

Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC)

2023-2024 Annual Report



Michigan Department of Education
Special Education Advisory Committee

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Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC)

2023-2024 Annual Report

Introduction

The *Individuals with Disabilities Education Act* (IDEA) State Advisory Panel (SAP), known as the Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC) in Michigan, is the federally mandated state advisory panel, designed to advise the Michigan Department of Education (MDE), State Board of Education (SBE), and the MDE Office of Special Education (OSE) on matters related to the education of students with disabilities. The purpose of SEAC is to provide state education organizations, agencies, and parents with an authentic voice of stakeholders to advise and/or assist in Michigan's effort to serve children with disabilities and their families. As part of its duties, this diverse committee annually submits a report on its activities to the SBE, MDE, and OSE. This report is made accessible and is available to the public on the [SEAC website](#), summarizing its activities for each school year.

SEAC Mission

The 2023-2024 mission of the SEAC is to promote positive outcomes for all Michigan students with disabilities by:

- Gathering, sharing, and disseminating information on a state and national level.
- Communicating with a diverse group of stakeholders.
- Identifying unmet needs.
- Collaborating with the Office of Special Education (OSE).
- Engaging with various offices in the Michigan Department of Education seeking feedback and input.
- Advising the State Board of Education (SBE).

Unanimously approved November 2023.

The Purpose of the Committee

The SEAC is Michigan's *Individuals with Disabilities Education Act* (IDEA) 2004 mandated SAP to the MDE and SBE. The SAP must:

§300.169 Duties

- (a) Advise the State Education Agency (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 Free Appropriate Public Education (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 nominated by their organizations, agencies, themselves or SBE members to fill seats. Opportunities to participate on the SEAC are regularly posted on the [SEAC website](#). Nominees are asked to complete applications, which are then reviewed by the SEAC Executive Committee, SEAC's governing body of seven (7) members elected by the Committee of the Whole each spring to provide leadership for the following year, and/or the Committee of the Whole as required in the SEAC Operating Procedures.

Nominees are sent to and 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 21-25 for 2023-2024 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 IDEA.

SEAC is a group of individuals representing various statewide organizations and interests engaging in learning to build a shared understanding around a host of complex topics affecting students with disabilities. The 2023-2024 school year continued SEAC's journey of providing meetings through a virtual platform, with three meetings being held in person. All business meetings were closed-captioned and recorded to best meet the accessibility needs of all members. During the year, the SEAC engaged in a variety of learning opportunities to best make recommendations to the SBE, MDE, and OSE.

As a basis for structuring these learning opportunities, members identified what is going well and what needs enhancement in communication from constituent groups to the SEAC and from the SEAC to constituent groups. It is key to the SEAC's effectiveness 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 this informs the monthly agenda.

Advising vs. Advocating

Advising in SEAC means to inform, to give information, to recommend, or to provide opinions to the group by seeking input from the constituents they are representing. Advocating is defined as any action that speaks in favor of, argues for a cause, supports, or defends, favors a position, or pleads on behalf of others.

Although each SEAC member brings their own advocacy experiences, it is crucial for members to recognize their role at the SEAC table must shift from being a personal advocate to that of an advisor voicing the opinions of the group they represent.

Members-at-large are the only members who provide information based on their personal experience. Those speaking on behalf of the constituents they represent may be required to present a position that is counter to their own beliefs because they are representing their stakeholder group.

The value of SEAC comes from hearing all voices, not just the loudest, and realizing all perspectives have equal value. Advice provided to the SBE and MDE is a representation of combined views and reasoning that has been challenged and explored by all organizational, agency, and member-at-large voices represented on SEAC.

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

SEAC is committed to maintaining an environment and membership embracing diversity to reflect the diversity of the students we serve. While our primary and legislative purpose must be to maintain a majority of members who have a disability themselves, or a child with a disability, there are other areas of diversity we consider when recommending to the SBE a nomination for appointment to fill an open SEAC seat.

SEAC membership is largely determined by the organizations and agencies represented as they send their nominees to us for approval. Because of this we encourage them to assist us in creating an environment that supports and appreciates the diverse attributes and identities their members bring to them and to send us nominees who can help increase our cultural competencies and ensure we have a wide range of perspectives, cultures, reflective of our Michigan landscape.

SEAC will continue to build and maintain an environment that acknowledges, respects, values, and embraces diverse cultures and disabilities. We encourage all our members to freely express who they are, fully participate in learning, work, and SEAC activities.

Accessibility

[Section 508 Standards](#) are established and maintained by the U. S. Access Board. Under Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, agencies must give disabled employees and members of the public access to information that is comparable to the access available to others. To achieve this, SEAC uses the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) – the globally recognized guidelines for creating accessibility digital experiences.

[WCAG 2.1](#) outlines the principles, guidelines, testable success criteria, and techniques needed to optimize content. There are four principles known as “POUR,” where all online content should be:

- **Perceivable** - Information and user interface components must be presentable to users in ways they can perceive (it can't be invisible to all of their senses).

- **Operable** - User interface components and navigation must be operable (the interface cannot require interaction that a user cannot perform).
- **Understandable** - Information and the operation of user interface must be understandable (the content or operation cannot be beyond their understanding).
- **Robust** - Content must be robust enough that it can be interpreted reliably by a wide variety of user agents, including assistive technology (as technologies and user agents evolve, the content should remain accessible).

