



STATE OF MICHIGAN
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
LANSING

RICK SNYDER
GOVERNOR

BRIAN J. WHISTON
STATE SUPERINTENDENT

MEMORANDUM

DATE: November 1, 2016
TO: State Board of Education
FROM: Brian J. Whiston, Chairman 
SUBJECT: Presentation on the Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC)
Annual Report for 2015-2016

The Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC) is mandated by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) to advise the State Education Agency (SEA) and by Michigan law to advise the State Board of Education (SBE) regarding special education issues. Its membership, appointed by the SBE, is regulated by the IDEA and capped through state statute.

The attached annual report is provided to the SBE at the end of the school year and summarizes the work of the SEAC throughout the year. Appendix A contains the SEAC's Memo to the Superintendent of Public Instruction regarding the Top 10 in 10.

Appendix B contains advice to the State Education Agency (SEA) in developing evaluations and reporting on data to the Secretary under section 618 of the Act, 300.169(c) for Indicators #6-Early Childhood Educational Environments, #7-Preschool Outcomes.

Appendix C contains the SEAC's SAT information for the Superintendent's Weekly Update to the State Board of Education.

Appendix D contains the report to the SBE regarding an analysis of the educational experience/progress among Native American, Hispanic and White Students in Michigan, including those with disabilities.

Appendix E contains the information which is being provided to the SBE on Meeting the Needs of Students with Challenging Behavior.

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608 WEST ALLEGAN STREET • P.O. BOX 30008 • LANSING, MICHIGAN 48909
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Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC)

2015-2016 Annual Report

June 29, 2016



Michigan Department of Education
Special Education Advisory Committee

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Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC)
2015-2016 Annual Report

Introduction

The Michigan Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC) is the federally mandated state advisory panel, designed to advise the Michigan Department of Education (MDE) and State Board of Education (SBE) on matters related to the education of students with disabilities. As part of its duties, the Committee annually submits a report on its activities to the State Education Agency (SEA). Additionally, the report is made available to the public. The intent of this report is to provide educational leaders and the citizens of the state of Michigan with information about the committee and to summarize its activities for the 2015-2016 school year.

SEAC's Mission

The mission of the SEAC is to support educational opportunities for all students in Michigan and especially those with disabilities by gathering, sharing, and disseminating information with the public; advising the SBE; and working with the Office of Special Education (OSE).

The Purpose of the Committee

The Special Education Advisory Committee is Michigan's *Individuals with Disabilities Education Act* (IDEA) 2004 mandated State Advisory Panel to the MDE and SBE. Its purpose is to:

1. Advise the SEA of unmet needs within the state in the education of children with disabilities, 300.169(a);
2. Comment publicly on any rules or regulations proposed by the state regarding the education of children with disabilities, 300.169(b);
3. Advise the SEA in developing evaluations and reporting on data to the Secretary under section 618 of the Act, 300.169(c);
4. Advise the SEA in developing corrective action plans to address findings identified in federal monitoring reports under Part B of the Act, 300.169(d);
5. Receive completed due process hearing findings and decisions; and
6. Advise the SEA in developing and implementing policies relating to the coordination of services for children with disabilities, 300.169(e).

SEAC members are appointed by the SBE and represent a broad diversity of stakeholders—administrators, providers, advocates, parents, and consumers—concerned with the education of all children, including students with disabilities (see pages 6-8 for 2015-2016 SEAC participants). By statute, fifty-one percent of the membership must be individuals with or parents of children with disabilities under 26 years of age who currently receive special education services under the IDEA.

The SEAC is a group of individuals representing various statewide organizations and interests and are engaged in learning to build a shared understanding around a host of complex topics affecting students with disabilities. This year the committee engaged in a wide range of learning in order to make recommendations to the MDE and SBE.

SEAC Learning

Given the diversity of the SEAC members and the prior knowledge they bring to the work, SEAC learning established shared understandings and ensured that decisions

resulted from shared understanding. This year, information presented to prepare the SEAC for its advisory role included:

- State Performance Plan (SPP) Indicators 6 & 7
- The new SAT and M-STEP
- The behavioral/mental health component of MIBLSI work
- Changes in secondary transition work and implementation of Personal Curricula

2015-2016 SEAC Work

1. State advisory panels are responsible for advising the SEA of **unmet needs** within the state in the education of children with disabilities. The SEAC provided advice with regard to unmet educational needs during the 2015-2016 year relative to two subgroups:
 - Native American and other minority populations. (See Appendix D for complete document.)
 - Students with challenging behavior. (See Appendix E for complete document.)
2. The SEAC did not comment publicly on rules or regulations proposed by the state in the education of children with disabilities as there were no rules in the promulgation process during the 2015-2016 school year.
3. The SEAC met its obligation to provide advice to the SEA in developing evaluations and reporting on data to the Secretary under section 618 of the Act, 300.169(c) by providing feedback on the target resetting for State Performance Plan Indicators:

#6—Early Childhood Educational Environments

#7—Preschool Outcomes

The work was accomplished at the October through January SEAC meetings during which the SEAC subcommittee met with and learned from MDE personnel with responsibilities for these indicators. In addition to providing specific target recommendations, the SEAC members also commented on the potential value of data disaggregation and analysis by race/ethnicity and by resident district. Finally, members expressed concern about preschool programs that serve children with the most severe disabilities. These centers will not be able to meet state outcome targets, and these populations should be considered as the state intervenes. (See Appendix B for specific SEAC feedback on State Improvement Plan targets.)

4. Relative to the expectation that the SEAC would advise the SEA in developing corrective action plans to address findings identified in federal monitoring reports under Part B of the Act, 300.169(d), there were no federal monitoring activities conducted during the 2015-2016 school year.
5. The SEAC met its obligation to receive findings and decisions of all completed due process hearings related to special education (34 CFR 300.509(d)(1)) by receiving summary information on fully adjudicated due process complaints. The SEAC received decisions between July 1, 2015 and June 30, 2016. The SEAC began discussion about how to complete this review in a more meaningful manner that will support their provision of advice to the state. Seventy-three (73) due

process hearings were filed. In only five (5) of those cases were Final Orders issued by an Administrative Law Judge.

