings.

Confidentiality is critical when reviewing policies and situations. At no time should individual information be shared.

Goals for Special Education Advisory Council.

Dr. Fegenbush stated that the St. Mary Parish School Board will be updating the website around the second week of October, which will include specific information under the Special Education department that will allow the community to provide input to the Special Education Advisory Council.

Special Education Policies: Where Can I Find Them?

Dr. Sanders provided a presentation on how and where to access school board policies on the website using the St. Mary Parish School Board "CAPS" system.

Policy IDDFC: Cameras in Special Education Classrooms.

Dr. Fegenbush provided information on the Cameras in Special Education Classrooms policy IDDFC. There are very strict procedures about what happens with a camera and how they can be viewed. No one is allowed to review the footage without a formal request. Parents will have to go through a process for camera footage to be reviewed if they have a need or concern and can identify a specific time. The footage can only be reviewed by the Superintendent because of the confidentiality of all students that may be within that classroom or the situation that may have occurred.

Classroom shall mean a self-contained classroom or other special education setting in which a majority of students in regular attendance are provided with special education and related services and are assigned to one or more self-contained classrooms or other special education setting for at least fifth percent (50 %) of the instructional day.

Parents are notified by letters at the beginning of the school year where cameras are being placed and signs are visible at that school location where audio and video cameras are in process. The public are made aware of being monitored.

The April Dun Act: Parent's Guide to Understanding the Law.

Ms. Almetra Pierce Stansbury briefly explained that the April Dunn Act is a law named after a Baton Rouge local April Dunn. Ms. Dunn was champion for students with disabilities. The law allows students with disabilities, that are eligible for the April Dun Act, to earn a high school diploma by meeting graduation requirements through individual performance criteria created by their IEP team.

Louisiana currently has two choices or pathways a student can take to earn a diploma:

- The University Pathway is a traditional pathway that prepares your child to go to a 4-year college.

- The Jump Start Pathway is a career pathway that prepares your child to go to work and/or continue their education at a 2-year community college.

Any student with a disability, as defined in R.S. 17:1942(B), except a student identified as gifted and talented and who has no other exceptionality, should be examined by IEP teams for eligibility for the April Dunn Act.

The IEP team will determine April Dunn Act eligibility when your child enters high school in the ninth grade without achieving (does not pass) the state established benchmarks on the LEAP 2025 state assessment for two of the three most recent school years or, does not achieve (does not pass) the state benchmarks after two attempts of the same LEAP 2025 high school assessment. The IEP teams should use these criteria for determining eligibility once the student has taken at least one high school state assessment.

The law requires the April Dunn Act to be applied to a course within the first 30 days of a student entering the course.

Please contact Mrs. Almetra Pierce-Stansbury at apierce-stansbury@stmaryk12.net for any further questions.

Special Olympics Bowling Update: October 25, 2024.

Ms. McClarity extended an invitation to everyone to attend and join the students for the Special Olympics Bowling event on October 25, 2024, at Steelwood Lanes in Morgan City.

Comments from Committee Members or Attendees:

There were no comments or questions from committee members or attendees.

Adjournment:

With there being no further business, Ms. Lee made a motion and Dr. Price made a second to adjourn the meeting at 4:49 p.m. All in favor and the motion carried.