

Washington State Special Education Advisory
Council
2020–21 Annual Report

THE SPECIAL EDUCATION ADVISORY COUNCIL (SEAC) 2020–21 ANNUAL REPORT

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PREFACE

The Washington State Special Education Advisory Council (SEAC) respectfully submits the 2020–21 annual report to the State of Washington Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI). The annual report is a summary of the committee's activities and recommendations during the reporting period. The SEAC provides a broad base of input to OSPI staff regarding policies, practices, and issues related to the education of children and youth with disabilities ages 3 through 21.

This report fulfills the requirements set forth by the <u>Individuals with Disabilities Education Act</u> (IDEA), and <u>Washington Administrative Code</u> (WAC) 392-172A-07060.

As a part of this report, the SEAC reviewed the recommendations from the prior year (2019–20) and noted progress towards those recommendations as well as identifying emerging trends and issues in the current school year. The recommendations reflect the review of information and summarize the work of the SEAC for the 2020–21 school year.

The SEAC Land Acknowledgement

We honor America's First People and all elders, past, present, and emerging and we are called on to learn and share what we learn about the tribal history, culture and contributions that have been suppressed in telling the story of America.

OSPI Equity Statement

Each student, family, and community possess strengths and cultural knowledge that benefits their peers, educators, and schools.

Ensuring educational equity:

- Goes beyond equality; it requires education leaders to examine the ways current policies and practices result in disparate outcomes for our students of color, students living in poverty, students receiving special education and English Learner services, students who identify as LGBTQ+, and highly mobile student populations.
- Requires education leaders to develop an understanding of historical contexts; engage students, families, and community representatives as partners in decision-making; and actively dismantle systemic barriers, replacing them with policies and practices that ensure all students have access to the instruction and support they need to succeed in our schools.

The SEAC Duties

The SEAC operates in compliance with state and federal requirements under the <u>IDEA Part B</u>, and <u>Revised Code of Washington (RCW) 28A.155</u>. The purpose of the SEAC is to identify emerging issues, and facilitate the provision of special education and related services to meet the unique needs of the state's 147,628 IDEA eligible students by:

 Advising the State Superintendent of Public Instruction and making recommendations on all matters related to special education and specifically advise the State Superintendent of unmet needs within the state in the education of students eligible for special education services.

- Commenting publicly on any rules or regulations proposed by the state regarding the education of students eligible for special education services.
- Advising the state in developing evaluations and reporting such information as may assist the state in its data requirements under section 618 of the IDEA.
- Advising the state in developing corrective action plans to address findings identified in federal monitoring reports under Part B of the IDEA.
- Advising the state in developing and implementing policies relating to the coordination of services for students eligible for special education services.
- Reviewing state due process findings and decisions.
- In the event that the state submits a waiver under WAC 300.164 regarding state-level nonsupplanting, OSPI must consult with the SEAC prior to the submission.

Acknowledgements

The SEAC wishes to express our appreciation for the collaborative and effective relationship we have with OSPI. This relationship provides the SEAC with the information and opportunity to maintain a strong and open line of communication regarding the issues that are critical to the needs of students with disabilities who receive special education services in Washington state.

Additionally, the SEAC recognizes the tireless work of all OSPI staff and especially the OSPI special education team. We appreciate the time spent with us sharing relevant data, ongoing work, and perspectives.

The SEAC Belief Statement

We believe that every student in Washington state has the right to reach his or her full human potential. We believe that students will fully and meaningfully participate in their education and community.

We will use our strength as a broad based and diverse constituency group to play an active and influential role in decisions affecting education policies, programs, and services. Our priorities are focused on building a strong public education system that is inclusive, equitable, proactive, and supportive of students, families, and educators.

The SEAC Commitments

- We will provide workable solutions—taking into account the various needs of each of our Local Education Agencies (LEAs).
- We will build partnerships across agencies and organizations to ensure the processes within the educational system supports the needs of the whole child.
- We will engage stakeholders throughout our schools and communities.
- We will review research and evidence-based practices.
- We will highlight examples of excellence in schools and communities across our state.

