

# Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC)

---

2018-2019 Annual Report



Michigan Department of Education  
Special Education Advisory Committee

## Table of Contents

<b>Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC) 2018-2019 Annual Report..</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Introduction.....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The SEAC’s Mission.....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The Purpose of the Committee .....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>SEAC Learning.....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>2018–2019 SEAC Committee of the Whole Work Relative to the Six IDEA     State Advisory Panel Duties .....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>2018–2019 SEAC Participants .....</b>	<b>9</b>
Delegates.....	9
Alternates.....	11
Ex-Officio Members.....	12
Ex-Officio Alternates .....	13
<b>Appendix: Michigan’s Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC)     Subcommittee Charges .....</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>2018-2019 .....</b>	<b>14</b>
Ongoing Committees .....	14
Ad Hoc Committees --1 to 2 meetings annually .....	16
MDE Committees with SEAC Representation .....	17

# Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC)

## 2018-2019 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 summarizing its activities for the 2018-2019 school year.

### The SEAC's Mission

The mission of the SEAC is to promote positive outcomes for all Michigan students with disabilities by:

- gathering, sharing, and disseminating information,
- communicating with stakeholders,
- identifying unmet needs,
- collaborating with the Office of Special Education, and
- advising the State Board of Education.

### 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.

The State Advisory Panel must:

#### **§300.169 Duties**

- (a) Advise the SEA of unmet needs within the State in the education of children with disabilities;
- (b) Comment publicly on any rules or regulations proposed by the State regarding the education of children with disabilities;
- (c) Advise the SEA in developing evaluations and reporting on data to the Secretary under section 618 of the Act;
- (d) Advise the SEA in developing corrective action plans to address findings identified in Federal monitoring reports under Part B of the Act; and
- (e) Advise the SEA in developing and implementing policies relating to the coordination of services for children with disabilities.

#### **§300.513(d)(1)**

- (a) Decision of hearing officer on the provision of FAPE.
- (d) Findings and decision to advisory panel and general public. The public agency, after deleting any personally identifiable information, must—
  - (1) Transmit the findings and decisions referred to in §300.512(a)(5) to the State advisory panel established under §300.167;

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 students with disabilities (see pages 9-13 for 2018-2019 SEAC participants). By federal statute, at least fifty-one percent of the membership must be individuals with disabilities 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 that engages in learning to build a shared understanding around a host of complex topics affecting students with disabilities. This year the committee engaged in a variety of learning opportunities in order to make recommendations to the MDE and SBE.

As a basis for structuring these learning opportunities, members identified what is going well and what needs enhancement in terms of communication from constituent groups to the SEAC and from the SEAC to constituent groups. It is key to the SEAC's effectiveness that the conversations at SEAC meetings reflect member organizations' concerns, not just the concerns of the individual delegate. Similarly, SEAC learning has limited impact if the new learning is not shared back with the member organizations. The Executive Committee routinely reminds the members of this responsibility, and it informs monthly agenda design.

## **SEAC Learning**

Given the diversity of SEAC members and the prior knowledge they bring to the work, SEAC learning established shared understandings to ensure that decisions reflected shared understanding and beliefs. This year, in addition to routine special education updates from the Office of Special Education (OSE) Director and the Policy Supervisor, and emerging legislation updates from the MDE legislative liaison, information presented to prepare the SEAC members for their advisory role included:

1. Progress in the MDE Top Ten in Ten Initiative.
2. Supporting Beginner Teacher Enactment of High-Leverage Practices, Dr. Paula Lancaster.
3. Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) state initiative, Jodi Spicer.
4. The Path Forward: the MDE Response to the United States Department of Education (USED) Determination, Dr. Scott Koenigschnecht.
5. Read by Grade Three state initiative, Dr. Kim St. Martin.
6. Family Matters documents, Stacie Rulison.

