

# SEAP

Special Education Advisory Panel  
2020-2021

# *Annual Report*



**pennsylvania**  
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

## SEAP Purpose

The Individuals With Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) requires that each state establish and maintain an advisory panel for the *purpose of advising the state special education staff regarding the education of eligible students with disabilities*.

This responsibility includes advising the Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) on the education of students with disabilities, ages three to twenty-one, who are educated through the use of public funds, including, but not limited to, children served in public schools, private schools, hospitals, prisons, and in the home.

## SEAP Responsibilities

SEAP has eight duties. Duties one through five are in accordance with 34 C.F.R. §300.169. Duties six through eight are added under Pennsylvania SEAP By-Laws. The SEAP advises the State Education Agency (The Pennsylvania Department of Education) on:

1. The unmet needs within the commonwealth as to the education of children with disabilities
2. Any rules or regulations proposed by the state regarding the education of children with disabilities
3. Developing evaluations and reporting on data to the Secretary of Education under section 618 of the Act
4. Developing corrective action plans to address findings identified in federal monitoring reports
5. Developing and implementing policies relating to the coordination of services for children with disabilities
6. Other issues as deemed necessary by the Secretary of the Department of Education, the Director of the Bureau of Special Education (BSE), and the Director of the Bureau of Early Intervention Services and Family Supports (BEISFS) or their respective designees
7. The education of eligible students with disabilities living in congregate care (i.e., residential treatment facilities, adult prisons, youth detention facilities, psychiatric hospitals, medical facilities)
8. Any other activities or actions required by its governing statutes or regulations

## Summary of SEAP Recommendations to Bureaus 2020-2021

Each year SEAP develops a work plan and establishes committees to deeply study SEAP's priorities. During 2020-2021, SEAP approved the following committee recommendations to the Bureau of Special Education and/or Bureau of Early Intervention Services and Family Supports.

### Family Engagement

- Further research into the needs of underserved children, such as those experiencing homelessness, migrant populations, children being raised by grandparents.
- Continue inclusion of the family voice at the PDE Annual Conference.

### Least Restrictive Environment

- Support inclusive opportunities through Universal Design for Learning (UDL) activities and awareness campaign.
- Make Supplementary Aids and Services (SaS) toolkit updates with materials for staff and families, training, and establishment of data collection on the use and outcomes from the SaS toolkit usage.

### Transitions

- Ensure that all students have necessary supports to transition into school age, into high school, and into adulthood during COVID-19, particularly for children and youth with complex support needs.
- Support the use of assistive technology (AT) and augmented alternative communication (AAC), to increase inclusive opportunities during transition points.
- Enhance interagency coordination across transition point systems.

## Mental Health

- Distribute and analyze surveys to local education agencies (LEAs) regarding students within, and transitioning back from, residential treatment facilities (RTF)s.
- Include a Mental Health Committee member at stakeholder meetings of other state organizations that intersect education services.

## Crisis Intervention and Restraint Prevention

- Provide guidance and tools to support students following a restraint.
- Provide training on restraints for families, training on trauma informed care, and training on components of high-quality functional behavioral assessments (FBA).
- Require specific credentials for those conducting FBAs.

## SEAP Recommendations on Action Topics

- Target setting and improvement activities on State Performance Plan/Annual Performance Report/State Systemic Improvement Plan (SPP/APR/SSIP)
- Attorney presence during mediation
- Positive Behavioral Supports Office of Child Development and Early Learning (OCDEL) Announcement
- Inclusion of All Children in Early Childhood Programs in PA OCDEL Announcement
- Early Intervention Service Delivery: Coaching Across Settings OCDEL Announcement
- State Performance Plan Process to Solicit Stakeholder Input
- Bureau of Special Education (BSE) and Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR) Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) (Public Comment)
- By-laws' amendments of panel membership and attendance requirements

## 2020-2021 Special Education Advisory Panel Members

SEAP is a requirement of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) Public Law 105-17. The Law outlines the requirements for panel members and stipulates the various agencies and programs they are to represent. IDEA also requires that panel membership be comprised of more than 50 percent parents of students with disabilities. The members serve a three-year term. Following is the list of 2020-2021 members who advanced the recommendations summarized in this report.

Heidi Allen	Regina Speaker Palubinsky
Cynthia Alvarez	Diane Perry
Gretchen Daugherty	Lucille Piggott-Prawl
Maria Edelberg	Kim Robinson
Amy Fisher	Cathy Roccia-Meier
Lisa Fulton	Perri Rosen
Naomi Galman	Robert Savakinus
Lisa Gaylor	Gina Scala
Chris Grandy	Rachel Schlosser
Luz Hernandez	Klarissa Spencer
Sharon Janosik	Jane Swan
Michele Jennings	Cecelia Thompson
Joe Kleppick	Edward Titterton
Timothy Krushinski	Alicia Tyler
Carmen Medina	Ned Whitehead
Ken Oakes	

## For More Information

For more information on SEAP responsibilities, membership, and operations see the [Pennsylvania Special Education Advisory Panel Flyer](https://tinyurl.com/SEAPflyerPA) at <https://tinyurl.com/SEAPflyerPA>

For more information on the SEAP meeting schedule, public attendance, by-laws, agendas, minutes, and current panel members, see the [SEAP webpage](https://tinyurl.com/SEAPinPA) at <https://tinyurl.com/SEAPinPA>

The full [2020-2021 Annual Report](https://tinyurl.com/SEAPAnnualReport2020-21) can be found at <https://tinyurl.com/SEAPAnnualReport2020-21>

# Commonwealth of Pennsylvania

Tom Wolf, Governor