The SEAC 2020–21 Focus Areas

Inclusion and Equity in Special Education Services

Inclusion is the belief and practice that all students have the right to meaningfully access academic and social opportunities in general education settings. In Washington State, only 57 percent of students receiving special education services are included in general education settings for 80–100 percent of the school day. Washington is currently one of the least inclusive states, ranking 44 out of 50. The SEAC continues to recognize the critical importance of building structures that contribute to inclusive school culture, so students are successful in their learning and feel an authentic sense of belonging, along with access to high quality general education curriculum.

The 2020-21 SEAC recommends:

- A clear alignment of initiatives and technical assistance OSPI is engaged in to improve outcomes for students with disabilities from preschool through high school transition.
- Ongoing oversight and accountability for Inclusionary Practices Project, started in 2019, to improve outcomes of students with disabilities through professional development, coaching, mentoring, and establishment of demonstration sites highlighting best practices.
- Continued review of disaggregated data (exclusion, restraint/isolation, parent participation, academics, demographics, interpreters/document translation provided at meetings/certification status of those interpreters).
- Intentional quarterly reporting to include the data that reflect the intersectionality identity of students with disabilities.
- Racial equity using the superintendent's language on racial justice and systemic racism in the current system.
- Implementation of recommendations of the Language Access Workgroup to build the foundation of meaningful family engagement of students with disabilities.
- Identification of an anti-ableism framework that honors disability as a form of diversity and positive identity.
- Consistent reporting on work of state design teams.

Special Education Funding

The SEAC continues to believe LEAs must be provided the necessary funding to support evidenced-based special education programming rooted in equity and best practices. To support this endeavor, the 2020–2021 SEAC recommends the 2021–2022 SEAC address the following funding issues:

- Support sustained funding for implementation:
 - o Access to general education professional development to all relevant certificated and classified staff and resources to implement the following areas in a virtual environment and in anticipation of re-entry to in-person services:
 - I. Universal Design for Learning (UDL)
 - II. Multi-tiered System of Supports (MTSS)
 - III. Standards-based instruction
 - IV. Trauma invested and healing-centered practices

- V. Family and community engagement/education with cultural humility
- VI. Language Access
- VII. Accessible materials to include curriculum and technology
- Continued efforts to braid funding sources and increase flexibility in the use of categorical and other funds. (Example: ESSER funding).
- Highlighting recommendations for new structures:
 - o An analysis of the impact of COVID19 pandemic on school funding and therefore services.
 - o An analysis of the impact of the implementation of the multiplier changes to the state special education funding model.
 - o Mental health supports
 - I. Counselors
 - II. Increased funding for school psychologists
 - III. Mental health providers
 - IV. Social emotional learning

An Analysis of the COVID-19 Response and Technical Assistance

The SEAC believes that the educational response to the global pandemic is an opportunity for Washington state to reshape and redesign the system of special education to improve practices and outcomes for all students. This new education environment requires support and guidance for school districts in the delivery of services for all students, particularly those in marginalized populations. The 2020–2021 SEAC recommends the 2021–2022 SEAC analyze the following implementation issues:

- Integration of the principles of Universal Design for Learning (UDL) throughout the educational system and ensure the benefits reach each and every student.
 - Accessible materials including but not limited to translation, screen readers, closed captioning, image descriptions, perceivable texts (size/font), internet, etc.
- The adequate and timely technical assistance system ensuring schools and LEAs are supported with tools and guidelines to meet the ever-changing needs of students in a remote/hybrid/in-person learning environment, including:
 - Low-incidence disabilities, 18–21 transition, pre-K, English Learners, graduation, and inclusion.
 - Evaluating the need for in-person services for students who were not able to access a Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) in a remote learning environment (e.g., Recovery Services).
 - o Safety as an access or barrier to equitable consistent services.
 - o Expanding community partnerships to meet the needs of students.
 - Enhanced supports and training for families on communication devices/assistive technology and use of that technology.

Family and Community Engagement

The SEAC continues to support the development and implementation of an inclusive and equitable plan for promoting diverse engagement of family, community, and natural supports through

trauma-informed and healing-centered practices which aims to increase knowledge, system improvement, and acknowledge all parties' unique expertise and perspective. Our communities are diverse and becoming more disconnected in our current pandemic educational environment.

