



STATE OF MICHIGAN  
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
LANSING

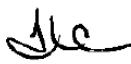
GRETCHEN WHITMER  
GOVERNOR

SHEILA A. ALLES  
INTERIM STATE SUPERINTENDENT

**MEMORANDUM**

**DATE:** January 29, 2019

**TO:** Organizations with An Interest In Improving Educational Outcomes for Students with Disabilities

**FROM:** Teri L. Chapman, Ed.S., Director  
Office of Special Education 

**SUBJECT:** Opportunity to apply for a vacant organizational seat on Michigan's Special Education Advisory Committee beginning with the 2019-20 school year

The federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) requires each state establish and maintain an advisory panel for the purpose of providing policy guidance with respect to special education and related services for students with disabilities in the State. In Michigan, this panel is known as the Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC). The SEAC advises both the Michigan Department of Education and the State Board of Education.

As of July 1, 2019, the SEAC will have 32 members. One organization has chosen not to participate on the committee. State law allows for 33 members. The SEAC wishes to return its membership to 33 to assure a range of expertise and diversity to effectively support quality educational outcomes for students with disabilities. Member organizations do not need to have education as their central focus. We anticipate viable candidates could come from fields such as counseling, educational data, health, legal services, social services, technology, etc. The following links provide additional information about:

- The federal requirements, expectations, and opportunities for state advisory panels [State Advisory Panel](#)
- Michigan's SEAC and its current [membership](#) and [bylaws](#)

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Specifically, the SEAC is seeking applicant organizations who meet all of the following criteria:

1. Statewide in scope, possibly as a state affiliate of a national organization
2. Membership of at least 200
3. Specific expertise and action in enhancing the educational outcomes of students with disabilities ages 3 – 26.
4. The ability to enhance the range of SEAC's diversity of perspectives.
5. The ability to have a delegate who can consistently participate in SEAC Committee of the Whole monthly meetings in Lansing, typically the first Wednesday of the month, and a designated alternate who can attend if there is an occasion when the delegate is not be available. Individual members serve three-year terms.
6. The ability to have a delegate who meets the federal criteria for a "defined member." A defined member is an individual with a disability or a parent of a child who currently receives special education services. Michigan must meet the federal requirement which ensures the majority of SEAC members are defined meet the defined member definition.

According to SEAC bylaws and procedures, all organizations whose members are primarily school-based employees are expected to have a defined member delegate for one of every three three-year terms. To ensure balance in the SEAC rotation, this new organization must commit to having a defined member for the 2022 - 2025 term. The selected organization will NOT be required to have a defined member delegate again until 2029 -2032 term.

Also, according to SEAC bylaws and procedures, all organizations whose members are primarily community-based family members or advocates are expected to have a defined member delegate every year.

For organizations interested in being considered for this SEAC membership, please send a letter of intent to Teri Chapman c/o Ashley Reed at [reeda@michigan.gov](mailto:reeda@michigan.gov) by Friday, March 15, 2019. The letter should explicitly respond to the six criteria above. Candidates will be invited to the May 1, 2019 SEAC Committee of the Whole meeting to make a brief (approximately five minutes) presentation explaining their potential contributions to the SEAC. Following the May 1, 2019 meeting, the SEAC members will vote to recommend a new organizational member. The SEAC will forward this recommendation and the associated rationale to the State Board of Education. The delegate and alternate will begin their term with the September Retreat in Fall 2019.

Please feel free to send a representative to the March 6, 2019 meeting as a guest if attending would provide you with a more complete understanding of SEAC. Please contact Ashley Reed by March 1, 2019 to confirm your plan to attend and to receive additional details about the meeting location, time, and agenda.

Thank you for your consideration of this opportunity.

Attachments.