SEAC strives to provide all materials and meetings in formats meeting federal guidelines. We offer online documents meeting POUR principles and seek the assistance of the Center for Educational Networking (CEN) to ensure our website is fully compliant with all requirements.

In addition, our meetings are all recorded, provide closed-captioning options, and are placed online for members to review later. Any additional requests are discussed personally with members who indicate they have a need, and solutions are quickly put in place to ensure all members have equal and full access to everything we do. Our belief and methodology are to understand inclusive design so we are immediately able to provide for the various needs of our members and can implement it seamlessly, so it becomes sufficiently ubiquitous and widely used – thus becoming the norm rather than the exception.

SEAC Learning

Given the diversity of SEAC members and the prior knowledge they bring to the work, SEAC learning establishes a shared understanding to ensure decisions and advice reflect those shared understandings and beliefs. This year, in addition to routine special education updates from the OSE Director and the OSE Policy Supervisor, reports from the Michigan Teacher of the Year (MTOY), and legislation updates from the MDE legislative liaison, the information presented was designed to prepare SEAC members for their advisory role. Input regarding the development of the 2023-2024 priorities was sought from the SBE, Directors of the MDE’s Division of P-20 System and Student Transitions, and the OSE, as well as SEAC member organizations, agencies, and members-at-large.

In addition to the regular monthly business meetings, the IDEA grant-funded initiative, Alt+Shift, hosted a field trip for our members. For this onsite learning day, members learned about professional learning opportunities, systems, and Alt+Shift’s partnership approach. Presenters discussed accessible digital materials, assistive technology, autonomous communication, and mathematics. Alt+Shift demonstrated several items from their lending library for a hands-on experience.

2023–2024 SEAC Work Relative to Six IDEA Duties/Functions

States and Lead Agencies have a responsibility, under federal law, to have a system of general supervision reflecting the implementation of IDEA. There are eight components of special education general supervision. Each component interacts with all other components. SEAC intertwines the eight components into six functions, guiding the work of this advisory committee.

In brief, the six functions are:

- Advise the State Educational Agency of unmet needs within the state in the education of children with disabilities.
- Comment publicly on any rules or regulations proposed by the state regarding the education of children with disabilities.
- Advise the State Educational Agency in developing evaluations and reporting on data to the secretary.
- Advise the State Educational Agency in developing corrective action plans to address findings identified in federal monitoring reports under this part.
- Advise the State Educational Agency in developing and implementing policies relating to the coordination of services for children with disabilities.
- Receive findings and decisions of all hearings related to special education.

The following information provides a detailed look at the learning provided to SEAC members centering on the functions during the 2023-2024 school year. These functions are found on the [SEAC website](#) with links for each function provided below.

Function 1: Advise the State Educational Agency of unmet needs within the state in the education of children with disabilities.

SEAC is charged with identifying unmet needs within special education and bringing them to the attention of the SBE and the MDE.

Unmet needs may be discovered through public comment at SBE meetings and through specific comments by SBE members. Additional thoughts are shared by the MDE and OSE, as well as the members of SEAC.

Because of the diversity of the SEAC membership, there is considerable opportunity for staying apprised of unmet needs. In 2023-2024, SEAC maintained representation from 12 state agencies, 6 family-support agencies, and 18 statewide organizations each represented by both a delegate and an alternate, as well as 11 members-at-large.

SEAC members additionally hold seats in state organizations concerning themselves with the education of students with disabilities. These include:

- MDE Family Matters Engagement Workgroup
- Michigan Education Research Institute Advisory Council (MERI)
- Opening the Pipeline of Talent into Michigan's Special Education (OPTIMISE)

- OSE Intermediate School District (ISD) General Supervision Workgroup
- Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) State Advisory Panel – State Interagency Coordinating Councils (SAP-SICC)

Annual Priorities for 2023-2024

The unmet needs SEAC studied in 2023-2024 focused on inequities discovered and reported on by the Directors of the MDE Educator Excellence, Career and Technical Education, Special Education, and Administrative Law, (formerly known as MDE P-20 System and Student Transitions) and the OSE. When SEAC selects issues such as those outlined below as priority unmet needs, members first analyze the scope of the problem by reviewing related data provided by experts in the field. They then identify areas of consensus and generate data-guided information for consideration by the SBE and MDE.

Read *LRE Scenarios: IEP Team Training Guide to Increase IDEA Compliance*. Fifty-nine (59) individual copies were provided to SEAC members by OSE.

There were two priorities identified for 2023-2024. Descriptions of each are below with recommendations following Priority 2.

Priority 1

Consistent with the requirements of IDEA, the MDE OSE is developing specific monitoring activities and technical assistance resources for all public agencies regarding obligations concerning the Least Restrictive Environment (LRE). SEAC members will continue providing input and feedback on the development of monitoring activities and associated technical assistance resources.

SEAC Learning Regarding Priority 1

Presenters included:

- Teri Rink, director MDE OSE
- Rebecca McIntyre, assistant director MDE OSE
- Chantel Mozden, program accountability unit supervisor MDE OSE
- Jamie Swiger, statewide monitor MDE OSE

Learning included:

- Understanding LRE is the single most important reason for IDEA.
- Several citations specify the requirements to be considered when Individualized Education Program (IEP) teams make placement decisions. Each is designed to ensure districts are taking steps to ensure placement is based solely on the needs of the child/student.
- IDEA presumes LRE to be general education.