The SEAC supports and is committed to equitable access in public schools. The SEAC encourages a commitment to family engagement in LEAs and school improvement plans must be accountable to the community of systemically and historically marginalized students with disabilities. The SEAC recommends the following actions for 2021–22:

- Support LEAs in implementing family engagement and technology practices such as training, parent special education advisory councils, and facilitation of community resources and supports for individuals with disabilities.
- Prioritize OSPI's work with stakeholders to identify and implement effective practices for family engagement in a virtual environment.
- Identify and analyze the exemplar work of LEAs in family and community engagement (Example: positive strategies used to increase parent response rate on surveys.)
- OSPI provide yearly parent survey results for review.
- Facilitate the procurement of funding for training and technical assistance with support of Educational Service Districts (ESDs).
- Build an inclusive culture of community and family engagement by being intentional and consistent in removing barriers to develop relationships with families by giving them knowledge and empowering them.
- Develop intentional communication routes and tools to ensure information travels all the way through the system to the teacher and family level in a consistent way.

Pre-service and In-service Educator Training

The SEAC believes that to have a truly supportive and inclusive learning environment we must move to dual certification in general education and special education for all teachers. The SEAC recommends collaboration between OSPI, The Professional Standards Board (PESB), the Washington Education Association (WEA), the Washington Association of Colleges of Teacher Education (WACTE), and other stakeholders including student and family-led organizations, to address educator preparation programs, teacher mentoring programs, and ongoing in-service professional development. Recommendations include to:

- Provide an OSPI definition of Critical Race Theory with an emphasis on intersectional identities and goals for diversity.
- Share data on retention and recruitment staff.
- Collaborate between Collaboration for Effective Educator Development, Accountability, and Reform (CEEDAR), the Keeping Exceptional Special Educators (KESE) grant that is supporting pre-services improvements, and the State Personnel Development Grant (SPDG) that supports MTSS.
- Proactive intervention.
- Classroom management strategies rooted in Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS).

- Continue to promote, fund, and provide certification of paraeducator staff.
- Teaching with a focus on equity through the practices of UDL, and implementing UDL with standards-based instruction.
- Teaching and engaging marginalized populations in a virtual environment with culturally responsive training.
- MTSS.
- Trauma-invested and healing-centered practices.
- The national focus around exclusionary practices, disproportionality, and their impact on discipline procedures.
- The effective utilization and supervision of paraeducators.
- Meaningful collaboration and communication with families.
- Meaningful collaboration, co-teaching, and consultation.
- Meaningful training for school leaders on supporting inclusive practices and models (e.g., co-teaching).

The SEAC 2020–21 Accomplishments

In the 2020–21 school year, the SEAC:

- Continued a focus on visibility of the SEAC through virtual meeting.
- Increased accessibility of meetings through translation, closed captioning, and interpreting services.
- Increased knowledge of awareness of issues impacting our communities through hosting public comment at meetings, virtual community forums, and presentations at meetings.
- Hosted statewide virtual community/parent forums with a focus on inclusion and equity in education.
- Continued intentional focus on diversity and equity within the SEAC membership, development
 of agendas, and recommendations to the state.
- Participated in numerous national and local task forces relating to issues impacting students with disabilities; birth through 21 years of age and beyond.
- Offered support statements relating to:
 - o Technical assistance in language access.
 - The efforts of OSPI and Center for the Improvement of Student Learning (CISL) to create a plan for MTSS.
 - o Comprehensive sexual health education.
 - Supporting the addition of an adapted Physical Education pathway for credentialed teachers.
- Formed workgroups and created documents relating to:
 - o Family and community engagement.
 - Equity of access.
 - Mental health supports.
 - OSPI funding.
- Tracked legislation that impacts families of students with disabilities with an intentional lens on equity.
- Provided input on proposed changes to the WAC 392-172.