6. The SEAC has an obligation to advise the SEA in developing and implementing policies relating to the coordination of services for children with disabilities through the participation of representatives from the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS)—Community Health, Juvenile Justice, and Michigan Rehabilitation Services; Michigan Department of Education—*McKinney-Vento Act* and Educator Preparation Institutions. During the 2015-2016 year, agency representatives were invited and encouraged to contribute to monthly meetings relative to the needs of students served by them. Also, the SEAC added representation from DHHS foster care to assure that this population’s concerns were considered as the SEAC prepared any public comment for the State Board of Education. The MDE legislative liaison became an Ex-Officio member. He provided updates to the full SEAC during several meetings on pending legislation that could impact students with individualized education programs (IEPs). This served as a helpful backdrop to the SEAC’s readiness to provide informed advice.

2015-2016 SEAC Participants

Delegates

Organization	Name and Town
Member At-Large	Heather Bird (Moran)
Member At-Large	Amy Sanderson (Saline)
Member At-Large	Barbara Brish (Commerce)
Member At-Large	Paulette Duggins (Bloomfield Hills)
Member At-Large	Nicole Miller (Buckley)
Member At-Large	Denyeal Nesovski (Shelby Twp)
Member At-Large	John Patterson (Kalamazoo)
Member At-Large	Kimberly Witt (Howell)
American Federation of Teachers Michigan	Latika Fenderson (Eastpointe)
Association for Children’s Mental Health	Terri Henrizi (Lansing)
Autism Society of Michigan	Kira Rockman (Troy)
Learning Disabilities Association of Michigan	Vicki White (Lansing)
Michigan Alliance for Families	Caryn Pack-Ivey (Detroit)
Michigan Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development	Scott Martin (Haslett) September, 2015 Anne-Marie Sladewski (Sterling Hts.) May-June, 2016
Michigan Association of Administrators of Special Education	Sara Park (Cassopolis)
Michigan Association of Intermediate School Administrators	Ronna Steel (Reading)

Organization	Name and Town
Michigan Association of Administrators in Special Education	Sue Pearson (Fowlerville)
Michigan Association of Nonpublic Schools	Sheryl Jo (Grand Rapids) September-November 2015 Richard Schumacher (Garden City) December, 2015 – June, 2016
Michigan Association of Public School Academies	Kimberly Love (Berkley)
Michigan Association of School Administrators	David Tebo (Hamilton)
Michigan Association of School Boards	Mark McKulsky (Hale)
Michigan Association of School Psychologists	Jim Corr (Traverse City)
Michigan Association of School Social Workers	Michele DeJulian (Grosse Ile) September – December, 2015 Teri Metros (Bath) January , 2016 – June, 2016
Michigan Association of Secondary School Principals	Jason Feig (Fowlerville) September – October, 2015 Andy Kowalyzk (Bay City) December, 2015 – June, 2016
Michigan Association of Teachers of Children with Emotional Impairments	William Young (East Lansing)
Michigan Council for Exceptional Children	Wendy Minor (Mattawan)
Michigan Education Association	Steven Stoner (Fort Gratiot)
Michigan Elementary and Middle School Principals Association	Craig McCalla (Ann Arbor)
Michigan Speech-Language-Hearing Association	Lori Haindl Torres (St. Joseph)
Michigan Transition Services Association	Jennifer Trackwell (Howell)
The Arc Michigan	Maggie Kolk (Fremont)

The SEAC voted in three (3) new organizations to fill vacancies beginning in the 2016-2017 school year: Downs Syndrome Association, Michigan Association of Computer Users in Learning, and the Michigan Reading Association.

Ex-Officio Members

Organization	Name
Educator Preparation Institutions	Amy Schelling
Michigan Department of Corrections	Laquita Featherstone
Michigan Department of Education, McKinney-Vento Representative	Pam Kies-Lowe

Organization	Name
Michigan Department of Education, Office of Special Education	Teri Chapman
Michigan Department of Health and Human Services, Community Health—Foster Care	Janet Kaley
Michigan Department of Health and Human Services, Juvenile Justice	James Thomas
Michigan Department of Health and Human Services, Michigan Rehabilitation Services	Cynthia Wright-Pratt

Please see the attached appendices which provides the detail of SEAC's 2015-2016 work products.

Appendix A

Memo to Superintendent of Instruction: Re: Top 10 in 10



SPECIAL EDUCATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Advisory Panel to the Michigan State Board of Education and the Michigan Department of Education

Office of Special Education

P.O. Box 30008 • Lansing, Michigan 48909

Telephone (517) 373-9433 • Facsimile (517) 373-7504

October 27, 2015

Special Education Advisory Committee's Recommendations: Making Michigan a Top Ten Education State in Ten Years

Michigan's Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC) is the *Individuals with Disabilities Education Act* (IDEA) mandated state advisory panel to the State Board of Education and the Michigan Department of Education.

The mission of the SEAC is to support opportunities for all students in Michigan and especially those with disabilities by gathering, sharing, and disseminating information with the public; advising the State Board of Education; and working with the Office of Special Education.

The 31 members of the SEAC represent a diverse group of stakeholders (administrators, providers, advocates, and consumers) concerned with the education of all children, including students with disabilities.

SEAC members have identified three primary goals to help Michigan become a Top 10 Education State in 10 Years:

1. Keeping students in school
2. Professional learning by pre-service and in-service personnel
3. Competency-based learning

"Keeping students in school" and achieving the "Top 10 in Ten" are not mutually exclusive educational outcomes. Becoming one of the "Top 10 in Ten" requires that students receive the necessary supports to remain in school, ready to learn and graduate with the academic skill and ability to continue into a post-secondary educational option of their choice, and/or obtain competitive employment and be a contributing member of their community. Keeping students in school requires that teachers be equipped to present rigorous lessons that have relevancy to their students while employing positive behavioral supports that promote appropriate behaviors and social/emotional well-being. Paraprofessionals and Health Care Aides also need professional learning opportunities so that they can support the academic and social/emotional growth.

Challenges to “keeping students in school” for the educators and related service providers, are the ability to address closing the achievement gap, increasing graduation rates, addressing behavior with positive supports, preventing dropouts, preventing violence, having meaningful accountability and strengthening positive school-family-community relationships.