Members also had the opportunity to participate in the quarterly national State Advisory Panel (SAP) webinars hosted by the USED, Office of Special Education

## Programs and National Association of State Directors of Special Education (NASDSE).

During monthly meetings, SEAC members worked as a learning community, developing and sharing information regarding the work of each member organization/agency as it relates to the SEAC's work. Over the course of the year, each SEAC member provided a written and oral report to the SEAC regarding their organization's/agency's work relative to the SEAC's annual priorities. Members-at-large offered similar reports. The purpose was to help members understand the varied expertise, perspectives, and resources that could enrich the SEAC's work. SEAC's annual priorities were to:

1. Understand and support the MDE work in its long-term process of state systemic improvement in support of the Top 10 in 10 priorities.
2. Mandatory professional learning for both incoming special and general educators as well as current educators, to build their capacity to effectively serve students with IEPs in the least restrictive environment (LRE).
3. Michigan's Read by Grade Three Law challenges and implications for students reading below grade level and for special education programs and services.

After introducing the organization's/agency's mission and purpose, as well as the number of members in the organization, each delegate addressed two questions:

1. What should the SEAC know about your organization/agency and its priorities/concerns to do the SEAC's work in a thorough, effective manner?
2. What input could SEAC members provide to help your organization/agency with a particular concern about effectively serving students with individualized education programs (IEPs)?

Delegates also had the opportunity to highlight other critical issues for their organization/agency that related to the SEAC's work.

The MDE legislative liaison is an Ex-Officio member. She provided updates during several meetings to the SEAC Committee of the Whole on pending legislation that could impact students with IEPs. This served as a helpful backdrop to the SEAC's readiness to provide informed advice.

This year a new Ex-Officio seat was added to the SEAC. It is a one year appointment for the Michigan Teacher of the Year. Laura Chang, the 2018-2019 Teacher of the Year also provided updates during several meetings regarding effective practices in the field that can support progress among students with IEPs. This aligned with the professional learning priority.

An additional strategy to engage members and help members learn about one another's work was the convening of four ongoing subcommittees: Bylaws and

Procedures, Membership, SEAC Mission, and SEAC Website. Details about the committee charges are in the Appendix.

The Bylaws and Procedures Committee:

1. Recommended to the Committee of the Whole amendments to both the bylaws & procedures to clarify member roles and responsibilities.
2. Began consideration of how to streamline SEAC's work.

Membership Committee:

1. Mentored new members.
2. Contacted members who missed multiple meetings to try to re-engage them.
3. Edited and then helped circulate memoranda regarding member attendance status per 2018 revised Procedures.
4. Edited and then helped circulate a memorandum, recruiting applicants for the vacant SEAC organizational seat.

The Mission Committee:

1. Reviewed the existing mission statement which has been in effect for many years.
2. Considered recent SEAC products which may be appropriate resources to update the mission.
3. Recommended an amended mission statement.

The Website Committee:

1. Recommended updates to the SEAC Website.
2. Recommended resource materials to include on the national State Advisory Panel (SAP) website. These would be available to Michigan SEAC and other SAPs.
3. Recommended to the executive committee Michigan SEAC resource materials to share with the SAP national website.

## **2018–2019 SEAC Committee of the Whole Work Relative to the Six IDEA State Advisory Panel Duties**

- a) 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 2018–2019 year.
  - 1) Every SEAC meeting has time allocated for Public Comment, so that members can hear about potential unmet needs.
  - 2) SEAC members generated priority topics and content for Family Matters documents.