- Engaged in presentations to the SEAC regarding the following topics:
 - August 21, 2020
 - COVID Updates regarding Special Education
 - Due Process summary

October 27, 2020

- COVID Updates regarding Special Education
- Inclusionary Practices Project Professional Development Updates
- Budget requests related to Special Education
- WAC revisions
- Due Process summary

o January 2021

Review and provided input into Annual Performance Report (APR)

February 23–24, 2021

- Legislative Plans 2021
- Analysis of COVID-19 impact on complaints
- Trends in Due Process decisions
- Plan to consider race and equity in Dispute Resolution and intersections with Language Access
- APR 2021 review, including SSIP
- Final WAC revisions
- Special Education Technology Center (SETC)
- Dyslexia Advisory Council updates
- Specific Learning Disability Cadre
- School to Post-School Transition Collaborative and Efforts
- Preschool and Collaboration with Department of Children, Youth, & Families
 (DCYF)
- Inclusionary Practices Project Report
- Due Process summary

o May 18-19, 2021

- Reopening plans
- Recovery services
- Inclusionary Practices Project priorities
- Graduation Pathways after the removal of the Certificate for Individual Achievement (CIA)
- Survey for American Rescue Plan Elementary and Secondary School Emergency
 Fun (ARPA ESSER) Plan
- Feedback on WA ARP ESSER Plan for students with disabilities

- Student survey
- Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS)
- ARPA IDEA funds
- Data on intersectionality of students with disabilities
- WA Assessment and Accountability Waiver updates
- Special Education and OSPI anti-racism work and strategic plan
- Restraint and isolation data
- Administrators Improving Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (AIMS) Project
- OSPI Comprehensive Education Data and Research System (CEDARS) data
- Supporting students in remote online learning
- Due Process summary

Recommendations for 2021–22

The SEAC values our responsibility to make recommendations to Superintendent Reykdal on all matters related to special education and the needs of students eligible for special education services.

In reviewing our priorities and reflecting on information we have received over this past year of work, we have identified the following actionable recommendations:

<u>Recommendation 1</u>: Collection and analysis of OSPI data regarding state level action on previous SEAC recommendations.

<u>Recommendation 2</u>: Collection and analysis of disaggregated data and recommendations regarding graduation pathways.

<u>Recommendation 3</u>: Review of data on adequacy and timeliness of OSPI response and technical assistance.

<u>Recommendation 4</u>: Convening of joint meeting between SEAC and DCYF Interagency Coordinating Council (ICC).

<u>Recommendation 5</u>: Collection and analysis of data on the collective impact of special education funding.

Appendix A: The SEAC 2020–21 Member Roster

Representative Role (per WAC 392-172A- 07060)	Special Education Advisory Council Members 2020–21 School Year * Member serves multiple roles on the SEAC		
Executive Team	Member & Organization	ESD of residence	Term
	*Executive Chairperson—Tammie Jensen- Tabor, Centralia School District—Special Education Administrator	ESD 113	2019–22
	*Executive Vice Chairperson—Jen Cole, Partnerships for Action, Voices for Empowerment (PAVE)—Program Director, Parent Training & Information—Parent	ESD 189	2019–22
	Executive Member–Jeff Brown, Burlington-Edison School District—Special Programs Director	ESD 189	2019–22
	Member & Organization	ESD of residence	Term
	*Executive Vice Chairperson—Jen Cole, Partnerships for Action, Voices for Empowerment (PAVE)—Program Director, Parent Training & Information—Parent	ESD 189	2019–22
	*Shawnta DiFalco, Grandview School District— Director of Special Services-McKinney Vento Liaison—Parent	ESD 105	2019–22
	*Suzanne Ender, LBLD Hamlin Robinson Learning Center— Special Education Teacher — Parent	ESD 121	2019–22
	*Patricia González, ARC of King County—Parent to Parent Coordinator for Latino Spanish Speakers—Parent	ESD 121	2019–22
	*Kitara Johnson, Excelsior—Chief Development Officer—Parent	ESD 121	2019–22
	Jennifer Lee—Parent	ESD 101	2019–22
	*Kimberly Leger, Puyallup School District— Director Special Education—Parent	ESD 121	2019–22
	*Shanna McBride, Department of Children, Youth, and Families—Early Learning/K-12 Education/Education Foster Care Program Manager—Parent	ESD 113	2019–22
	*Joy Sebe, Open Doors for Multicultural Families—Program Lead—Parent	ESD 121	2019–22
	*Dr. Vanessa Tucker, Pacific Lutheran University (PLU)—Associate Professor Special Education—Parent	ESD 121	2019–22
	*Amie Verellen-Grubbs, Lakewood School District—Assistant Director Teaching & Learning—Parent	ESD 189	2019–22

