



**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: Rachael Sewell, Amy Eelkema, Nicole Warner, Joel Van Valin, Christina Locke, Rhonda Morrison, Kathleen Morrison, Mayra Mariscal, Heidi Nistler, Jackie Kelly, Pablo Matamoros

11 people: 7 of 10 members, 3 staff, 1 guests

Special Education Advisory Council (SEAC)

Date: 10-13-2025

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

In Person: Administration Building, 360 Colborne St. room A & B. (5:30-6:00 p.m. light meal and connecting).

Virtually: Google Meets <https://meet.google.com/qak-bbkt-kbs>

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

Share your name, if you're a member or guest and what is your favorite thing about the fall.

6:15 p.m. Approve October Agenda. [October Agenda](#)

Rachel Sewell moved to approve the October Agenda, Rhonda Morrison seconded. The October Agenda was approved and passed.

Approve [September 2025 Minutes](#) Rachel Sewell moved to approve September Minutes, Rhonda Morrison seconded. September minutes was approved and passed.

6:20 p.m. Introduction to SEAC

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.

6:25 p.m. Parent Advisory Handbook, Pablo Matamoros Assistant Director Family Engagement

SPPS Students, families, staff, and the community have long benefited from the ideas and perspectives of advisory council members. Over the time, there have been various changes in the groups' focus, composition, effectiveness, and participation, but these changes have not been consistent or coordinated.

OFECF is committed to ensuring that the work of all advisory councils clearly supports SPPS mission, increases and improves community engagement, and improves student performance by helping achieve the following adopted priorities:

- Decrease disparities in achievement based on race, ethnicity, culture, and identity.
- Increase achievement of English Learners
- Increase achievement of students receiving special education services

- Improve kindergarten readiness
- Increase academic growth in reading and math for all students
- Prepare all graduates for college, career, and life

Options for Board Engagement with PAC

- **SPPS-Autorized Advisory Councils**
 - Gender and Sexual Diversity Parent Advisory Council (GSDPSC)
 - Hmong Parent Advisory Council (HPAC)
 - Karen Parent Advisory Council (KPAC)
 - Parents of African American Students Advisory Council (PAASAC)
 - Somali Parent Advisory Council (SPAC)
- **Legally-Autorized Advisory Councils**
 - American Indian Parent Advisory Council (AI PAC)
 - Special Education Advisory Council (SEAC)
 - Latino Consent Decree Parent Advisory Council (LCD PAC)

Options for Board Engagement with PAC

- Written Statement
- Requesting a special session with Board Members at a PAC meeting
- Presenting at COB

6:50 p.m. Forum

Open time for...

- hearing parent voice
- sharing stories from the disability community
- giving feedback for future agenda items
- sharing resources

7:10 p.m. SEAC Business

Membership

Movie [Forget Me Not: Inclusion in the Classroom](#), location, date and time.

7:30 p.m. SpEd Update- Heidi Nistler, Assistant Superintendent, Specialized Services

[OSS Organizational Chart](#)

2025-2026 Priorities

Mandatory CEIS Plan

- 15% of federal special education funds ~ \$1.2 million
- Check and Connect team expansion
 - 2 additional Cultural Specialists
- Problem Solving team expansion
 - 5.5 licensed staff members (teachers, social worker, occupational therapist)
 - 3 Educational Assistants
- Reducing Suspensions and Dismissals
 - Year 1 of Mandatory CEIS (Coordinating Early Intervening Services)
 - Mandatory CEIS in special education refers to required activities and supports that a district must implement when it is found to have significant disproportionality in the identification, placement, or discipline of students with disabilities based on race or ethnicity.
 - SPPS Disproportionality in the following areas:
 - Total disciplinary removals for students who are Black or African American and receive special education services
 - Students who are Black or African American and receiving special education services being suspended for 10+ days

- 5.5 Special Education Licensed Staff (teachers, social worker, occupational Therapist) and 2 EAs
- Purpose: Support general education students and students receiving special education services who have experienced high rates of dismissals/suspensions or who are exhibiting behaviors for which they are at high risk of being dismissed or suspended
 - Conduct observations, interviews, file review, work directly with students, create recommendations, and help with implementation of interventions

SPPS Referendum Reminder

To continue providing high-quality education to all our students, we are asking the community to vote on an operating levy on November 4, 2025.

- Information about the referendum is on the SPPS website
 - [2025 Referendum](#)
 - [Video Learn about the SPPS referendum](#)
 - [4 page Handout](#)
- Early voting opens on September 19, 2025
 - [Voter registration information](#)

Resources

- [Pacer Center's National Bullying Prevention Center](#)
- [Kids Against Bullying](#)
- [Teens Against Bullying](#)

8:00 p.m. Adjourn

Next meeting- Monday, November 10, 2025 Hybrid meeting