- 3) They updated bylaws and procedures to clarify membership requirements and foster consistent member engagement.
- 4) As part of the mid-year progress check, SEAC members reviewed the SEAC annual priorities. Then SEAC members identified the following issues to continue/consider as possible unmet needs moving into the 2019-2020 school year:
  - i. State Systemic Improvement
    - (1) Diploma options for all (e.g. without a diploma, financial aid isn't available, and options for employment are limited)
  - ii. Professional Learning
    - (1) Readiness to accept responsibility for differentiated instruction and inclusive practices among all teachers –MDE's whole child focus
    - (2) Improved readiness to address PBIS, trauma-informed practices, personal curriculum, seclusion/restraint, significant disproportionality... with measurable results
    - (3) Progress toward consistent learning in priority areas among all SEAC constituent groups
  - iii. Read by Grade Three Law
    - (1) How to access easy to understand, frequently updated information for all constituent groups – e.g. evidence-based reading instruction practices, "good cause exceptions" for special populations
    - (2) Implications for highly mobile families (frequent school & district changes)
    - (3) Support availability of early intervention for high/at-risk populations
    - (4) Learning connections for preservice students and families
- b) The SEAC learned about the state suspension law affecting the education of children with disabilities as well as others.
- c) The SEAC did not provide advice to the SEA on the target resetting for State Performance Plan Indicators because there were no indicators scheduled for target resets. The SEAC did however provide feedback to the SEA on revising the baseline for Indicator 17, the State Systemic Improvement Plan.
- d) 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 2018–2019 school year. Members were provided with a detailed description of the MDE Path Forward document, the state's response to the USED Needs Intervention Determination. The SEAC had an opportunity to identify issues to consider in developing an improvement plan,

and they had representatives serving on the state action team to further develop the MDE plan.

- e) Relative to the expectation that the SEAC would advise the SEA in developing and implementing policies relating to the coordination of services for children with disabilities, members were kept apprised of the revised state monitoring plan and in June were offered an opportunity to provide feedback on draft communication to stakeholders regarding this new model.

Also, per Michigan law, the SEAC advises the State Board of Education (SBE). In preparation to do so, SEAC representatives attended most of the monthly SBE meetings to help members become aware of and understand issues of concern to the educational community as a whole.

- f) 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 made between July 1, 2018 and May 1, 2019. The SEAC participated in detailed discussion on 10 of the hearings that may reflect a pattern of unmet needs, providing their thoughts to OSE personnel.

In addition, this past year, SEAC members reported the following accomplishments:

- 1) At the request of the State Board of Education, the SEAC contributed input to the State Superintendent search. Thirteen members contributed to the work, sharing the input in print and in an interview with the search organization. The document was designed to reflect the educational interests of students with IEPs and responded specifically to the requested areas:
  - a. Strengths of the educational environment.
  - b. Critical issues facing the successful candidate.
  - c. Qualities/characteristics exemplified by a successful candidate.
- 2) There was SEAC representation on the MDE Family Engagement Work Group (Caryn Pack-Ivey) and Michigan Education Research Institute Advisory Council (Anne-Marie Sladewski).
- 3) There was increased communications between SEAC and member organization constituents about the annual priorities.



## 2018–2019 SEAC Participants

### Delegates

Organization/Role	Committee Participation	Name and Community
Member At-Large	Executive	<b>Anne Barna</b> (Mason)
Member At-Large	State Advisory Panel Website	<b>Justin Caine</b> (Lansing)
Member At-Large	Executive, State Advisory Panel Website	<b>Rob Dickinson</b> (Lansing)
Member At-Large	N/A	<b>Terie Elbers</b> (Reese) through November 2018
Member At-Large	Bylaws	<b>Michelle Frederick</b> (White Lake)
Member At-Large	Executive, State Advisory Panel Website	<b>Jessica Murphy</b> (Portland) through April 2019
Member At-Large	Mission	<b>Lily Schulting</b> (Grand Rapids)
Member At-Large	Mission	<b>Kara Tiethof</b> (Allendale)
Member At-Large	N/A	<b>Regina Umpstead</b> (DeWitt) beginning January 2019
American Federation of Teachers Michigan	Bylaws	<b>Lois Lofton-Doniver</b> (Detroit)
Autism Society of Michigan	Membership, Bylaws	<b>Amy Trahey</b> (Grand Ledge)
Down Syndrome Association of West Michigan	Executive, Membership co-chair	<b>Nancy Spanski</b> (Lakeview)
Learning Disabilities Association of Michigan	N/A	<b>Debra Houde</b> (Saline)
Michigan Alliance for Families	Membership	<b>Kanika Littleton</b> (Farmington Hills)
Michigan Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development	Mission	<b>John Mertz</b> (Bay City)
Michigan Association of Administrators of Special Education	Bylaws	<b>Rebecca McIntyre</b> (Grand Rapids) through May 2019
Michigan Association of Computer Users in Learning	N/A	<b>Mark Smith</b> (Lansing)

