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**GEO Academies
2024-2025 School Year
Special Education Advisory Council Report**



GEO Academies Regional Network of School in Louisiana

GEO Prep of Greater Baton Rouge

GEO Prep Mid-City

GEO Next Generation High School

GEO Baker

May 29, 2025

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2024-2025 School Year
Special Education Advisory Council Report

I. The Purpose of the 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.

II. Special Education Advisory Council Members and Roles (2024/2025)

SEAC Members	Role
Vacancy	Parent (Geo Prep Academy of Greater Baton Rouge)
Vacancy	Parent (GEO Mid-City)
Vacancy	Parent (GEO Next Generation High School)
Vacancy	Parent (GEO Prep Baker)
Vacancy	Principal, Teacher, or Paraprofessional (Geo Prep Academy of Greater Baton Rouge)
Tracy Mitchell	Special Education Coordinator (GEO Mid-City)
Vacancy	Principal, Teacher, or Paraprofessional (GEO Next Generation High School)
Vacancy	Principal, Teacher or Paraprofessional (GEO Prep Baker)
Vacancy	Rep from Entity That Serves Students with Disabilities
Vacancy	Special Education Stake Holder (non-parent/school staff)
Trayvonnia Duhe	Regional Deputy Chief Academic Officer
Mary Keyes	Regional Director of Special Education
Pamela White	Regional Associate Director of Special Education, SEAC Chairperson

III. 2024-2025 Meeting Dates, Agendas, and Minutes

The Special Education Advisory Council held its first preliminary meeting on [insert date], bringing together interim members to begin foundational planning. Participants introduced themselves, shared their backgrounds, and expressed their commitment to

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supporting students with disabilities. The group reviewed the intended purpose and mission of the council, emphasizing its advisory role in promoting inclusive and equitable education. A discussion followed regarding the vision for the council, the importance of diverse representation, and examples of governance models from other districts. Members expressed interest in establishing subcommittees focused on council structure and alignment with district goals. It was agreed that everyone would review sample bylaws before the next meeting, and the Special Education Department leadership would provide an overview of its current strategic plan and performance metrics.

April 28, 2025 (Meeting 1)

Agenda Items: Overview of special education department goals

Meeting Notes: During the first meeting held on April 28, 2025, the council discussed the goals and initiative of the special education department with new department leadership. Key areas of focused were identified for the remaining of the 2024/2025 school year.

May 9, 2025 (Meeting 2)

Agenda Items: Purpose and vision for the Advisory Council, Overview of special education department goals, Update Council structure

Meeting Notes: During the second meeting held on May 9, 2025, the council discussed areas within the special education department in need of updated processes and procedures. In addition, the council discussed reshaping its formal structure and governance framework. Members discussed the current structure and how council meeting were conducted during the previous school year. The council proposed the establishment of a new structure to establish a regional special education advisory council to represent all four schools in the GEO Academies network of schools within the region. The discussion included the inclusion of parents, educators, community members, and special education providers. The individual that would hold the council chair position was established and monthly meetings during the school year were discussed as an option, but it was determined that meetings are to occur a minimum of three times annually as required by R.S. 17:1944 with additional meetings being scheduled as needed. The council also discussed the annual advisory council report and its due date.

May 15, 2025 (Meeting 3)

Agenda Items: Purpose and vision for the Advisory Council, Finalize updated of council structure and membership planning

Meeting Notes: During the third meeting held on May 15, 2025, the council finalized reshaping of its formal structure and governance framework. The council finalized a regional council that is to include the required representation from each campus within the region as stipulated in by R.S. 17:1944. The discussion also included current council positions with vacancies, the process of releasing the council member application to the

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public and encouraging parents at all school to apply for membership. The council also discussed the annual advisory council report and its due date.

IV. Executive Summary

The Special Education Advisory Council met during the year to lay the groundwork for updating processes and procedures within the special education department and to establish its restructure and formal operations for the upcoming school year. Discussions focused on identifying areas in need of updated processed and procedures within the department. In addition, discussion regarding the council focused on reestablishing its structure, identifying priorities, and aligning with the goals of the Special Education Department. Members engaged in strategic conversations to support the enhancement of services for students with disabilities, emphasizing the importance of cohesive processes and procedures across the region. A primary focus was placed on reviewing and updating current processes and procedures to better reflect best practices and the needs of the departments and schools. These efforts set a strong foundation for the council's future contributions to policy development and program improvement.

V. Highlights and Accomplishments

The district's SEAC coordinated a series of planning meetings consisting of Council members where discussions relative to recommended updated to department policies and procedures as well as the council structure were held. These planning meetings resulted in the following recommended actions:

- Agreed on a new council chair and a standard meeting schedule (three meetings during the school year).
- Identified key areas in need of updated processed and procedures within the Special Education Department.
- Reached consensus on key elements of the restructured regional council such as membership composition to represent all four school within the region.

VI. Areas of Improvement/Next Steps/Timeline of Upcoming Activities

An area of improvement is noted parental engagement. While the council acknowledged the district's ongoing efforts to support families, members emphasized that many parents continue to experience challenges in understanding special education processes and accessing resources. Improving communication, building trust, and creating more accessible and inclusive opportunities for parent involvement were identified as key priorities. The council agreed that strengthening parent engagement is essential to advancing equitable outcomes for students with disabilities and committed to exploring strategies that foster stronger partnerships between families and schools. Next, the council will release a public announcement for Special Education Advisory Council vacancies and the council membership application to the public. The announcement and application period will be conducted between the months of June/July 2025.

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VII. How to Become a Member of the Special Education Advisor Council

Persons interested in becoming a member of the GEO Academies Special Education Advisory Council should complete a digital membership application. When term limits expire or a vacancy becomes available, a public notice along with a link to the digital application will be provided on social media and the announcement page of the district's website.