



**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 Baxter, Ashley Ward, Brenda Natala, Calton Sims, Chamie Link, Jackie Kelly, Jodi Meerovich, Kellie McCourtney Mailatyar, Mayra Mariscal, Melissa Haley, Melissa Weeks, Michele Silvester, Nicole Warner, Oanh Nguyen, Rachael Sewell, RaShonda Muhammad, Rhonda Morrison, Roxanne King, Sarah Zielinski.

19 people: 8 of 9 members, 4 staff, 7 guests

Special Education Advisory Council (SEAC) Minutes Approved

Date: 11-01-21

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

Location: Virtual meeting via Zoom

Link to [November Presentation](#)

5:30 p.m. Optional Pre Meeting Chatter - Join us if you can for an informal check in.

6:00 p.m. Housekeeping, Welcome & Introductions

Introductions/ Share/ Connect: Your name, your child, why you are here.

6:03 p.m. Melissa Weeks went over some housekeeping items. Members, guests and staff were informed that the Special Education Update presentation will be recorded.

6:20 p.m. Approve [October Meeting Minutes](#)

6:26 p.m. Rachael Sewell moved to approve SEAC meeting minutes, Calton Sims seconded. Minutes were approved and passed.

6:25 p.m. Review and Vote on SEAC Mission

SPPS SEAC Mission:

The purpose of the Saint Paul Public Schools' Special Education Advisory Council is to collaborate with the District's Office of Specialized Services to:

- **Address the unique needs** of diverse learners so they can meet their maximum potential.
- **Promote** respect and inclusivity for all students and families.
- **Build strong relationships** between families, schools, community partners, and district decision makers to influence policy making.
- **Empower and support parents** to effectively advocate for children.

6:31 pm Melissa Weeks made a motion to approve the SEAC Mission as written, Amy Elkema seconded. **SEAC Mission was approved and updated.**

6:30 p.m. Review and Update [SEAC Procedural Guidelines](#)

6:35 p.m. Melissa Haley and Melisa Weeks went over to present the Special Education Advisory Council (SEAC) Organizational Guidelines. **ACTION Item- Executive Committee will revise and share draft with SEAC members for vote to approve at December meeting.**

6:45 p.m. SEAC membership

- Looking for a new Co-Chair- Melissa Haley stepping down. December will be her last meeting.
- Tara Ellis has moved to North Saint Paul

6:50 p.m. Special Education Update, Brenda Natala, Director Specialized Services.

7:11 p.m. The meeting was recorded.

- **Special Education Data**

Brenda Natala went over to present -“October 1 Enrollment Trend by Primary Disability” that includes students in grades EC-12.

-“Scholars receiving Special Ed Services” Demographics in general by Race, English Learners and Free/Reduced Lunch.

Sarah Zielinski went over to present -“ECSE Enrollment by Age” ESCE Birth to 3 & ECSE 3 to Enrollment on November 1 by age on September 1.

-“ECSE Referrals & Enrollment”

- **ARP Update**

Academic Updates: Training for teachers - Literacy and Math, Progress Monitoring, Curriculum investments - Specialized programs - Board Maker - Unique Learning Systems.

Literacy Training for Special Educators: Sunday 1 and 2 Training. - 125 licensed staff trained this fall/winter - Sunday curriculum kits purchased.

- **Special Education Recovery Services Update**

Do families feel confident they know: What they need to ask? And what they need to share”?

Information added to SPPS Special Education Website. [Special Education Recovery Services](#) **ACTION Item- Refer SPPS families to website.**

- **Envision SPPS Update.**

Sustainable, holistic, well rounded education. Schools with sufficient enrollment to provide opportunities. Arts, Science, Health/Physical Education, Social Studies, World Languages, Academic Supports, Mental Health Supports. Pathways and access for special education

Web site: [Envision SPPS](#)

[Summary of Recommendations](#) to the Board

-Early Childhood Education.-

-Early Childhood Workgroup Findings. -Early Childhood Landscape. -Potential Sites for Early Learning Hubs.

-American Rescue Plan (ARP).

-Special Education Staffing. Special Education Teachers.

Monitoring caseloads. -Openings are covered by existing staff. -Substitute teacher shortages. SPPS is currently recruiting Paraprofessionals because of shortage - [TA Interest Form](#) ACTION Item- Thank you for sharing the TA interest Form with people in your community who may consider becoming a TA.

7:20 p.m. Parent Voices- Do you have a story to share? A problem to solve?

7:50 p.m. Meeting Wrap Up

Announcement, Event or Resources to share.

- **NEW Resource from PACER** to help parents prepare for Special Education Recovery meetings. [Pacer's Preparing for Special Education Recovery meeting](#)
- As reflected in SEAC's Organizational Guidelines we will dedicate space on the monthly agenda to allow for a forum. The forum will allow the expression of concerns and recommendations pertaining to the education of students with disabilities in SPPS. SEAC members strive to discuss & advise on issues of broad importance to SPPS as a whole. Personal stories & reflection can be used to inform the group's understanding of broad issues. Perspectives and confidentiality will be respected. Members are encouraged to bring forth concerns & recommendations without fear of reprisal.

8:00 p.m. Adjourn

8:00 p.m. Meeting adjourned

8:05 p.m. SEAC Executive

Next SEAC meeting: Monday, Dec. 6, 2021 6-8 p.m.