Representative Role (per WAC 392-172A- 07060)	Special Education Advisory Council Members 2020–21 School Year * Member serves multiple roles on the SEAC		
Individual with disability	Member & Organization	ESD of residence	Term
	Eden Bush—Student, Davis High School	ESD 105	2019–22
	*Kitara Johnson, Excelsior—Chief Development Officer—Parent	ESD 121	2019–22
	*Dr. Vanessa Tucker, Pacific Lutheran University	ESD 121	2019–22
	(PLU)— Associate Professor Special Education—Parent		
Educator	Member & Organization	ESD of residence	Term
	Tanya Cochran, White Salmon School District— Special Education Teacher	ESD 112	2019–22
	Shyla DeJong, Richland School District— Special Education Teacher	ESD 123	2019–22
	*Suzanne Ender, Hamlin Robinson Learning Center—LBLD Interventionist—Private School—Parent	ESD 121	2019–22
	*Dr. Vanessa Tucker, Pacific Lutheran University (PLU)—Associate Professor Special Education—Parent	ESD 121	2019–22
Institution of higher education that	Member & Organization	ESD of residence	Term
prepare special education and related services	*Dr. Vanessa Tucker, Pacific Lutheran University (PLU)—Associate Professor Special Education—Parent	ESD 121	2019–22
personnel			
State & Local District officials who carry	Member & Organization	ESD of residence	Term
out activities under subtitle B of Title VII of the McKinney	*Shawnta DiFalco, Grandview School District— Director of Special Services-McKinney Vento Liaison—Parent	ESD 105	2019–22
Vento Homeless Assistance Act	*Amie Verellen-Grubbs, Lakewood School District—Assistant Director Teaching & Learning—Parent	ESD 189	2019–22

Local administrators of	Member & Organization	ESD of residence	Term
special education programs	Jeff Brown, Burlington Edison School District— Director Special Programs	ESD 189	2019–22
	*Shawnta DiFalco, Grandview School District— Director of Special Services—McKinney Vento Liaison—Parent	ESD 105	2019–22
	Tammie Jensen–Tabor, Centralia School District— Special Education Administrator	ESD 113	2019–22
	*Kimberly Leger, Puyallup School District— Director Special Education	ESD 121	2019–22
	Sean McCormick, Washington State School for the Blind (WSSB)—Director On-Campus Education	ESD 112	2019–22
	*Amie Verellen-Grubbs, Lakewood School District—Assistant Director Teaching & Learning—McKinney Vento Liaison-Parent	ESD 189	2019–22
State agencies involved in the	Member & Organization	ESD of residence	Term
financing or delivery of related services to special	*Tammie Doyle, Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, (DSHS/DVR)— Secondary Transition Manager	ESD 113	2019–22
education students	*Kathleen Harvey, Rehabilitation Administration Juvenile Rehabilitation, (DSHS/JRA)-Director Division of Community Reentry and Parole Programs	ESD 113	2018–20
	*Laurie Thomas, Department of Early Learning, (DEL)— ESIT Program Administrator	ESD 113	2018–20
Representatives of private schools and	Member & Organization	ESD of residence	Term
public charter schools	*Suzanne Ender, Hamlin Robinson Learning Center—LBLD Interventionist—Private School—Parent	ESD 121	2019–22
	*Kitara Johnson, Excelsior–Chief Development Officer—Private School—Parent	ESD 101	2019–22
	Diana Marker, Washington Charter Schools Association– Director of School Services	ESD 121	2018–20