Educator preparation programs, including programs for related service providers, must focus on not only the core program requirements but also need to include training in various modes of assessment, progress monitoring, and collaborative consultation with multiple and varied team members. Programming also needs to include experiences in general and special education and connecting with service providers within the community.

Related service providers, such as school psychologists, school social workers, and counselors are a critical part of the school team providing support to ensure a quality, genuinely accessible, education. This is true not only for the students who struggle with barriers and challenges to learning. They also serve to ensure a quality and genuinely accessible education for all students. Education is one of our State’s most important responsibilities and wisest investments. Services that lower barriers to learning and effective teaching are not ancillary to this mission but rather central to the supportive educational process necessary to prepare all of Michigan’s children for academic success, healthy development, and responsible citizenship and raise Michigan to being one of the “Top 10 in Ten.”

As the State education systems moves toward becoming a “Top 10 in Ten” it appears necessary that there be a “rethinking” of the current educational model and an adjustment to meet the demands of the current community of learners and their families. In order to initiate change each member of the education community must take a look at what skills and services they bring to the table and determine what, if any, changes need to be instituted so as not to replicate or continue a system that is not producing desired outcomes:

- Educator preparation institutes will need to assess the skills needed by staff in school districts and adjust their programs to address the needs.
- School districts will need to assess how to best employ the skills of all the staff, teaching and related service providers.
- Schools and community service providers (private and public) must develop a collaborative model of working together in meeting the needs of students.
- Professional development needs to be based on best practice and address the needs of the staff and students being served.
- Staff evaluations should be based on a growth model as opposed to a punitive model.

While a solid academic university program is vital, continuing education is extremely important for educators in order to remain current in their chosen profession (teacher or related service provider). Quality continuing education must take the form of professional development, professional learning communities, workshops, and college courses that stress current evidence based practices.

In competency-based learning, students demonstrate mastery of a defined set of skills or competencies for each course in lieu of completing credit requirements based on time in class. For example rather than being required to complete four years of math to graduate, students are expected to meet common learning standards for

math, usually established by the state or district. To master the learning standards or competencies, students are given support and additional time as needed. The goal of the system is to meet students' learning needs more effectively than is done through traditional requirements based on credits and "seat-time" (calculated in Carnegie units, developed in 1906 as a measure of the amount of time a student has studied a subject).

In summary, to bring Michigan into the "Top 10 in Ten Years" it will require that we keep students in school, ready to learn and graduate with the academic skill and ability to continue into a post-secondary educational option of their choice, and/or obtain competitive employment and be a contributing member of their community. This can be accomplished by: (1) building relationships with the students, their families and members of the community; (2) rigorous professional learning experiences including pre-service and in-service learning opportunities; (3) competency-based learning allowing students to demonstrate mastery of a defined set of skills or competencies in lieu of completing requirements based on time in class. This would be similar to having an Individualized Education Program for every student.

Appendix B

Advice to the SEA in Developing Evaluations and Reporting on Data to the Secretary Under section 618 of the Act, 300.169(c)

**Michigan Special Education Advisory Committee
Feedback on Proposed Targets for State Performance Plan (SPP)
Indicators: #6 & 7**

**State Performance Plan (SPP) Indicator #6
Early Childhood Educational Environments**

Summary Statement A

A regular early childhood program and receiving the majority of special education and related services in the regular early childhood program.

Baseline FFY 2011: 27.20% FFY 2014 Performance: 28.00%				
Year	MDE Proposed	SEAC Work Group Proposed	SEAC Committee	MDE Submitted to OSEP
2014	28.20%	N/A	N/A	N/A
2015	28.20%	N/A	N/A	N/A
2016	28.30%	OK	OK	≥28.30%
2017	28.40%	28.50%	OK	≥28.50%
2018	28.50%	28.80%	OK	≥28.80%

Summary Statement B

Separate special education class, separate school or residential facility.

Baseline FFY 2011: 44.20% FFY 2014 Performance: 41.39%				
Year	MDE Proposed	SEAC Work Group Proposed	SEAC Committee	MDE Submitted to OSEP
2014	43.20%	N/A	N/A	N/A

Year	MDE Proposed	SEAC Work Group Proposed	SEAC Committee	MDE Submitted to OSEP
2015	43.20%	N/A	N/A	N/A
2016	42.70%	41.70%	41.40%	≤42.00%
2017	42.20%	41.20%	40.90%	≤41.50%
2018	41.70%	40.70%	40.40%	≤41.00%

**SPP #7 – Preschool Outcomes
Outcome A: Positive Social-Emotional Skills**

Summary Statement 1

Of those preschool children who entered or exited the preschool program below age expectations in each outcome, the percent who substantially increased their rate of growth by the time they turned 6 years of age or exited the program.

New Baseline: 81.11% FFY 2014 Performance: 87.73%

Year	MDE Proposed	SEAC Work Group Proposed	SEAC Committee	MDE Submitted to OSEP
2014	86.00%	N/A	N/A	≥86.00%
2015	86.50%	N/A	N/A	≥86.50%
2016	87.00%	88.00%	88.0%	≥87.00%
2017	87.50%	88.50%	88.5%	≥87.50%
2018	88.00%	89.00%	89.0%	≥88.00%

Summary Statement 2

The percent of preschool children who were functioning within age expectations in each outcome by the time they turned 6 years of age or exited the program.

New Baseline: 53.96% FFY 2014 Performance: 54.98%

Year	MDE Proposed	SEAC Work Group Proposed	SEAC Committee	MDE Submitted to OSEP
2014	55.50%	N/A	N/A	≥54.90%
2015	55.60%	N/A	N/A	≥55.00%
2016	55.70%	55.10%	55.1%	≥55.10%
2017	55.80%	55.20%	55.2%	≥55.20%
2018	55.90%	55.30%	55.3%	≥55.30%

**SPP #7 – Preschool Outcomes
Outcome B: Acquisition and Use of Knowledge and Skills**

Summary Statement 1

Of those preschool children who entered or exited the preschool program below age expectations in each Outcome, the percent who substantially increased their rate of growth by the time they turned 6 years of age or exited the program.

