



STATE OF MICHIGAN
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
LANSING



THOMAS D. WATKINS, JR.
SUPERINTENDENT OF
PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

JENNIFER M. GRANHOLM
GOVERNOR

February 12, 2003

MEMORANDUM

TO: State Board of Education

FROM: Thomas D. Watkins, Jr., Chairperson

SUBJECT: Discussion on the Special Education Advisory Committee
Activities Mid-Year Report for 2002-2003

Act 240 of the Public Acts of 1983 created a Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC) to advise the State Board of Education on matters relating to special education. Attachment A lists the organizations represented on the SEAC.

Federal regulations require that the state's SEAC submit an annual report of its activities and suggestions to the State Board of Education [34 CFR 300.653(b)] to implement the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. Attachment B is the Mid-Year Report from October 2002 to January 2003. Attachment C contains the attendance records for each SEAC member during the 2002-2003 school year.

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**ORGANIZATIONS REPRESENTED ON THE SPECIAL EDUCATION
ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

<u>Organization</u>	<u>Acronym</u>
1. The Arc Michigan	Arc
2. Autism Society of Michigan	ASM
3. Citizens Alliance to Uphold Special Education	CAUSE
4. Council for Exceptional Children	CEC
5. Learning Disabilities Association of Michigan	LDAM
6. Michigan Association of Administrators of Special Education	MAASE
7. Michigan Association for Children with Emotional Disorders	MACED
8. Michigan Association of Intermediate School Administrators	MAISA
9. Michigan Association of Intermediate Special Education Administrators	MAISEA
*10. Michigan Association of Teachers of Emotionally Disturbed Children Michigan Association of Learning Disability Educators	MATEDC/ MALDE
11. Michigan Association of School Administrators	MASA
12. Michigan Association of School Boards	MASB
*13. Michigan Association of School Psychologists/ Michigan Association of School Social Workers	MASP/ MASSW
14. Michigan Education Association	MEA
15. Michigan Federation of Teachers	MFT
16. Michigan Speech-Language-Hearing Association	MSLHA
17. Statewide Parent Advisory Committee	SPAC
18. Special Education Supervisors of Michigan	SESOM
19. Michigan Transition Services Association	MTSA
20. Michigan Association of Public School Academies	MAPSA
21. Michigan Association of Non-Public Schools	MAANS
22. (vacant organizational seat, formerly Physically Impaired Association of Michigan)	PIAM

*Shared seats

(In addition to the organizational seats, eight at-large members are nominated directly by the State Board of Education.)

State of Michigan
SPECIAL EDUCATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Mid-Year Report 2002-2003

Mission Statement

The mission of the Special Education Advisory Committee 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 State Board of Education; and working with the Office of Special Education and Early Intervention Services.

**Chairperson Report
Mid-Year Summary of 2002-2003 Activities**

Submitted by Shari Krishnan, Chair

Since the SEAC's October 21, 2002 update was sent to you, the SEAC has been rapidly moving along in the five areas identified in that update. For the benefit of our two new Board members, I would like to use those five areas as headings in this midyear report. Beneath those headings, I will bring everyone up-to-date on the status of and work that has been done in those identified areas.

- **Assessing our communication strategies:**

The Operations Subcommittee further examined this topic. This subcommittee was responsible for collecting data and designing a table that demonstrates how various members of the SEAC communicate with our perspective constituencies. Overall, the 2002-2003 SEAC membership has been committed to carrying SEAC's information and messages back to the people who we represent most. (See the attached Report from the Operations subcommittee.)

- **Working on identifying public policy priorities related to special education:**

With the upcoming reauthorization of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), the SEAC, under the leadership of the Policy Subcommittee, identified targeted areas for consideration when the MDE and its related bodies meet with legislative ones. A copy of these targeted areas will be given to Mr. Watkins and all of you. (See the attached Report from the Policy Subcommittee.)

- **Looking at ways to enhance our value as the SEAC:**

As identified earlier, sharing information with the field has become one of this year's SEAC's priorities. Additionally, a more proactive versus reactive approach to policy-related concerns is being attempted. We are also looking toward our bylaws to maintain the fidelity of SEAC's purpose as outlined in the IDEA and expected by the MDE, our State Board, and the public.