- LRE includes environmental circumstances.
- LRE requirements, continuum, placements: citations, monitoring, evidence.
- Parent focus groups.
- LRE in the context of virtual schools.
- LRE trends across academic years from Michigan’s FFY 2022 Annual Performance Report At a Glance.
- Capitalizing on the work of Michigan’s Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MiMTSS) specifically emphasizing Tier 1 instruction.

Priority 2

Further the knowledge and broaden the understanding of SEAC members regarding accommodations and the options for supplementary services and related services for fully supporting students with disabilities in their LRE. This will result in the development of resources, strategies, and tools for our schools to ensure we are appropriately meeting the needs of students, so they develop a sense of belonging.

SEAC Learning Regarding Priority 2

Presenters included:

- Stephanie Dyer – consultant Statewide Autism Resources & Training (START)
- Kate Fanelli – project coordinator Alt+Shift
- Chantel Mozden - program accountability unit supervisor MDE OSE
- Melissa Nantais – advanced tiers coordinator MiMTSS, Technical Assistance (TA) Center
- Sara Pericolosi – assistive technology/augmentative and alternative communication specialist Alt+Shift
- Teri Rink - director MDE OSE

Learning included:

- Understanding LRE.
- Review of items in development by OSE.
- Gathering and reviewing input.
- IDEA Grant-Funded initiatives work in LRE specific to Priority 2 including:

- [Alt+Shift](#) – focusing on collaboration and impact, offering professional learning including training, technical assistance, and co-constructed implementation planning, striving to shift adult mindsets and provide alternative options to improve outcomes for every student. Bonus – Michigan’s lending library where schools can borrow and try before they buy.
- [START](#) – Offers statewide training, resources, and webinars ensuring the provision of FAPE in the LRE. They assist in assuring all educational staff, including administrators, general and special education teachers, itinerant and ancillary staff, and support staff understand these terms and the related obligation of each to appropriately support students with disabilities.
- [MiMTSS TA Center](#) – Supports educators in building their knowledge and skills to serve all students equitably using a multi-tiered system of supports framework. They are committed to helping educators use data, systems, and practices that honor individual identities and provide opportunities for all to achieve their dreams.

Resources shared:

- Code of Federal Regulations: [LRE: § 300.114 - § 300.120](#)
- Family Matters [Educational Placement and the Least Restrictive Environment \(LRE\) fact sheet](#)
- [Michigan Department of Education’s Dyslexia Handbook](#)
- [Literacy Playlists](#) on the MiMTSS TA Center YouTube Channel
- [Intensifying Literacy Instruction: Essential Practices](#)
- National Center on Intensive Intervention: [Intensifying Literacy Instruction: Essential Practices](#)

Results and Recommendations from both Priority 1 and Priority 2:

There remains work to be completed. Ongoing recommendations will be made to the OSE based on the continuation of this work for another year. Parents from SEAC will be particularly instrumental in the continued development of materials for understanding the parent’s point of view in determining how each of their child’s IEP(s) addressed the who, what, why, where, when, and how of offering a least restrictive environment for their student(s).

Function 2: Comment publicly on any rules or regulations proposed by the state regarding the education of children with disabilities.

The SEAC comments publicly on any proposed rules or regulations proposed by the state regarding the education of students with disabilities.

SEAC seeks input from the Executive Committee, the Ad Hoc Committee, and the Committee of the Whole (the entire membership of SEAC) when needed. Comments provided by SEAC are posted in this section, when and if they are made. Each of the postings below was discussed and many of the organizations on SEAC chose to work with their constituent groups to respond to the proposed changes.

Proposed changes to [Michigan Administrative Rules for Special Education \(MARSE\)](#) in the 2023-2024 school year included:

- **R 340.1721(b)** Alignment with IDEA requirements regarding the determination of eligibility and the provision of a Free and Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) for students parentally placed in private schools. (Proposed revision: clarify responsibilities for parentally placed students.) The general purpose of the proposed R 340.1721b is to align the rule with the requirements of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), 42 US 1400 to 1482, regarding students who are parentally placed in nonpublic schools.
- **R 340.1723** Align rule with federal requirements related to a parent’s request for an Individualized Education Evaluation (IEE). (Proposed revision: align rule with federal requirements.) The general purpose of the proposed R 340.1723c is to remove the requirement that a parent’s request for an independent educational evaluation of their child be in writing.
- **R 340.1733(d)** Requires an age span for special education programs operated in elementary buildings to not exceed at any one time, a 6-year age span or the age span of the students who are non-disabled in the building, whichever is less. (Proposed revisions: challenges of 34 CFR Section 300.114(a) requiring LRE with nondisabled peers to the maximum extent appropriate and R 340.1733(d) challenges for districts operating young and early childhood programs. The general purpose of the proposed R 340.1733 is to revise the age span of preschool programs located in elementary school buildings.
- Michigan’s draft request for a **waiver extension** to exceed the one percent cap on participation on MI-Access. This waiver extension request includes continued plans to continue reducing the number and percentage of students who take MI-Access which is allowable under ESSA. [2023 - 123 Notice and Request for Public Comment Alternate Assessment One Percent Cap Waiver Request](#).

Opportunities for [public comment](#) are posted on the Michigan Department of Education website as they occur.