New Baseline: 82.22% FFY 2014 Performance: 89.28%

Year	MDE Proposed	SEAC Work Group Proposed	SEAC Committee	MDE Submitted to OSEP
2014	87.00%	N/A	N/A	≥87.00%
2015	87.50%	N/A	N/A	≥87.50%
2016	88.00%	89.30%	89.3%	≥88.00%
2017	88.50%	89.40%	89.4%	≥88.50%
2018	89.00%	89.50%	89.5%	≥89.00%

Summary Statement 2

The percent of preschool children who were functioning within age expectations in each outcome by the time they turned 6 years of age or exited the program.

New Baseline: 53.65% FFY 2014 Performance: 56.34%

Year	MDE Proposed	SEAC Work Group Proposed	SEAC Committee	MDE Submitted to OSEP
2014	56.00%	N/A	N/A	≥56.00%
2015	56.10%	N/A	N/A	≥56.10%
2016	56.20%	56.4%	56.4%	≥56.30%
2017	56.30%	56.5%	56.5%	≥56.40%
2018	56.40%	56.6%	56.6%	≥56.50%

SPP #7 – Preschool Outcomes

Outcome C: Use of Appropriate Behaviors to Meet Their Needs

Summary Statement 1

Of those preschool children who entered or exited the preschool program below age expectations in each outcome, the percent who substantially increased their rate of growth by the time they turned 6 years of age or exited the program.

New Baseline: 81.31% FFY 2014 Performance: 87.85%

Year	MDE Proposed	SEAC Work Group Proposed	SEAC Committee	MDE Submitted to OSEP
2014	86.00%	N/A	N/A	≥86.00%
2015	86.50%	N/A	N/A	≥86.50%
2016	87.00%	88.00%	88.00%	≥87.25%
2017	87.50%	88.25%	88.25%	≥87.75%
2018	88.00%	88.50%	88.50%	≥88.25%

Summary Statement 2

The percent of preschool children who were functioning within age expectations in each Outcome by the time they turned 6 years of age or exited the program.

New Baseline: 58.72% FFY 2014 Performance: 59.17%

Year	MDE Proposed	SEAC Work Group Proposed	SEAC Committee	MDE Submitted to OSEP
2014	59.10%	N/A	N/A	≥59.10%
2015	59.20%	N/A	N/A	≥59.20%
2016	59.30%	59.3%	59.3%	≥59.30%
2017	59.40%	59.5%	59.5%	≥59.40%
2018	59.50%	59.7%	59.7%	≥59.50%

Related comments submitted by the SEAC to the OSE regarding proposed State Performance Plan (SPP) targets for Indicator 7

SEAC members understand Michigan's obligation to set and work toward statewide aggregate targets for each SPP indicator for submission to the U.S. Department of Education.

SEAC members also understand that the MDE must disaggregate Indicator performance data by local educational agency and publicly report each district's performance on this Indicator, including whether or not the state target was met. SEAC members believe that this disaggregated data has more practical significance in determining which districts need additional attention and support to increase the rate of educational success among its young children. Also, SEAC members shared concern that when a district provides programming for children with the most significant learning challenges, it is not reasonable to believe that some of those programs will meet the target. Those children in their program must be prioritized for quality programs and services so that their rate of learning accelerates, but this must be done in a way that while holding the district accountable for progress, it is not punitive.

There is another way that SEAC members believe Indicator 7 data must be analyzed to best serve Michigan's neediest children. The data should also be disaggregated by race/ethnicity, so that the progress of children in each racial/ethnic subgroup can be analyzed, both at the state level, and more importantly, at the local level, so that high quality, evidence-based programming can reach those who need it most. There is a risk that good progress among one or two racial subgroups can mask limited performance among children in minority races.

Finally, SEAC members understand that it is Michigan's protocol to report data by operating district, the district where the child attends school every day. It would also be helpful, if possible to analyze data by resident district. This helps to paint the picture of the needs of our communities, so that our communities can better understand the needs of its residents. With the current pattern of Schools of Choice, collaborative programming across districts and public school academies serving children from multiple districts, the operating district data may mask important information that could inform the development of community-based supports for local residents.

By uncovering and then closely focusing on the neediest young children, Michigan's attainment of its Indicator 7 summary targets will have the most meaning.

Appendix C

SAT Information for the Superintendent's Weekly Update to the State Board of Education

Date: March 8, 2016

SEAC members have identified that for students with disabilities and those who work with these students, communication is the most important area to help everyone understand the SAT assessment and the accommodation process. SEAC has identified the following issues that need more communication with the field:

1. Michigan has a state specific website regarding the SAT. There is still confusion when people visit the national College Board site rather than the specific Michigan SAT website.
2. Parents, students, and educators need to understand more fully what "college reportable scores" mean, in simple language, so that they can make informed decisions in Individualized Education Programs (IEPs).
3. "Spotlight on Student Assessment and Accountability" is a great resource, but more people need to know about this resource.
4. More information regarding the Khan Academy sample testing and test preparation needs to be disseminated to the families.
5. It will help if organizations such as the Michigan Association of Secondary School Principals, as well as teacher and family organizations receive this information to post on their websites and send on to their constituents.

In summary, the best way to help individuals understand the nuances of implementing the SAT is to make sure that the correct information is communicated to the right people in a timely fashion. Resources that help explain the SAT accommodation process, wording for the IEP, sample testing and test preparation through the Khan Academy should be readily available and easily accessed. The SEAC is recommending that all the offices in MDE assist the Office of Assessment and Accountability in getting the word out to families and educators. Simultaneously, SEAC will reach out to its constituent organizations to assist in the communication outreach to help assure that IEP teams make informed accommodation recommendations, and students optimize their SAT performance.

Appendix D

An Analysis of the Educational Experience/Progress Among Native American, Hispanic and White Students in Michigan, Including Those With Disabilities

As the Michigan Department of Education and State Board of Education prepare their vision and plan to become a "Top 10 in 10" state, Michigan's Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC) believes it is critical that the data be analyzed in depth to better identify the interventions that will improve outcomes for all students as indicated in the Guiding Principles and Strategic Goals. The members of SEAC believe that it is important to identify and address the variety of factors (e.g., cultural, socioeconomic, linguistic, poverty, homelessness, special education rates, etc.) that may impact graduation rates, dropout rates, academic achievement, employability, and other post-secondary outcomes for all students. It is imperative that Michigan's educational stakeholders consider the unique needs of student subgroups, and

challenge the belief that “one size fits all.” By sharing some recent SEAC data analyses with the State Board of Education, SEAC members hope that this can bring awareness to these issues and start a deep dialogue among educational stakeholders.