<b>Organization/Role</b>	<b>Committee Participation</b>	<b>Name and Community</b>
Michigan Association of Intermediate School Administrators	N/A	<b>Deborah Kadish</b> (Bay City)
Michigan Association of Nonpublic Schools	Mission	<b>Kathy Krause</b> (Farmington Hills)
Michigan Association of Public School Academies	Executive Chair, Bylaws, Mission Membership, State Advisory Panel Website,	<b>Teri Pettit</b> (Fenton)
Michigan Association of School Boards	Executive, Membership co-chair	<b>Jill Fennessy</b> (Sand Lake)
Michigan Association of School Psychologists	Bylaws, Mission co-chair	<b>Jennifer Headley-Nordman</b> (Holland)
Michigan Association of School Social Workers	Membership	<b>Annette Hobrecht</b> (Beverly Hills)
Michigan Association of School Superintendents and Administrators	Membership	<b>Mary Finnigan</b> (Shelby Township)
Michigan Association of Secondary School Principals	State Advisory Panel Website	<b>Charlie Hollerith</b> (Bloomfield)
Michigan Council for Exceptional Children	N/A	<b>Shalika Robie</b> (Dearborn)
Michigan Education Association	N/A	<b>Chandra Madafferi</b> (South Lyon)
Michigan Elementary and Middle School Principals Association	N/A	<b>Caterina Berry</b> (Livonia)
Michigan Occupational Therapy Association	State Advisory Panel Website	<b>Donna Case</b> (Northville)
Michigan Reading Association	Executive Vice chair, Bylaws Co-chair	<b>Nancy Jaskiw</b> (Manistee)
Michigan Speech-Language and Hearing Association	Bylaws	<b>Lori Tavtigian</b> (New Boston)
Michigan Transition Services Association	Bylaws	<b>Melisa Burch</b> (Acme)
Student Advocacy Center of Michigan	State Advisory Panel Website	<b>Kathleen Kosobud</b> (Ypsilanti)
The Arc Michigan	Membership	<b>Kenya Harper-Black</b> (Rockford)

## Alternates

<b>Organization/Role</b>	<b>Committee Participation</b>	<b>Name</b>
American Federation of Teachers Michigan	Bylaws	<b>Rebecca Gibson</b>
Autism Society of Michigan	N/A	<b>Anne Carpenter</b>
Down Syndrome Association of West Michigan	State Advisory Panel Website	<b>Katherine Mills</b>
Learning Disabilities Association of Michigan	N/A	<b>Amy Barto</b>
Michigan Alliance for Families	Mission, MDE Family Engagement Work Group	<b>Caryn Pack-Ivey</b>
Michigan Association of Computer Users in Learning	State Advisory Panel Website	<b>Laura Griffith</b>
Michigan Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development	Mission co-chair, Membership	<b>Anne-Marie Sladewski</b>
Michigan Association of Administrators of Special Education	Bylaws	<b>Nichole Moore</b>
Michigan Association of Intermediate School Administrators	Membership	<b>Ronna Steel</b>
Michigan Association of Non-Public Schools	N/A	<b>Elizabeth Dombrowski</b>
Michigan Association of Public School Academies	Bylaws, State Advisory Panel Website	<b>Sarah Vander Baan</b>
Michigan Association of School Boards	N/A	<b>Donald Hubler</b>
Michigan Association of School Psychologists	N/A	<b>Katie Lamb</b>
Michigan Association of School Social Workers	N/A	<b>Michel Lynn DeJulian</b>
Michigan Association of School Superintendents and Administrators	N/A	<b>Blake Prewitt</b>
Michigan Association of Secondary School Principals	N/A	<b>Tracy Hall</b>
Michigan Council for Exceptional Children	N/A	<b>Mary Meldrum</b>
Michigan Education Association	Mission	<b>Lisa Bacsikin</b>
Michigan Reading Association	N/A	N/A