- **Discussing the MDE's needs, identified through the Continuous Improvement Monitoring Process, and possible ways that a SEAC subcommittee may help:**

The State Improvement Plan (SIP) Subcommittee has been looking at an area critical to the quality of life of students with disabilities. That area is transition. Along the way in this subcommittee's work, they have identified that there needs to be more tangible links among the Continuous Improvement Monitoring Process, MDE grant initiatives, and the work that SEAC does to support them. (See the attached Report from the State Improvement Plan subcommittee.)

- **Planning opportunities to help the SEAC members enhance their understanding of general education issues and their impact on special education:**

This has been a very important year for the SEAC in this area. Because the SEAC has such a diverse stakeholder representation, there is quite a disparity in the knowledge that our members have regarding general education issues that impact special education. Until the gap in this knowledge was narrowed, it would have been difficult to have meaningful conversations among the different stakeholders at the table (reflective of the present state of education).

Starting in November, the SEAC members have had the option to attend an educational "enrichment session," offered during the lunch break. The first series of these sessions have focused on federal, state, and local issues that have an impact on both general and special education. The majority of the presenters have been MDE employees. It was felt that the timing for learning about these topics was critical, since Michigan was rolling out its responses to the No Child Left Behind Act and EducationYES! The enrichment sessions have also helped enhance the communication efforts of the SEAC, since the SEAC is exposed to current information that is interesting and useful to the field.

- **Additional information that completes my addressing the October 21, 2002 report:**

In November, the SEAC had identified some priority issues to study that would help address unmet needs of students with disabilities in Michigan. These SEAC-identified priority issues needed to be set aside to complete the most pressing of MDE's SEAC-related work, the first being the completion of the IDEA policy priorities in a timely manner to make them optimally useful to Mr. Watkins and others as we work through the year of 2003. The second project being to review the many policies, procedures, and their related public comments that have resulted from the updated Special Education Rules package. This is one of SEAC's major roles outlined in our bylaws.

- **Conclusion:**

As the Chair of SEAC, I'd like to thank each of you for your extraordinary support this year. From receiving State Board of Education invitations to join your subcommittee meetings, to being added to MDE Email lists; the SEAC has learned much from these courtesies extended to us by you and the MDE staff. We are seeing a bigger picture of education for the benefit of all students in Michigan. It makes volunteerism worthwhile. I hope that you realize how grateful we are for this.

Please feel free to contact me at anytime should you have questions about this report or the work of the SEAC.

**SEAC Subcommittees
Mid-Year Summaries of 2002-2003 Activities**

**Operations Subcommittee
Submitted by Ginny Palubin and Kathleen Clegg, Co-chairs**

The Operations Subcommittee was asked to research possible ways of expediting the work and meetings of the SEAC. We examined several different possibilities of changing the by-laws and determined any change in the by-laws would be far too restrictive. Currently the SEAC is not required to meet any specific number of times throughout the year. We did, however, recommend the annual retreat be held in June. This will enable the committee to begin its work in September rather than in October.

We asked each member to identify the means of informing their organization of the SEAC's monthly work, decisions, etc. This information has been collated and distributed to the committee members. We feel this information may be helpful for each organization.

A listing of web sites which give legislative information is near completion. This, too, will be distributed to the committee members. We expect this will help the organizations keep in touch with the introduction of legislative bills.

Lastly, we created a schedule of meetings for the 2003 - 2004 year. A survey has been e-mailed to each member asking them to choose the dates for a June retreat. Once the results have been compiled, the schedule will be ready for publication. We anticipate this information will be forwarded to each organization thus allowing any new members a knowledge base for their SEAC commitment.

**State Improvement Plan Subcommittee
Submitted by Pam Mish, Chair**

The SIP subcommittee had decided to examine the state of transition practices in Michigan as the focus of our work for this year. To date we have looked at the activities and personnel development to support transition across our state. We have developed a list of questions regarding the impact of those transition activities on student outcomes into their adult lives. We would also like to identify the gaps and next steps that should be taken to further the broader educational agenda for Michigan.