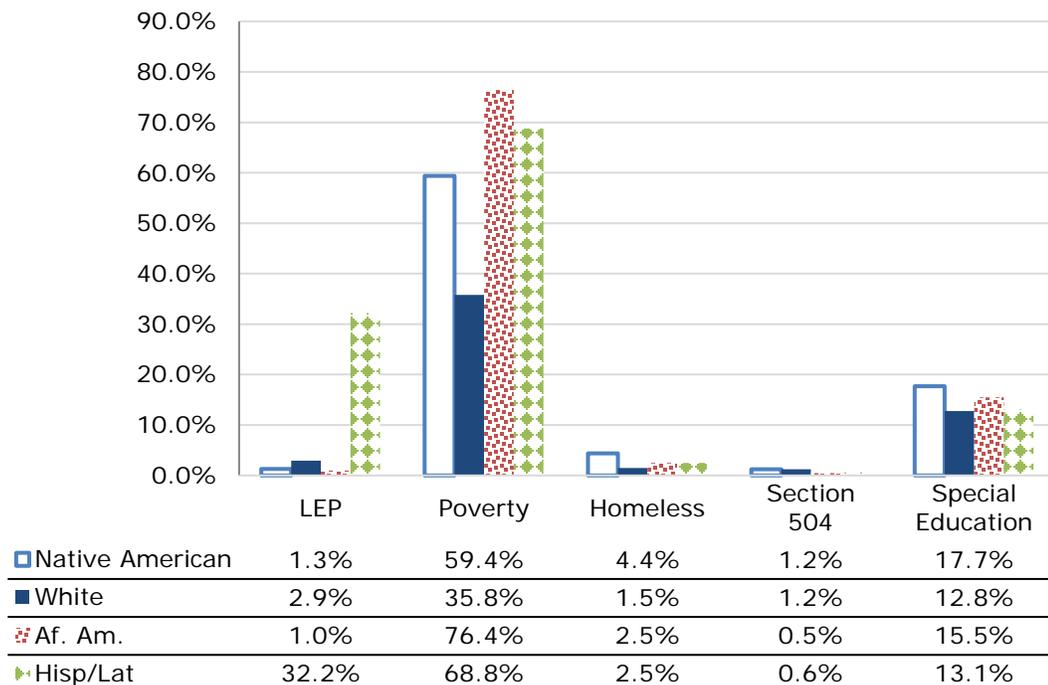
Table 1. Student Count Data for Michigan

Student Population	Overall Student Count	Percentage (%) of Overall Student Population	Students Receiving Special Education Services Count	Percentage (%) of Students Receiving Special Education Services
Total Count	1,633,297	100%	214,307	12.8%
Native American	13,487	1%	2,384	17.7%
African American	283,137	21%	43,805	15.5%
Hispanic/Latino	112,566	7%	14,702	13.1%

Spring 2015 Michigan Student Data System (MSDS), Birth to 26

The data in Table 1 show that students that are Native American or African American are identified for special education services at a greater rate than the average of all students.

Figure 1. Special Factors to Consider for Students



Spring 2015 Michigan Student Data System (MSDS), Birth to 26

The data in Figure 1 show that Native American, African American, and Hispanic/Latino students experience greater instances of poverty and homelessness than their White peers.

Table 2. Reading Proficiency Data across Subgroups

Third Grade Reading Proficiency Rates

Group	2008-2009	2013-2014	Average Change per Year	Number of Years to 85%
All	58.9	61.3	+0.48	N/A
African American	38.3	37.3	-0.02	N/A
Hispanic	41.8	46.9	+1.02	37.35
Economically Disadvantaged	44.4	47.9	+0.7	53
English Language Learners	32.6	37.2	+0.92	51.96
Students with Disabilities	29.1	35.1	+1.20	41.58

Fifth Grade Reading Proficiency Rates

Group	2008-2009	2013-2014	Average Change per Year	Number of Years to 85%
All	58.6	71.7	+2.62	5.08
African American	33.1	48.7	+3.12	11.63
Hispanic	40.0	60.8	+4.16	5.82
Economically Disadvantaged	41.2	59.4	+3.64	7.03
English Language Learners	21.9	39.2	+3.46	13.24
Students with Disabilities	24.8	41.0	+3.26	13.47

Eighth Grade Reading Proficiency Rates

Group	2008-2009	2013-2014	Average Change per Year	Number of Years to 85%
All	52.1	72.7	+4.12	2.99
African American	29.0	49.7	+4.14	8.53
Hispanic	36.8	61.8	+5.00	4.64
Economically Disadvantaged	35.8	60.1	+4.86	5.12

Group	2008-2009	2013-2014	Average Change per Year	Number of Years to 85%
English Language Learners	19.2	35.5	+3.62	15.18
Students with Disabilities	19.5	33.9	+3.68	13.89

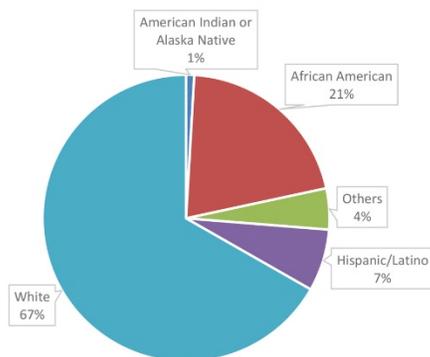
Eleventh Grade Reading Proficiency Rates

Group	2008-2009	2013-2014	Average Change per Year	Number of Years to 85%
All	49.1	54.0	+1.2	20.22
African American	23.1	29.0	+1.5	33.58
Hispanic	34.0	45.0	+1.2	37.5
Economically Disadvantaged	31.5	38.0	+1.6	24.85
English Language Learners	11.4	13.0	+0.4	166.5
Students with Disabilities	15.5	19.0	+0.9	68.7

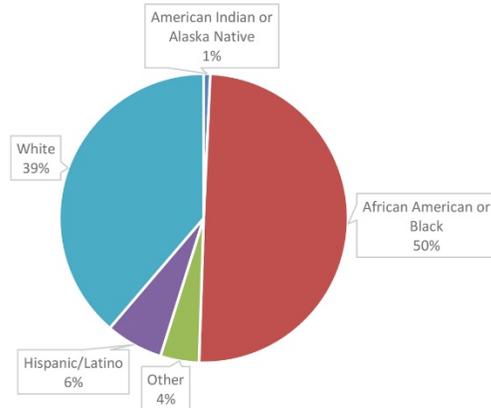
Data in Table 2 represents a snapshot of a single point in time. Given the rates of growth identified in Table 2, SEAC members believe that Michigan cannot continue to keep doing “business as usual” if Michigan expects all students to achieve the 85% reading proficiency standard.

