

Special Education Advisory Committee (SECAC)

Meeting Minutes – November 20, 2025 Meeting Type: Subcommittee Work Session

Purpose of Meeting

The November SECAC meeting was dedicated entirely to subcommittee work. Members met in small groups to refine ideas, clarify next steps, and continue planning aligned with committee goals.

Subcommittee Reports

1. Membership and Governance Subcommittee

The Membership and Governance Subcommittee focused on strategies to strengthen membership, increase visibility, and clarify the role and impact of SECAC.

Membership Outreach Strategies Discussed:

- Use of **postcards and trifold**s to share SECAC information
- Increased presence at **Back-to-School Nights, PTO meetings, and Judy Center events**
- Development of a **letter to principals**, to be distributed in May, requesting building representation

Refinement of Ideas from Previous Meeting:

- Reviewed the **current letter sent to principals** requesting representatives
 - Discussed revising the letter to:
 - Clearly outline **expectations** for school-based representatives
 - Highlight **SECAC accomplishments**
 - Include a **consolidated statement of purpose** describing SECAC's advisory role and value
- Discussed expanding visibility beyond handouts:
 - In addition to distributing trifold/postcards during IEP meetings, members discussed placing a **SECAC informational poster** in IEP meeting rooms that includes meeting dates and contact information

- Discussed **presenting at Judy Centers** to inform families of younger children about SECAC and available supports

Bylaws Review:

- Continued discussion regarding proposed bylaw changes
 - Timeline confirmed:
 - **Draft changes finalized by:** February 19, 2026
 - **Vote on bylaw changes scheduled for:** March 19, 2026
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2. Recognition and Awards Subcommittee

The Recognition and Awards Subcommittee focused on planning elements for a future recognition event.

Venue Considerations:

- Use of **CCPS buildings**
 - No cost for weekday evening use
 - Discussion included food restrictions and building guidelines

Logistics and Technology Needs:

- Projector
- Microphone
- Lighting
- Music
- Setup and clean-up planning

Accessibility Considerations:

- Closed captioning
- ASL interpreting
- Wheelchair accessibility

Decorations and Environment:

- Tablecloths

- Banner
- Student artwork
- Balloons (if permitted)

Program Components Discussed:

- Welcome and purpose statement
- Brief remarks from administration or a special education team lead
- Recognition of nominees (names read aloud, quotes shared)
- Presentation of certificates and tokens
- Group photo

Refreshments and Engagement (Optional):

- Light refreshments dependent on venue (coffee, tea, lemonade, small cookies or popcorn)
- Engagement ideas:
 - Guest sign-in book
 - QR code for photo sharing
 - Photo booth

Student Involvement:

- Recording short video clips of students saying “thank you” to nominees
- Student-created banners, cards, or artwork
- Students assisting with certificate distribution, if appropriate

Post-Event Follow-Up:

- Share photos and highlights with the school community
- Thank nominees and nominators via email or written note
- Distribute a **feedback survey** to assess event impact and identify improvements

Cost Considerations:

- Certificates: Planned

- Tokens/Gifts: Optional
- Refreshments: Optional

3. Community Engagement and Family Support Subcommittee

The Community Engagement and Family Support Subcommittee engaged in extensive discussion focused on strengthening connections with schools and community partners. Members reflected on strategies that have been effective in the past as well as approaches that have not yielded desired engagement, using these reflections to inform future planning.

Meeting Structure:

- Member introductions
- Recap of key discussion points from the previous month
- Establishment of the subcommittee's purpose and goals

Key Discussion Points:

- The importance of clear, consistent engagement with schools to increase awareness of SECAC and its advisory role
- The need for intentional collaboration with Family Support, while maintaining clear role distinctions
- Recognition that families often engage first through Family Support services, creating a natural connection point to introduce SECAC
- Discussion emphasized that SECAC's role differs from Family Support in that SECAC focuses on system-level advocacy and recommendations, rather than individual case support

Working Framework: Family Support and SECAC Alignment

Shared Focus:

- Supporting families of students with disabilities
- Improving access to information, resources, and opportunities for engagement
- Elevating family voice to inform system-level improvements

Family Support:

- Directly supports families through:
 - Information sharing
 - Resource navigation
 - Connection to services and events
- Responds to **individual family needs and concerns**
- Serves as an **entry point** for family engagement

SECAC (Advisory Role):

- Provides **system-level advocacy**
- Identifies trends and common themes impacting families
- Develops and submits **recommendations to the Board of Education**
- Does not engage in individual advocacy or case management

Next Steps:

- Identify opportunities to collaborate with Family Support on outreach and events
- Develop consistent messaging that clarifies the role of SECAC for families and school staff
- Continue refining engagement strategies based on past successes and lessons learned

Adjournment

The meeting concluded following subcommittee discussions. Members will continue work within their subcommittees and share updates at the next SECAC meeting.