

MISSOURI SPECIAL EDUCATION ADVISORY PANEL

*Advising the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education on
Implementation of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act*

June 2012

Chair

Scott B. Montgomery

Vice Chair

Russell Brock

Secretary

Susan Sharp

Dear Citizens of Missouri:

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) requires each State Education Agency (SEA) to establish a committee in order to provide advice regarding programs and services for children with disabilities. The Special Education Advisory Panel (SEAP) serves in that capacity for the Special Education Office of the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE).

SEAP represents stakeholders who have specific knowledge of, and interest in, special education. It plays an important role in representing the various constituencies who are impacted by, or have an interest in, special education in Missouri.

The primary function of SEAP is to provide policy guidance on special education and related services and carry out those specific and general functions set forth in law. SEAP exists to perform five enumerated functions: 1.) advise DESE of unmet needs within the state in the education of children with disabilities; 2.) provide public comments on any rules or regulations proposed by the state regarding the education of children with disabilities; 3.) advise DESE regarding the development of evaluations and reporting of data to the U.S. Department of Education; 4.) advise DESE regarding the development of corrective action plans to address findings identified in federal monitoring reports; and, 5.) advise DESE regarding the development and implementation of policies related to the coordination of services for children with disabilities. The panel accomplishes this charge by convening to review items and offer comments related to proposed rules and regulations, advisement of reports to and from the U.S. Department of Education, and other special education issues brought to the panel.

SEAP's duties, responsibilities, and membership categories are defined in the IDEA and include parents of children with disabilities, individuals with disabilities, public school teachers and administrators, representatives of charter and private schools, as well as representatives from various state agencies and organizations.

The work of SEAP occurs at regularly scheduled meetings of the entire panel, as well as subcommittees (Evaluation, Rules and Regulations, Monitoring, Programs, Nominations, and Public Comment). The panel meets quarterly throughout each year and meeting dates are posted on the DESE website at: <http://dese.mo.gov/se/seap/94142meetings.html>.

Per Sunshine Law, SEAP's meetings are open to the public. SEAP welcomes and encourages comments from constituents statewide regarding concerns or issues faced by students with disabilities, their families, and the professionals who work with them. The comments are viewed by the Public Comment Committee members only and shared with the panel at the quarterly meetings. The public may submit comments to the panel via email at: seapcomments@gmail.com.

This letter is intended to serve as our annual report to provide an overview of the responsibilities and activities of the SEAP during the 2011-12 school year. For more complete information about SEAP activities, we encourage a visit to the following website:

<http://www.dese.mo.gov/divspeced/Administration/AdvisoryPanel/94142mainpage.html>.

SEAP and the Office of Special Education had an active school year. Here are a few highlights of SEAP activities:

- Missouri Integrated Model (MIM) – MIM presented an innovative process directed at improving students achievement and transforming school culture through tiered layers of support. Presenters included: Rich Hodits, MIM implementation facilitator; Patti Noonan, University of Kansas; Melvin Bishop, St. Charles School District; and, Russ Rowbottom, Meramec Valley School District.
- SEAP reviewed and discussed summaries and draft copies of the Part B Annual Performance Report (APR) and the Part B State Performance Plan (SPP).
- Professional Learning Communities (PLC) – PLC presented on the subject of increased knowledge of special education issues as they relate to the school environment. Presenters included: Vince Powell, High School Principal; Pam Deneke, Special Education Instructor, from Jackson School District; Rob Gordon-MO PLC Web/Data Consultant; and, Mary Ann Burns, Director of School Improvement Initiatives.
- Dr. Stephen Barr, Assistant Commissioner, Office of Special Education, presented information on the Department's Top 10 by 20 initiatives.
- Due Process Hearing Decisions/Disclosures – SEAP reviewed the current process of having a three member due process hearing officer panel and offered advisement to DESE regarding proposed legislation to this process. SEAP also reviewed a summary of data in connection to these decisions.
- Dynamics Learning Maps – SEAP was presented with information regarding an alternative assessment being developed by a consortium of states including Missouri. The presenters included: Alan Sheinker and Neal Kingston. This presentation was also open to other groups and/or associations with an interest in special education.

- Missouri Assistive Technology – Representatives from Missouri Assistive Technology presented new and developing assistive devices and trends for students utilizing assistive technology. The presenters included: David Baker and John Effinger, Assistive Technology Project.

Citizens of this great state who are interested in serving on SEAP are encouraged to review the membership requirements and consider submitting an application for SEAP membership. Thank you for your continued interest in the academic advancement and well-being of children with disabilities.

Sincerely,

Scott B. Montgomery, MSW
Chairperson, 2011-2012