<b>Organization/Role</b>	<b>Committee Participation</b>	<b>Name</b>
Michigan Occupational Therapy Association	Mission	<b>Kirsten Matthews</b>
Michigan Speech-Language and Hearing Association	State Advisory Panel Website	<b>Courtney Halbower</b>
Michigan Transition Services Association	State Advisory Panel Website	<b>Eileen Brandt</b>
Student Advocacy Center of Michigan	N/A	N/A
The Arc Michigan	N/A	<b>Michelle Driscoll</b>

### **Ex-Officio Members**

<b>Agency</b>	<b>Committee Participation</b>	<b>Name</b>
2017-2018 SEAC Chair	N/A	<b>Sara Park</b>
Confederation of Michigan Tribal Education Directors	Mission	<b>Melissa Isaac</b>
Educator Preparation Institutions	N/A	<b>Amy Schelling</b>
Michigan Department of Corrections	Membership	<b>Belle Bodell</b>
Michigan Department of Education, McKinney-Vento Representative	Membership, Bylaws	<b>Pam Kies-Lowe</b>
Michigan Department of Education, Office of Special Education	Membership, Bylaws	<b>Teri Chapman</b>
Michigan Department of Health and Human Services, Community Health—Foster Care	N/A	<b>Janet Kaley</b>
Michigan Department of Health and Human Services, Juvenile Justice	Bylaws	<b>James Thomas</b>
Michigan Department of Health and Human Services, Michigan Rehabilitation Services	N/A	<b>Cynthia Wright-Pratt</b>
Michigan Teacher of the Year	Membership, Bylaws	<b>Laura Chang</b>

## Ex-Officio Alternates

<b>Agency</b>	<b>Committee Participation</b>	<b>Name</b>
Educator Preparation Institutions	N/A	<b>Christine DeWildt</b>
Michigan Department of Corrections	Bylaws	<b>Adrienne Gates</b>
Michigan Department of Corrections	N/A	<b>Connie Marks</b>
Michigan Department of Health and Human Services, Michigan Rehabilitation Services	N/A	<b>Jennifer Hirst</b>
Michigan Tribal Education Directors Confederation (new member)	N/A	<b>Christina Sharp</b>
Michigan Department of Health and Human Services, Education and Youth Services	Membership	<b>Ann Rossi</b>
Michigan Department of Health and Human Services, Juvenile Justice	N/A	N/A
Michigan Department of Education-McKinney Vento Act (an ISD representative)	Bylaws	<b>Sara Orris</b>
Michigan Teacher of the Year	N/A	<b>Karen Nicol</b>

# **Appendix: Michigan's Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC) Subcommittee Charges**

2018-2019

## **Ongoing Committees**

### **Executive Committee**

Per the SEAC Bylaws, the purpose and function of the Executive Committee is to:

- a. The Chairperson shall:
  - i. Preside regularly at meetings of the SEAC;
  - ii. Appoint committees and ad hoc committee chairpersons with the concurrence of the SEAC;
  - iii. Gather information for the Annual Report;
  - iv. Facilitate the generation of annual priorities;
  - v. Assign issues and activities to committees;
  - vi. Serve as official spokesperson or delegate such responsibility; and
  - vii. Establish the preliminary agenda with the advice of the Director of Special Education.
- b. The Vice Chairperson shall:
  - i. Chair the meeting in the absence of the Chairperson; and
  - ii. Serve as parliamentary resource (See SEAC Procedures: Parliamentary resource).
  - iii. Serve as Chairperson of the Bylaws committee, making sure the annual revision is complete.
  - iv. Monitor the SEAC Action Calendar to assure deadlines are met.
  - v. Perform other duties as assigned by the Chairperson.
- c. In the event that both the Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson are absent, an executive committee member will be chosen to chair the meeting.