Function 3: Advise the State Educational Agency in developing evaluations and reporting on data to the secretary.

SEAC provides advice to the OSE on the target resetting for SPP Indicators.

[State Performance Plan and Annual Performance Report](#)

The OSE Performance Reporting Unit presents to SEAC whenever SPP targets are to be reset. The 2023-2024 year included the following presenters:

Jessica Brady, performance reporting unit supervisor MDE OSE

Joshua Roltsch, performance reporting unit consultant MDE OSE

Charles Thomas, performance reporting unit consultant MDE OSE

Julie Trevino, performance reporting unit consultant MDE OSE

Marci VanHorn, performance reporting unit consultant MDE OSE

Amanda Way, performance reporting unit consultant MDE OSE

The SPP consists of 17 performance indicators that measure the state's progress. Targets for the results indicators are determined by the MDE OSE with input from the SEAC and other stakeholder groups in Michigan. To provide helpful input into the target-setting process, SEAC members must understand indicators for which targets are to be set.

- For each indicator studied, the OSE provides data collection methodology, data collection analysis and results, and historical data trends.
- Proposed targets must meet the OSEP standards:
 - Must be rigorous yet achievable.
 - Must show improvement over baseline data.

The MDE OSE publishes presentations specific to the SPP target-setting process as a mechanism to make information available to the public as part of meeting OSE's stakeholder involvement requirements. These presentations from years past may be found on the [SEAC Website](#).

Updates from the target-setting requirements, triggered by the federal OSEP for 2023-2024, included a review by SEAC members for Indicator 4A: understand Indicator 4 current methodology and data trends; understand proposed methodology change and rationale; understand the impact of monitoring with proposed change; provide input/feedback on proposed change.

Resource shared:

- [Understanding the Part B Strand Report: B4 Suspension/Expulsion](#)

Function 4: Advise the State Educational Agency in developing evaluations and reporting on data to the secretary.

Advise the SEA in developing corrective action plans to address findings identified in federal monitoring reports under Part B of the Act.

Function 4 needs attention only when federal monitoring corrective action plans (CAPs) are identified and required by OSEP. There were no findings resulting in corrective action plans for the 2023-2024 school year, so no advising was required.

Function 5: Advise the State Educational Agency in developing and implementing policies relating to the coordination of services for children with disabilities.

The State Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP), submitted yearly to the U.S. Department of Education (USED), takes into consideration the SEAC's thinking about the coordination of efforts across offices as well as the early literacy priority area and its related targets. SEAC's annual unmet needs priorities (Function 1) align with the Michigan Department of Education's (MDE's) Top 10 Strategic Education Plan.

SEAC invited numerous people from various offices and organizations with expertise in the areas stated in the priorities. Those have been identified in Function 1. Other means of learning regarding the SSIP included:

- Dr. Michele Harmala, MDE deputy superintendent, Educator Excellence, Career and Technical Education, Special Education, and Administrative Law (formerly known as P-20 System and Student Transitions), presented information regarding the number of special education students successfully completing their high school careers.
 - [Supporting Students to and through Graduation - Engaging Students for Successful Middle Years 2023](#)
 - [MDE Graduation Rate Guidance Revised 2022](#)
- SEAC advises the SBE.
 - The SEAC facilitator, accompanied by one (rotating) member of the SEAC Executive Committee attend each of the SBE meetings and report back to the SEAC Committee of the Whole regarding what was learned at the meeting via a written report, and what (if any) action SEAC might take in assisting the SBE in their understanding of the needs of students with disabilities. Each of the 2023-2024 meetings were attended in-person and virtually by SEAC members.
 - The SEAC regularly invites members of both the SEA and SBE to present and participate in various meetings throughout the school year. This continued relationship serves to collect relevant and timely information in the carrying out of SEAC duties.
 - The SEAC regularly presents its Annual Report in October of each calendar year to the SBE.
- Kathie Fortino, project director for OPTIMISE, spoke to SEAC members regarding this Michigan group made up of education partners, including SEAC, to attract, prepare, and retain more professionals in the special education field. SEAC has been visited by, receives newsletters and other materials from, and engages SEAC members in their work. Some of the most recent offerings, with many other resources on, and are coming to the [OPTIMISE Website](#).
- Monthly OSE updates are provided to SEAC. The following updates occurred in this past year:
 - OSE State Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP) updates (monthly).
 - OSE program accountability updates (bi-monthly and as needed).

- OSE Information Line data (bi-monthly and as needed).
- OSE supervisors described and presented their work in OSE (as needed).
- Resources Provided from the OSE:
 - [Clarification on Guidelines for Participation in MI-Access Memo](#)
 - [2023-2024 Technical Assistance Meeting Dates & Topics Memo](#)
 - [Determining the Need for Special Education Transportation Memo](#)
 - [Guidance for the Development of ISD Plan for Delivery of Special Education Programs and Services in Catamaran](#)
 - [IDEA Equitable Services at a Glance \(michigan.gov\)](#)
 - [Independent Education Evaluation \(IEE\)](#)
 - [Independent Educational Evaluation Guidance](#)
 - [Initial Evaluation Procedure for Special Education Programs and Services](#)
 - [Intermediate School District Management of Proportionate Share Funds](#)
 - [Intersection of McKinney Vento Homeless Assistance Act and the IDEA](#)
 - [ISD General Supervision System Assessment Tool: Part B](#)
 - [ISD General Supervision System Design Tool: Part B](#)
 - [Least Restrictive Environment: Nonacademic Settings](#)
 - [Least Restrictive Environment: The Requirements Package](#)
 - [Least Restrictive Environments \(LRE\) - Catamaran Training Site](#)
 - [Special Education Teacher Flexibility Waivers](#)
 - [Substitute Teacher Placement for Special Education Programs Memo](#)
- Resources Provided from IDEA Grant-Initiatives:
 - Alt+Shift: [Digital Accessibility in Educational Organizations](#)
 - Family Matters: [2023 - 087 Family Matters Resources and Information Memo; Family Matters Educational Placement and the Least Restrictive Environment \(LRE\) Fact Sheet](#)
- Personal Curriculum: Michigan law [380.1278a](#) and [380.1278b](#)