At our December meeting, the SIP subcommittee had a lengthy discussion about our work and its relationship to the Continuous Improvement Monitoring Process (CIMP) committee reports. We decided that we needed further clarification from the Michigan Department of Education before we proceed with our activities on Transition.

**Policy Subcommittee
Submitted by Steve Wessels and Brenda Kotsis, Co-chairs**

Our subcommittee time was spent gathering our representative organization's national position papers on the subject of reauthorization of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), organizing these priorities, and discussing the fit or match with committee member's feelings about this piece of federal legislation. Additional concerns were brought to the table, and this total list of concerns or priorities was then organized by topic area. Seven topic areas emerged, and from this list of seven, three were found to be of the highest concern to subcommittee members.

This process of refining and organizing was presented to the SEAC in December and they requested a straw vote on the seven topic areas. The straw vote resulted in a slight reorganization of priorities. A final list of four priorities was then worked up in narrative form and presented for approval.

Our next challenge will be to look at the public comment taken on the draft of the Inclusive Education Policy statement this committee presented to the SBE in June 2002, and make a recommendation to the SBE in a timely fashion.

Special Education Advisory Committee
2002-03 Attendance

Name	Organization	2002				2003					
		Retreat	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June
Clegg	At-Large	P	P	P	P	P					
Clement	Arc	P	P	A	P	P					
Coleman	At-Large	P	P	P	A	P					
Ervin	At-Large	P	A	P	P	P					
Fialka	At-Large	P	P	P	A	P					
High	LDAM	P	P	P	P	P					
Hogerheide	MEA	P	P	P	P	P					
Jackson	MACED	P	P	P	A	P					
Jacobs	MANS	P	P	P	*	P					
Keller	CAUSE	P	P	A	*	P					
Kotsis	At-Large	P	P	P	*	P					
Krishnan	At-Large	P	P	P	P	P					
Kubaiko	MAPSA	P	P	P	A	P					
McNeilly	MTSA	P	P	P	P	P					
Mish	MAASE	P	P	P	*	P					
Opsommer	ASM	A	P	P	A	P					
Palubin	MFT&SRP	P	P	A	P	P					
Rabidoux	MSLHA	P	A	P	P	P					
Roush	At-Large	P	P	P	P	P					
Russell	MASB	P	P	P	P	P					
Schwartz	MASP	P	P	P	P	P					
Siegel	MAISA	A	P	P	A	P					
Simpson	At-Large	P	P	P	P	P					
Smith	SESOM	P	P	*	P	*					
Trap	MAISEA	P	P	P	*	P					
VanderPloeg	CEC	P	P	P	P	P					
VanGasse	MASA	P	P	P	P	P					
Ward	SPAC	P	P	P	P	*					
Wessels	MALDE/MATEDC	P	P	P	P	P					

P = Present A = Absent * = Alternate

2/7/2003

**Special Education Advisory Committee
2002-03 Presenters**

Meeting Date	Name	Title	Organization	Topic
September 9, 2002	Kathleen Straus	President	State Board of Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication
October 1, 2002	Tom Watkins	Superintendent of Public Instruction	Michigan Department of Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Superintendent Requests¹
November 5, 2002	Beth Steenwyk	Director, Special Education	Comstock Public Schools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • President's Commission on Excellence in Special Education² and • No Child Left Behind³ • Transition⁴
	Jan Yoak-Newman	Director	Transition Services Project (TSP)	
December 4, 2002	Peggy Dutcher	MI Access Coordinator	MDE- Office of Special Education/Early Intervention Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MI Access
January 8, 2003	Paul Bielawski	Special Assistant for Under Performing Schools	Michigan Department of Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Education YES!
February 5, 2003	Elizabeth Bauer Carolyn Curtin	State Board of Education Members		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction to SEAC
April or May NOT CONFIRMED	Barb Wybrecht			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fetal Alcohol Syndrome

¹ Executive Committee Only

² SEAC Committee of the Whole

³ Policy Subcommittee

⁴ State Improvement Plan Subcommittee (SIP)