Figure 2. Greater than 10 Day Suspension and Expulsion by Race Ethnicity among Students with an IEP (SWI)

Total population of students with IEPs



Students with IEPs suspended more than 10 days



Total Population of Students With IEPs

American Indian or Alaska Native	African American	White	Hispanic/Latino	Other
1%	21%	67%	7%	4%

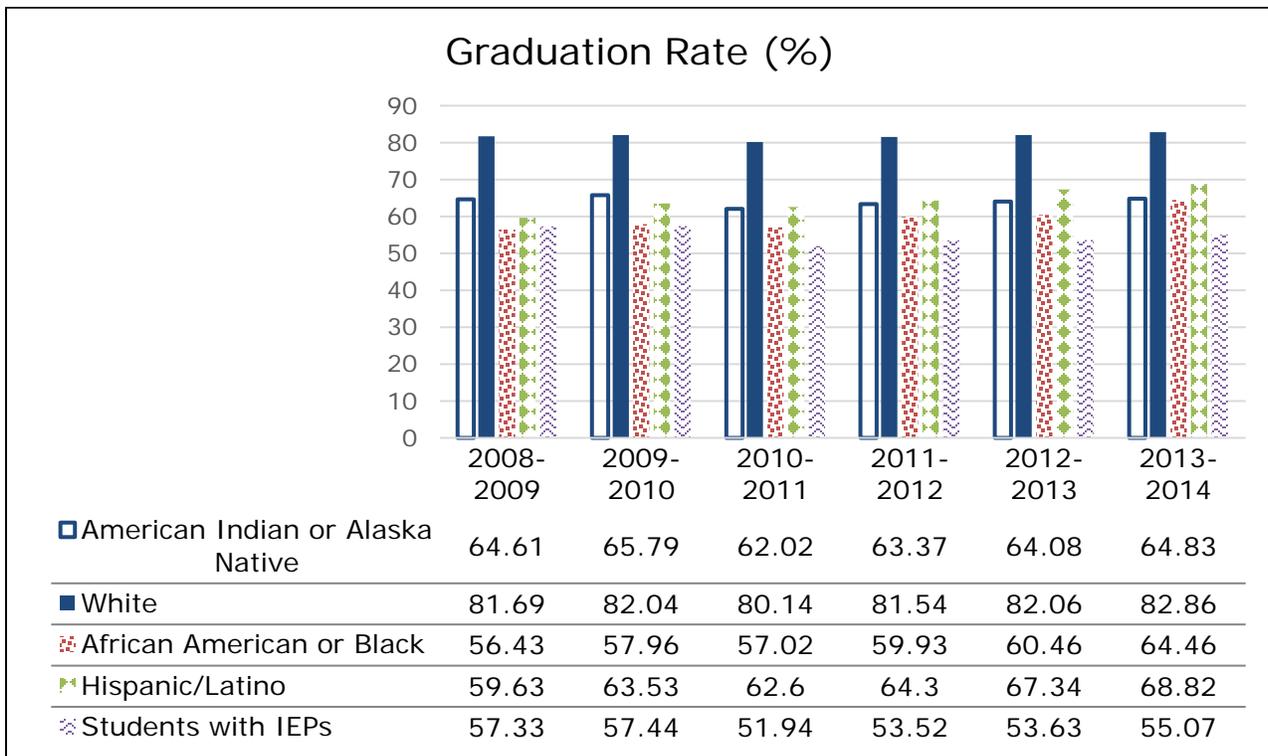
Students With IEPs Suspended More Than 10 Days

American Indian or Alaska Native	African American	White	Hispanic/Latino	Other
1%	50%	39%	6%	4%

2015 Michigan Student Data System (MSDS), ages 3 – 21

Figure 2 shows that students who are African American are suspended with greater frequency than students of other ethnicities which results in missed instructional opportunities and negative effects on student academic proficiency.

Figure 3. 4-Year Cohort Graduation Rates in Michigan across Subgroups



MISchoolData.org, *Graduation and Dropout (GAD) Data Trends, 2008-2014*

As indicated in Figure 3, graduation rates for students with disabilities, Native American, African American, and Latino/Hispanic American students remain significantly below the rate for White students without disabilities.

Due to the fact that there are fewer graduates in the Native American, African American, Latino/Hispanic, and students with disabilities subgroups there is less likelihood that the students will engage in post-secondary educational opportunities such as college and/or be prepared for life beyond school.

Of the students who attend college, students from these subgroups are much more likely to enroll in remedial or foundational college courses their first year and have a higher attrition rate than white students. This demonstrates a lack of educational preparedness and the inability of the educational system to prepare students for post-secondary educational opportunities (MI School Data STARR & NCES Outcomes Data, 2012-2013.)

In addition, according to Office of Disability Employment Policy (ODEP) data, only one-third (32%) of working-age people with disabilities were employed on average in the 2010-2012 period, compared to over two-thirds (72.7%) of people without disabilities. Employment rates were particularly low among African American individuals and those with low levels of education (ODEP, 2012).

In Conclusion

Overall, some composite statewide data may not look too disturbing. However, the composite data obscure the "real story" about what is occurring for individual students within the various demographic groups across critical outcomes.

When considering state level data and action plans, it is important to look beyond aggregated data sets that may not accurately reflect the outcomes for each student, or even subgroups of students. The SEAC strongly believes that all students should have an opportunity to achieve success in school and beyond. When state level data is disaggregated, educators and families can better understand the challenges and needs of children across the state that will allow schools to develop and implement more effective and targeted intervention strategies.