- Start Project: [LRE and Belonging Practices Across the Lifespan](#)
- Resource Provided from MDE:
 - [IEP Memo](#)
 - [A Parent's Guide to Personal Curriculum: Focus on Students with an Individualized Education Plan \(IEP\)](#)
- Resources Provided from the Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP):
 - [Celebrating the 50th Anniversary of the Rehabilitation Act: Through our History, Successes and Vision for the Future](#)
 - [Confronting Negative Stereotypes About Dyslexia/ADHD and Not Settling for Low Expectations](#)
 - [Dear Colleague Letter \(DCL\) related to Preschool Least Restrictive Environments \(LRE\)](#)
 - [Making a Difference: Leading with LD as a Special Education Teacher](#)
 - [OSEP Dear Colleague Letter on General Supervision Responsibilities. July 24, 2023](#)
 - [Policy Statement on Inclusion of Children With Disabilities in Early Childhood Programs](#)

Function 6: Receive findings and decisions of all hearings related to special education.

The Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC) is obligated to receive findings and decisions of all completed due process hearings related to special education by receiving summary information pertaining to all completed due process hearings. (34 CFR 300.509(d)(1))

IDEA ensures a FAPE to all children with disabilities. IDEA specifically codifies three critical rights for students with disabilities: identification, evaluation, and educational programming/service. To ensure compliance with the statute, numerous provisions are included ensuring procedural safeguards for students with disabilities.

Procedural safeguards guarantee a complaint resolution system, mediation, and an impartial due process hearing as remedies for parent/guardian challenges of local educational agency (LEA) decisions. Dispute resolution options and resources are available from the [OSE website](#). Due process hearing decisions in Michigan are available through an [online database](#).

Redacted versions of court decisions are studied by SEAC members to better understand the special education legal decisions in Michigan and inform the SBE and MDE of the unmet needs of students with disabilities. These written reviews of cases heard in court assist SEAC members in understanding existing administrative laws, binding precedent, and persuasive precedent hearing officers use to form their

decisions. SEAC members participated in detailed discussions reflecting on patterns of unmet needs from received findings and decisions of the following fully adjudicated due process complaints, ultimately providing thoughts and input to OSE personnel:

- Due Process Case - DP 22-0098: Petitioner's complaint alleged issues involving the transition plan, the need for reevaluation of student, the need for extended school year (ESY) services, Respondent's obligation to review and revise the Individualized Education Program (IEP), and the requirement to provide a FAPE in the least restrictive environment.
- Due Process Case - DP 22-0031: Petitioner's complaint alleged issues involving child find requirements, failure to provide FAPE, failure to respond to a request for evaluation, and appropriate services and/or supports are appropriate.
- Due Process Case – DP 22-0040: Petitioner's complaint alleged the school district had failed to consider all relevant documentation when conducting its Review of Existing Evaluation Data (REED), violated IDEA by failing to develop an Individualized Education Program (IEP) for the student despite parent requests.

In addition to receipt of due process hearing cases, SEAC members receive additional information from monthly updates regarding legal matters in the state. This includes:

- OSE Program Accountability Unit operates an Information Line available to anyone in the state. This information line is available through both email and telephone. Periodic reports were made by supervisor, Chantel Mozden, to inform SEAC members of a number of calls received, topics covered, those making the calls, to assist in identifying special education trends and patterns throughout the state over a year's time. Documents shared included an organizer for reviewing cases, and documents:
 - [Guidance on State General Supervision Responsibilities under Part B and C of the IDEA \(July 24, 2023\)](#)
 - [State General Supervision Responsibilities Under Parts B and C of the IDEA, Monitoring, Technical Assistance, and Enforcement](#)
 - [FAQ Regarding Identification & Correction of Noncompliance and Reporting on Correction in the SPP/APR \(Sept. 3, 2008\)](#)
 - [U.S. Department of Education, OSEP 09-02: Reporting on Correction of Noncompliance in the Annual Performance Report Required under Sections 616 and 642 of the IDEA \(Oct. 17, 2008\)](#)
 - [Q and A on Monitoring, Technical Assistance and Enforcement \(Revised June 2009\)](#)
 - Statewide monthly technical assistance calls were provided for all stakeholders on a variety of topics.

- [Commemorating the 48th Anniversary of the IDEA \(ed.gov\)](#)
- Legislative Reviews were provided by Dr. Sheryl Kennedy, Legislative Liaison for the Office of Public and Governmental Affairs (OPGA) in the MDE and Olivia Ponte, legislative analyst. Dr. Kennedy assisted SEAC in understanding Michigan’s Legislature and provided helpful ideas in improving SEAC’s advisory efforts. Monthly reports centered around [Michigan’s Top 10 Strategic Action Plan](#).