Not less than one vocational,	Member & Organization	ESD of residence	Term
community, or business organization	*Jen Cole, Partnerships for Action, Voices for Empowerment (PAVE)—Program Director—Parent	ESD 189	2019–22
concerned with the provision of transition services	*Tammie Doyle, Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, (DSHS/DVR)— Secondary Transition Manager	ESD 113	2018–20
to students eligible for special education	*Patricia González, ARC of King County—Parent to Parent Coordinator for Latino Spanish Speakers—Parent	ESD 121	2019–22
	*Laurie Thomas, Department of Early Learning, (DEL)— ESIT Program Administrator	ESD 113	2018–20
A state child welfare agency	Member & Organization	ESD of residence	Term
employee responsible for services to children in foster care	*Shanna McBride, Department of Children, Youth, and Families—Early Learning/K-12 Education/Education Foster Care Program Manager—Parent	ESD 113	2019–22
State juvenile and		ESD of	
adult corrections	Member & Organization	residence	Term
	*Kathleen Harvey, Rehabilitation Administration Juvenile Rehabilitation, (DSHS/JRA)–Director Division of Community Reentry and Parole		Term 2018–20
adult corrections	*Kathleen Harvey, Rehabilitation Administration Juvenile Rehabilitation, (DSHS/JRA)– Director	residence	
adult corrections agencies Cultural linguistic	*Kathleen Harvey, Rehabilitation Administration Juvenile Rehabilitation, (DSHS/JRA)-Director Division of Community Reentry and Parole Programs	residence ESD 113 ESD of	2018–20
adult corrections agencies Cultural linguistic diversity to reflect the communities	*Kathleen Harvey, Rehabilitation Administration Juvenile Rehabilitation, (DSHS/JRA)–Director Division of Community Reentry and Parole Programs Member & Organization *Joy Sebe, Open Doors for Multicultural Families	residence ESD 113 ESD of residence	2018–20 Term
adult corrections agencies Cultural linguistic diversity to reflect the communities we serve and ensure a diversified	*Kathleen Harvey, Rehabilitation Administration Juvenile Rehabilitation, (DSHS/JRA)–Director Division of Community Reentry and Parole Programs Member & Organization *Joy Sebe, Open Doors for Multicultural Families –Program Lead—Parent *Patricia González, ARC of King County—Parent to Parent Coordinator for Latino Spanish	ESD of residence ESD 121	2018–20 Term 2019–22
adult corrections agencies Cultural linguistic diversity to reflect the communities we serve and ensure a diversified	*Kathleen Harvey, Rehabilitation Administration Juvenile Rehabilitation, (DSHS/JRA)-Director Division of Community Reentry and Parole Programs Member & Organization *Joy Sebe, Open Doors for Multicultural Families -Program Lead—Parent *Patricia González, ARC of King County—Parent to Parent Coordinator for Latino Spanish Speakers—Parent	residence ESD 113 ESD of residence ESD 121 ESD 121 School District	2018–20 Term 2019–22 2019–22
adult corrections agencies Cultural linguistic diversity to reflect the communities we serve and ensure a diversified	*Kathleen Harvey, Rehabilitation Administration Juvenile Rehabilitation, (DSHS/JRA)-Director Division of Community Reentry and Parole Programs Member & Organization *Joy Sebe, Open Doors for Multicultural Families -Program Lead—Parent *Patricia González, ARC of King County—Parent to Parent Coordinator for Latino Spanish Speakers—Parent	residence ESD 113 ESD of residence ESD 121 ESD 121 School District	2018–20 Term 2019–22 2019–22

Appendix B

The SEAC Representation on Other Local, State, National Committees and Groups

The SEAC members participated in a variety of local, state and national committees:

- State Interagency Coordinating Council (ICC) for The Department of Children Youth and Families (DCYF) (Part C of the IDEA)
- Washington State Rehabilitation Council for the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation
- Safety Net Committee
- Early Learning Strategic Plan Steering Committee
- Comprehensive Sexual Health Education Workgroup
- State Re-Opening Schools Committee
- OSPI Special Education Re-Opening Workgroup
- Cultivating Inclusion Lewis County
- Language Access Workgroup
- Blind Youth Consortium
- PNW Association for Education and Rehabilitation of the Blind and Visually Impaired (PNW AER)
- OSPI Language Access Workgroup
- Special Educator Stakeholder Workgroup Least Restrictive Environment (LRE)
- Reopening of Washington Schools for 2020-21
- OSPI Dyslexia Task Force
- Lake Washington School District PTSA Committee

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All students prepared for post-secondary pathways, careers, and civic engagement.



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