The reality is that numbers can be deceiving, and they do not always represent the outcomes for each of Michigan's children. So, while certain data points (e.g., graduation rates) have shown improvement over time, Native American, African American, Latino/Hispanic, and students with disabilities continue to perform well below state averages. Children in these subgroups deserve Michigan's close consideration and commitment.

Thank you for taking the time to consider this important information.

Appendix E

Meeting the Needs of Students With Challenging Behavior

The Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC) formed a sub-committee to explore members' concerns regarding meeting the needs of students exhibiting challenging behavior(s) in our schools. The committee's working definition of challenging behavior was a severe, persistent pattern of behavior that could endanger the student or those around him/her and consistently disrupts the learning environment. Dr. Steve Goodman, Director of MIBLSI, provided consulting support to this sub-committee. The committee's focus was to provide ideas that will support school districts, equipping school personnel with information, tools, and resources to implement strategies, programs, and social supports needed to reduce challenging behaviors. In turn, this would increase the likelihood of all students' educational progress by reducing time and attention directed toward problematic behavior as well as stress among both students and school personnel.

Many students demonstrate aggressive behaviors toward others or themselves, which disrupts academic learning and poses risks in schools. The committee explored the needs of students, which contribute to the disciplinary events, as well as the concerns of dedicated professionals committed to educating and supporting them. The committee also learned about systems districts already have in place for all students surrounding socio-emotional functioning and behavior.

The essential learning outcomes centered around the needs of students and personnel. While the committee addressed a robust list of topics, the primary learning included:

- Michigan adopted a Positive Behavior Supports Policy in 2006, which required each school district to implement a system of school-wide positive behavior support strategies. Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) is a wonderful framework for assisting school personnel in adopting and organizing evidence-based behavioral interventions into an integrated continuum, which enhances academic and social behavior outcomes for all students. PBIS aligns with district use of a Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS). This integrated, multi-tiered system of instruction, assessment, and intervention is designed to meet the achievement and behavioral health needs of ALL learners. MTSS follows a 3 Tier process;
 - Tier 1 is intentional, instructional practice of pro-social skills for *all* students,
 - Tier 2 targets interventions for *some* students needing additional support, and
 - Tier 3 provides more intensive interventions for the *few* students who need it most.

The committee questions whether all districts are truly operating PBIS and MTSS programs and, if so, are they being implemented with fidelity?

- Professional learning opportunities regarding PBIS and MTSS only reach some personnel in some LEAs, therefore, limiting understanding and compassion for supporting students demonstrating the most challenging behaviors. When school professionals do not feel equipped to manage the behaviors of these students, biases may be created or exacerbated, and the students' needs are ultimately not met.
- There are currently 3 grants (Project Aware, Safe Schools Healthy Schools, and School Climate Transformation), awarded to a few intermediate school districts (ISDs) and/or local educational agencies (LEAs), focusing on mental health in schools.

- Project Aware is funded by the Substance Abuse Mental Health Services Administration and granted to Kent, Jackson, and Oakland ISDs (3 ISDs).
- Safe Schools Healthy Students is funded by the Substance Abuse Mental Health Services Administration and is granted to The School District of the City of Saginaw, Education Achievement Authority of Michigan (EAA), and Houghton Lake Community Schools (3 LEAs).
- School Climate Transformation is funded by the United States Department of Education and training/coaching is provided to 90 ISDs and LEAs.

The existence/funding of these grants confirms the state's awareness that mental health support is needed in our schools. The SEAC believes, however, that there is a lack of access to, and collaboration with, mental health professionals within and outside of many schools. The schools that are not fortunate enough to be participating in these grants may not be addressing the mental health needs of their students. Likewise, when these grant cycles end, how will these ISDs/LEAs ensure this important work continues and expands?

- Barriers exist on how mental health services are provided across a multi-tiered system of support. Districts have different interpretations of how they can appropriate funding for mental health supports. For example, some districts limit the functions of their school psychologists and school social workers, who are trained to teach pro-social skills, to only serve students with Individualized Education Programs (IEPs). Districts may be misinterpreting policy regarding how funds, other than special education dollars, can be utilized so these professionals can provide early intervening services to students with the most challenging behaviors. In essence, schools are **not** optimizing strategic use of personnel to be of most benefit to the students. Funding could be used differently to strategically assign qualified personnel to support the students with the most significant behavioral needs.

After careful review, the committee generated a list of observations and recommendations for the State Board of Education's consideration. They are grouped into four clusters:

- data collection and analysis,
- systems change,
- professional learning,
- funding allocations.

Data collection and analysis

What needs to be looked at carefully, to serve as the basis for planning?

- Consider universal statewide data on student suspensions, rather than just for students with IEPs. This would create a more comprehensive picture of the situation.
- Identify mental health needs in all districts.

- Support standardization in building level data driven progress monitoring to help identify where to focus professional learning and technical assistance.

Systems Change

Based on analysis of the data and the identification of related priorities, what could the state and/or districts prioritize for focused attention?

- Develop a process to connect students who have mental health needs with effective/quality resources. This may require referrals to community providers if education funding isn't available.
- Utilize a framework of school mental health pilots and/or grants to further collaboration among existing resources within schools and outside of schools (i.e. counseling, psychology, social work, psychiatry, etc.) to more effectively reach any students whose behavior is impacting learning. Consider increasing staffing levels to better meet the need.
- Implement effective systems.
 - Often, when people talk about PBIS, they view it as another step to special education.
 - Often, when implementing PBIS, people commonly stop at tier 1. How often do we assume school staff won't change vs. don't know how to change? Provide supports for staff and keep high expectations for students.
 - Often, people look at students who need tier 3 supports and think the practice that was set up for a student identified as tier 3 will work with another student. In tier 3, look at processes for setting up a system *individualized* for each student, rather than using practices that worked for one student and applying that to another.
- Increase accountability for reporting progress for students in tiers 2 and 3. Currently the only universal data collection concerns expulsion. In Michigan, it is only required to collect and report most suspension data to the state for students with IEPs. There is support for making it easier for schools to report data and not be punished by it if a district reports data that reflects a problem. The district needs to be responsible to address this and should have access to support for doing so.
- The 2006 SBE policy (not mandated) states that districts should implement PBIS. It would help to have districts understand the value added by implementing the approach with fidelity—a systematically applied problem solving model with substantive progress monitoring.
- Invest in PBIS and mental health systems and support students/LEAs with adequate professional learning and funding.
- Develop capacity/sustainability, moving toward an effective coaching model where the team concept requirements are met. The team should include the following: a professional that understands behavior, a staff member who understands the nuances of the school's schedule, and someone who fully knows the child experiencing behavioral challenges.