In Summation

The chart below shows in which months each of the functions of SEAC were discussed, presented, and/or fulfilled (indicated by an X).

Date	Function 1: Unmet Needs	Function 2: Public Comment	Function 3: SPP	Function 4: CAP	Function 5: SSIP	Function 6: Due Process
September 2023	Priorities 1&2, MDE/OSE	MARSE	X	N/A	X	X
October 2023	OPTIMISE & Priorities 1&2	N/A	B4	N/A	X	DP-22-0098
November 2023	Priorities 1&2	N/A	N/A	N/A	X	DP-22-0098
December 2023	Priorities 1&2, Virtual Schools	N/A	N/A	N/A	X	DP-22-0098
January 2024	Priorities IDEA Grants lens	N/A	N/A	N/A	X	DP-23-0031
February 2024	Priority 1 Field Trip	N/A	N/A	N/A	X	DP-23-0031
March 2024	Dyslexia Handbook	N/A	N/A	N/A	X	N/A
April 2024	High School Transition	MARSE	N/A	N/A	X	DP-23-0040
May 2024	Priorities 1&2	N/A	B4	N/A	X	N/A
June 2024	Priorities 1&2	N/A	N/A	N/A	X	N/A

Additional Offerings

SEAC planning often implements new ideas proposed by members and keeps members informed on timely topics. To that end, the following also occurred in the 2023-2024 school year:

- **Breakout Groups** - Breakout groups are a perennial favorite activity of SEAC members, offering them a chance to work more closely with other members thus promoting lifetime connections. These groups are offered as often as an agenda will allow. This has been particularly useful in meeting other members via the virtual format we adopted for much of the year.
- **Resources** - An online library is available to SEAC members to improve access to and understanding of special education. These resources are updated regularly. Each seated

organization has its own page in the SEAC Google Drive to provide an online presence complete with the required documentation to replace the paper files previously collected. This information includes:

- Mission statement
- Designated outreach areas
- Documentation of state areas served/or active members/chapters
- 501c3 nonprofit tax status
- Active website with clear guidelines on how to contact the organization
- Active board of directors
- Annual Report (e.g., to a national organization, local affiliate, members, for tax purposes)
- **Monthly Meeting Speakers**
 - SBE Visits - SBE secretary, Judith Pritchett, Ph.D., joined SEAC on two occasions, the first time was to welcome new members in September 2023, and the second time to say farewell to the members who left SEAC in June 2024.
 - Ms. Kathy Fortino, project manager, Opening the Pipeline of Talent into Michigan’s Special Education (OPTIMISE) – Members were provided with an update on all work occurring over the summer of 2023.
 - Michigan Teacher of the Year - Each year ex-officio delegate and alternate seats are filled by the Michigan Teacher of the Year program. This is a one-year appointment. Ms. Candice Jackson, the 2023-2024 Teacher of the Year provided three updates at regular business meetings regarding being in the field, teacher recruitment initiatives, and parent/community involvement. She was accompanied by Ms. Bridgit Sova, alternate Regional Teacher of the Year.
 - Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Office, director Rané Garcia, asked SEAC members to contribute a list of books featuring inclusion in special education. 36 entries were provided for captivating reading for all ages.
- **Monthly Newsletter** – Online monthly publication, *SEAC Advisor*, provides members with answers to questions, updates from SBE meetings, OSE, MDE, and OSEP, opportunities and additional information specific to professional development, SEAC organization and agency news, and more.
- **Member Directory** – An online SEAC member directory provided each member with a virtual page to write about themselves and who they represent. This additionally provided members with easy access for outreach should they need/want to contact another member of SEAC.

- **Sharing Information with Constituents** – The Executive Committee members took turns presenting monthly on how they share SEAC information with their constituents, encouraging members to likewise share SEAC materials and offerings with their constituents.
- **Accessibility** – SEAC provided online offerings through Zoom, including closed-captioning and recordings of all meetings. SEAC’s Google Drive provides all written material in an accessible format. Continual updates are made as needs arise and are expressed. Members have the opportunity to request accommodations throughout the year as needed.

SEAC Sub-Committees

A strategy to engage members and help members learn about one another’s work was the convening of subcommittees:

- **Ad Hoc Committee:** The purpose and function of the Ad Hoc Committee are to perform a specific task or objective. SEAC members were asked to respond through public comment on special education matters. Opportunities were available regarding the revision of the MARSE. Public comment impacted the following rules, (refer to the document [Michigan Administrative Rules for Special Education with Related IDEA Federal Regulations](#) updated to reflect changes).
 - R 340.1721b: Makes the process for determining eligibility for special education for parentally placed students in nonpublic schools is consistent with 34 CFR §§300.130 to 300.147.
 - R 340.1723c: Removes the requirement for a parent’s request for an Independent Education Evaluation to be in writing consistent with 34 CFR §300.502.
 - R 340.1733: Modifies language to require the age span for students who are assigned special education programs, except for severe cognitive impairment and serve multiple impairments operate in an elementary building so age span does not exceed the age span of students who are nondisabled in the building.
- **Executive Committee:** The purpose and function of the Executive Committee members is to:
 - Assist the chairperson in conducting the business of SEAC.
 - Meet in the summer to plan the calendar, new member orientation, and subsequent meetings.
 - Meet monthly to set and review agendas.
 - Respond in a timely fashion regarding requests from the SBE, MDE, and/or the OSE.
 - Promote and further SEAC’s work around the identified priorities.
 - Assist in the development and carry-through of SEAC agendas.