### **Executive Committee**

- Function: To assist the Chairperson in conducting the business of the SEAC.
- When there is a request from the State Board of Education (SBE) or Michigan Department of Education (MDE) for time sensitive feedback, and there is not a SEAC Committee of the Whole business meeting prior to the deadline, the executive committee will provide a response and feedback on behalf of the SEAC with a majority vote of support. As time permits, the Executive Committee will seek electronic input from Committee of the Whole members. (Bylaws III. A. 3.)

#### **Commitment:**

- Plan the September new member orientation and committee of the whole retreat.
- Mentor new SEAC members.

- Facilitate table discussion during small group work during meetings.
- Vote on recommended additions/changes to SEAC procedures.
- Co-chair subcommittees.

Executive Committee members arrive 1.5 hours before SEAC meetings for final preparation, and meet after the conclusion of meetings for a debrief and planning for next meeting -up of 45 minutes. Committee members can also expect 1-2 emails requiring responses between meetings throughout the year, and 2 meetings and 1 phone call during the summer for planning the next year. The use of Google docs with email correspondence is also part of Executive Committee roles.

---

For each of the remaining committees:

- Sub-committee size will be limited to 10 members.
- Volunteers will receive an email offering options for conference call meeting dates and times. The date/time that works for the majority will be selected.
- Each group reports to the Committee of the Whole any month when they have new information to share.
- The Executive Committee or the Committee of the Whole decides what action to take.

### **Membership Committee**

The purpose and function of the Membership Committee is to:

- Support representativeness of SEAC across state.
  - Support the OSE and member organizations in recruiting replacements for members whose terms end.
- Support engagement of SEAC members.
  - Reach out via phone or email to members who are absent to support participation.
  - As needed, support the executive committee to provide support and mentoring to new members.
  - As needed, support the executive committee to facilitate table discussions during meetings.
- As needed, review and update the rubric for Organization applications to SEAC, and review results.

Commitment:

- 3-4 committee meeting calls over the course of the year for the rest of the work.
- Members will each make/send a few calls/emails to recruit new/re-engage current members.
- Committee members can expect approximately 1-2 brief check-ins during lunch at a SEAC meeting of the whole.

## **Bylaws Committee**

The purpose and function of the Bylaws Committee is to:

- Review the SEAC bylaws annually.
- Recommend changes to bylaws or procedures following member input.
- Support the work of members with bylaws review during small group work.

Commitment:

- Committee members can expect approximately 3 phone meetings per year, with an occasional brief check-in during lunch at a SEAC meeting of the whole.

## **Ad Hoc Committees --1 to 2 meetings annually**

- The groups may work for 1-6 meetings until the task is done. Typically meetings are by phone at mutually convenient times.

## **Due Process Reports Summer Work Session**

The purpose and function of the committee is to:

- Assist in developing a template for the presentation of due process hearing decisions for committee of the whole discussions.

Commitment:

- There will be one session that will take place either in July or August depending on availability of participants.

## **State Advisory Panel (SAP) Website Committee**

The purpose and function of the SAP Website Committee is to:

- Recommend resource materials that would be available to Michigan SEAC from other SAPs.
- Recommend to the executive committee Michigan SEAC resource materials to share with the SAP Website.

Commitment:

- Committee members can expect up to two (2) meetings per year.

## **SEAC Mission Committee**

The purpose and function of the Mission Committee is to:

- Review the existing mission statement which has been in effect for many years.
- Consider more recent SEAC products which may be appropriate resources to update the mission.
- Recommend an amended mission statement if it seems warranted.



Commitment:

- Committee members can expect up to two (2) meetings this year.

**MDE Committees with SEAC Representation**

- A SEAC member represents the SEAC on the
  - Michigan Education Research Institute Advisory Council and
  - MDE Family Engagement work group.