- Provide a statewide standard for a functional behavior assessments (FBA), providing guidance, and possibly sample forms, to help create consistency.
- Encourage development of an accurate, non-punitive feedback system within districts that informs personnel about the effectiveness of the districts' PBIS system and that encourages positive change at the local and ISD levels.
- Tier 3 supports and mental health issues continue to be of concern in Michigan and nationally. Mental health services in rural areas are very different than urban areas. Michigan is looking at how to involve mental health, juvenile justice, social services at all tiers as needed. Consider models interconnecting school mental health and school-wide positive behavior support such as the existing models across the U.S. (Susan Barret, Mark Weist and Lucille Eiber).
- There are locations where high rates of substance abuse or depression occur, and in those locations, more prevention practices could be implemented in Tier 1 rather than waiting until Tier 2 or 3 to put responsive practices in place.
- Districts tend to add things on, and need to get rid of what doesn't work. Consider models to address this problem such as the Maryland Safe and Supportive Schools Initiative collaborating with Johns Hopkins (Susan Barrett and Bob Putman).

Professional Learning

How could the state and/or districts support fidelity of implementation with ongoing strategically planned professional learning?

- Provide professional learning for superintendents and principals first, to create a culture of PBIS and MTSS, and ensure that systems are in place for implementing the system with fidelity for all students.
- Implement a team, focusing on prevention and actively teaching pro-social strategies in tiers 1 and 2 including:
 1. Someone with the behavior expertise who understands positive and negative reinforcement.
 2. Someone who understands how building systems work (scheduling, relationships of student).
 3. Someone who understands the individual.
 4. Progress monitor the student's behavior and academic trigger needs.
 5. Progress monitor the building's fidelity of implementation, and determine which personnel need support.
- Focus on behavior prevention and de-escalation via Functional Behavior Assessment (FBA) to better understand the interaction between the environment and the individual. People are asking, "How do we do the FBA correctly?" Gain a better understanding of neutralizing routines and

underlying triggers (e.g. health, fears, medications, sleep patterns, familial stressors, unhealthy school/home environments, etc.). Recommend what should be included in a “good” FBA form. Encourage consistent practice in forms and evidence based practices. There are protocols to assess if this is being implemented with fidelity and can be used to gain input (e.g., PBIS.org and the MIBLSI website).

- Build capacity through use of local coaches.
- Arrange joint, ongoing special education and general education professional learning opportunities about students with mental health issues and how to support them.

Funding Allocation

How could this be refined in order to overcome barriers and support implementation of the system and associated professional learning needs?

- Do problem solving around the use of budget to address local needs, i.e.
 - School psychologists and school social workers for special education only vs. for all students. Clarify interpretation of law for locals.
 - There is confusion that Tier 3 is special education rather than intensive intervention for any student who needs it for a period of time.
- Find ways to braid or pool funding among ALL community partners.
- Sometimes professionals can't be part of the team because the service is not Medicaid billable. Are there other options?
- Fund schools to staff mental health professionals that can analyze, support teams, teach pro-social skills, connect with resources, etc.
- Invest in a PBIS and mental health system that supports students and those who serve them.

SEAC members hope that these preliminary observations and recommendations are considered as a resource to improve educational outcomes for all students throughout Michigan. The topic of challenging behavior is extremely complex. The committee plans to further analyze the relationship and distinctions between PBIS and mental health supports in schools. More specifically, how can capacity be built in schools to support students with mental illnesses and other mental health needs? This document alone cannot begin to address the multitude of options that could benefit students across Michigan.

SEAC plans to continue work in this area in the year ahead and requests State Board of Education (SBE) feedback regarding specific aspects of the issue that it would help to have a diverse stakeholder advisory group such as the SEAC explore. For instance, would it help the SBE for the SEAC challenging behavior subcommittee to:

- Review and make recommendations for an update of the current state PBIS document that would better serve district personnel?

- Consider specific observed relationships in LEAs between challenging behavior and the SBE's health and poverty priorities?
- Consider specific observed relationships in LEAs between challenging behavior and the SBE's bullying priority?
- Address other related priorities that the SBE would identify?

Thank you, in advance, for your consideration of the issue of challenging behavior in our schools and your feedback to the SEAC regarding how this committee can assist.

Committee Members

	Organization	Name	Role
1.	American Federation of Teachers Michigan	LaTika Fenderson	Program Associate
2.	American Federation of Teachers Michigan	Lois Lofton-Doniver	Special Educational Issues Coordinator
3.	Autism Society of Michigan	Kira Rockman	Board Member ASM
4.	Member-At-Large	Paulette Duggins	Executive Director of Down Syndrome Guild of SE Michigan
5.	Member-At-Large	Nicole Miller	Parent of a child with a disability
6.	Member-At-Large	Amy Sanderson	Parent Advocate
7.	Michigan Alliance for Families	Caryn Pack Ivey	Co-Director MAF
8.	Michigan Association of Administrators of Special Education	Sue Pearson	Director of Special Education
9.	Michigan Association of Public School Academies	Kimberly Love, co-Chair	Social Worker
10.	Michigan Association of School Boards	Mark McKulsky	Board member
11.	Michigan Association of School Psychologists	Jim Corr	School Psychologist
12.	Michigan Association of School Social Workers	Teri Metros	School Social Worker
13.	Michigan Education Association	Tom Greene	Field Services Consultant
14.	Michigan Elementary and Middle School Principals Association	Craig McCalla	Principal

	Organization	Name	Role
15.	Michigan Speech-Language Hearing Association	Lori Haindl Torres, co-Chair	Speech-Language Pathologist