- Join the SEAC facilitator in attending monthly SBE meetings, providing information to the Committee of the Whole while maintaining a collaborative relationship with SBE members.
- Respond to the identification of unmet needs.
- Provide public comment on proposed policies and rules when requested.
- Provide input on needs/issues presented by members through monthly online surveys.
- **Mission Committee:** The purpose and function of the Mission Committee is mandated in statute requiring:
 - Yearly review of the existing mission statement for accuracy and relevancy.
 - Recommend changes to the Committee of the Whole.
- The 2023-2024 work of the committee yielded no recommendations for changes. The advice of the Mission Committee was to keep the mission statement the same and it was unanimously approved by the Committee of the Whole. Refer to page 3 for the complete mission statement.
- **Operating Procedures Committee:** The purpose and function of the Operating Procedures Committee, required in statute, is to:
 - Review the SEAC Operating Procedures annually as required by IDEA.
 - Recommend changes to members and allow them time to make input.
 - The annual review of the operating procedures prompted limited changes recommended by the Operating Procedures Committee and approved by the Committee of the Whole.
- **OSEP SAP-SICC Committee:** Appointed members collaborate with the national SAP in the United States Department of Education (USED), OSEP. The purpose and function of the committee is to:
 - Recommend resource materials be available to Michigan SEAC from other SAPs.
 - Recommend to the executive committee Michigan SEAC resource materials to share on the SAP Website.
 - Regular members will include the SEAC facilitator, SEAC chair, and one member-at-large.

Three meetings were held by OSEP in the 2023-2024 year:

- October 2023 – Recruiting and Sustaining Member Engagement
- February 2024 – Engaging SAPs and SICCs with States about General Supervision Requirements
- April 2024 – Engaging with Your State in Differentiation Monitoring and Support

All information, newsletters, and PowerPoints provided to us by OSEP are posted on the SEAC Google Drive and shared with members.

2023–2024 SEAC Participants

SEAC welcomed back 18 organizations with 34 (delegate and alternate) representatives, 6 school-based organizations with 12 (delegate and alternate) representatives, 13 ex-officios with 26 (delegate and alternate) representatives, and 11 members-at-large (MAL), (2 of whom are in reserve, meaning they only vote in the case of absence of another MAL).

Defined Members: IDEA requires that a majority (51 percent) of the members be individuals with disabilities or parents of children with disabilities under the age of 26 years who currently receive special education services under the IDEA.

The total number of defined members in 2023-2024 was 71 percent. This number does not include non-voting ex-officios and alternates.

Members-at-Large

Members-at-large are individuals nominated by anyone and appointed to the SEAC by the SBE, not representing a specific organization. There was a total of 12 members-at-large, 10 of which were defined members, two of which were non-defined, one sitting in reserve for defined members, and one in reserve for non-defined members.

**defined members*

Members-at-Large	Name and Community
Member-at-large (Reserve)	George Chapp (Ann Arbor)
Member-at-large	Nayana Datta* (Canton)
Member-at-large	Jackie Darrough* (Port Huron)
Member-at-large	Sama Jabborri* (Sterling Heights)
Member-at-large	Lindy Johnson* (Spring Lake)
Member-at-large	Angela Khater* (Dearborn)
Member-at-large	Beth Kohler (Monroe)
Member-at-large	Victoria Martinez* (Dearborn Heights)
Member-at-large	Katherine Mills* (Kalamazoo)
Member-at-large (Reserve)	Angie Smith (Farmington Hills)
Member-at-large	Lizette Vasquez* (Mason)
Member-at-large	Dara Wilson * (Detroit)

Organizational Delegates

Organizations with a scope and practice affecting services to students receiving services under IDEA hold a total of twenty-four seats on SEAC. This includes organizations with a family and advocacy-centered

focus. To hold a seat, organizations must have an online presence, a statewide presence, and serve a unique population.

Organization	Name and Community
American Federation of Teachers Michigan (AFT)	Jacqueline Goosen (Clinton Township)
Autism Alliance of Michigan (AAoM)	Heather Eckner* (Ann Arbor)
Down Syndrome Association of West Michigan (DSAWM)	Melissa Lehman* (Kalamazoo)
Friendship Circle	Dani Gillman* (Bloomfield Hills)
Learning Disabilities Association of Michigan (LDA Mi)	Amy Barto* (Grand Rapids)
Michigan Alliance for Families (MAF)	Stephanie Nicholls* (Milford)
Michigan Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (MiASCD)	Anne-Marie Sladewski (Eastpointe)
Michigan Association of Administrators of Special Education (MAASE)	Sarah Winslow* (Okemos)
Michigan Association of Intermediate School Administrators (MAISA)	Theresa Richter* (Ithaca)
Michigan Association of Nonpublic Schools (MANS)	Tammy Castiglione (Monroe)
Michigan Association of Public School Academies (MAPSA)	Angela Gilbert (Woodhaven)
Michigan Association of School Boards (MASB)	Birgit McQuiston* (Lake Orion)
Michigan Association of School Psychologists (MASP)	Matthew Smith* (Clare)
Michigan Association of School Social Workers (MASSW)	Erica Saville (Southgate)
Michigan Association of School Superintendents & Administrators (MASA)	Angela Nettleton (Pickford)
Michigan Association of Secondary School Principals (MASSP)	Gina Schmitt (Grand Haven)
Michigan Council for Exceptional Children (MCEC)	Dr. Lydia Moore (Troy)
Michigan Education Association (MEA)	Brett Smith* (Linden)
Michigan Elementary and Middle School Principals Association (MEMSPA)	Dina Rocheleau* (Cedar)
Michigan Occupational Therapy Association (MiOTA)	Karen Tibbs (Lansing)
Michigan Reading Association (MRA)	Karen Anspach (Eastpointe)
Michigan Speech-Language and Hearing Association (MSHA)	Cassandra Griffin (Livonia)
Michigan Transition Services Association (MTSA)	Eileen Brandt* (Livonia)

Organization	Name and Community
The Arc Michigan	Margarita Rodriguez Curry* (Concord)

Organizational Alternates

In addition to organizations identifying members to serve as delegates, they provide an alternate to represent the delegate in the event of an absence. Alternates are invited, but not required, to attend all meetings.

**defined members*

Organization	Name and Community
AFT	Samantha Hoskin (Redford)
AAoM	Jenna Friedman* (West Bloomfield)
DSAWM	Stacy VanderBent* (Hudsonville)
LDA Mi	Maura Race* (Grand Rapids)
MAF	Kelsey Biswanger* (Oakland Township)
MiASCD	Gary Wood (Dorr)
MAASE	Shailee Patel* (South Lyon)
MAISA	Cara Hart* (Saginaw)
MANS	Kathy Krause (Farmington)
MAPSA	Theresa Franklin (Farmington Hills)
MASB	Janice Van Gasse* (Norway)
MASP	Katie Lamb* (Rochester)
MASSW	Karla Vandenberg (Kalamazoo)
MAISA	Scott Riley (Blissfield)
MASSP	Heather Rutledge* (Rochester Hills)
MCEC	Jennifer DeWaard (Holland)
MEA	Heather Poirier* (Rochester Hills)
MiOTA	Robin Pegg (Dorr)
MRA	Lorri Zieleniewski (Washington)
MSHA	Alyssa Wirth (Sterling Heights)
MTSA	Kristin White* (Brighton)
The Arc Michigan	Heba Takouz* (Rochester)

Ex-officio Delegates

Ex-officio delegates are non-voting members who hold a position in a state or federal office important or relevant to the service of students with disabilities in Michigan.

**defined members*

Agency	Name and Community
Confederation of Michigan Tribal Education Directors (CMTED)	Michelle Simms (Fulton)
Educator Preparation Institutes (EPI)	Dr. Pamela George (Grand Rapids)
Michigan Department of Corrections (MDOC)	Belle Bodell (Alma)
Michigan Lifelong Education, Advancement, and Potential (MiLEAP), 619 Preschool Education	Lisa Wascacz (Lansing)
Michigan Lifelong Education, Advancement, and Potential (MiLEAP), (Early On)	Janet Timbs (Mt. Morris)
MDE), Office of Educational Supports (OES), Title IX, McKinney-Vento	Irma Lopez-Barajas (Byron Center)
MDE, OSE	Teri Rink (Grand Blanc)
MDE OSE, Low Incidence Outreach (LIO)	Johanna Brutvan (Royal Oak)
Michigan Department of Health & Human Services (DHHS), Foster Care	Ann Rossi (Lansing)
Michigan DHHS, Juvenile Justice (DHHS JJ)	unnamed
Michigan DHHS, Michigan Rehabilitation Services (DHHS MRS)	Jennifer Hirst* (Marshall)
Michigan Teacher of the Year (MTOY)	Candice Jackson (Livonia)
SEAC previous chair	Stacie Rulison* (St. Johns)

Ex-officio Alternates

Ex-officio alternates are non-voting members who hold a position in a state or federal office important or relevant to the service of students with disabilities in Michigan and represent the delegate in the event of an absence.

**defined members*

Agency	Name and Community
CMTED	Christina Sharp (Saginaw)
EPI	Dr. Peggy Yates* (Alma)
MDOC	Adrienne Gates (Dewitt)
MiLEAP 619	Mark Kuipers (Grand Rapids)
MiLEAP, Early On	Colleen O'Connor (Lansing)
MDE, OSE	Chantel Mozden (Saginaw)
MDE OSE, LIO	Roxanne Balfour (Lowell)
MDE, Title IX, McKinney-Vento	Sarah Orris (Rochester)
Michigan DHHS, Foster Care	Sarah Goad* (Okemos)
Michigan DHHS, JJ	Dr. Terri Mileski (Escanaba)
Michigan Regional Teacher of the Year (RTOY)	Brigit Sova (Midland)

Support Personnel

Agency	Name and Community
MDE, OSE SEAC Facilitator	Teri Pettit (Hartland)
MDE, OSE SEAC Support	Trisha Abrahamson (Lansing)

Respectfully submitted to the State Board of Education by Teri Rink, director, Michigan Department of Education, Office of Special Education, and Teri Pettit, SEAC facilitator November 2024.