

Orleans Parish  
2025-2026 Annual Special Education Advisory Council (SEAC) Report



May 2026

### What is the purpose of Orleans Parish's Special Education Advisory Council?

R.S. 17:1944 requires local public school systems to create a special education advisory council to provide advice and feedback regarding special education policies, procedures, and resources. The council shall also engage in outreach activities to the community at large to increase the level of knowledge, support, and collaboration with respect to special education.

### Members and Roles

| Member                    | Role                                                                                    |
|---------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Justina Boyd              | Parent                                                                                  |
| Kira Friedrich            | Parent                                                                                  |
| Shantia White             | Parent                                                                                  |
| Toya Jackson              | Parent                                                                                  |
| Claire Tibbetts           | Entity That Serves Students with Disabilities or Families of Students with Disabilities |
| Vacancy                   | Principal, Teacher or Paraprofessional                                                  |
| Vacancy                   | High School Student with an Exceptionality                                              |
| Dr. Shayla Guidry Hilaire | NOLA-PS Chief Student Support Officer                                                   |
| Kaylan Rogers             | NOLA-PS Assistant Director of Student Support Project Management                        |
| Ashley Augustine          | NOLA-PS Ombudswoman                                                                     |

### 2025-2026 Meetings, Agendas, Minutes

|                    |                     |                                                                                                                             |
|--------------------|---------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| September 29, 2025 | OPSB Central Office | Agenda: <a href="#">09.29.2025 SEAC Agenda</a><br>Minutes: <a href="#">SEAC Regular Meeting Summary - September 29 2025</a> |
| December 4, 2025   | Virtual Meeting     | Agenda: <a href="#">12.04.2025 SEAC Agenda</a><br>Minutes: <a href="#">SEAC Regular Meeting Summary - December 4 2025</a>   |
| April 16, 2026     | Virtual Meeting     | Agenda: <a href="#">04.16.2026 SEAC Agenda</a><br>Minutes: <a href="#">SEAC Regular Meeting Summary - April 16 2026</a>     |

A quorum was met at each of the scheduled September 29<sup>th</sup>, December 4<sup>th</sup>, and April 16<sup>th</sup> meetings. Meeting notices are advertised verbally during the Wrap Up portion towards the end of a previous meeting, through email reminders, and by online calendar invitations. Participation is encouraged through interactive whole group activities (i.e. chart paper and sticky note displays, verbal discussions, Zoom Whiteboard, virtual surveys/polls, etc.), small group/partner activities (i.e. priority lead/co-lead collaboration), as well as individual assignments (i.e. worksheets, guided notetaking prompts, assignment of action steps, etc.). Members are also encouraged to provide personal feedback and ideas during meetings or otherwise.

## Executive Summary

### 1. Overview of Special Education in Orleans Parish

- a. Students with disabilities in Orleans Parish continue to make steady academic gains, supported by targeted investments in inclusive practices, specialized services, and data-driven interventions across NOLA Public Schools (NOLA-PS). These efforts align with the district's broader equity agenda and Louisiana's continued focus on improving outcomes for students with exceptionalities.

#### i. Academic Performance Data and Subgroup Performance

1. **On Par with the State Average:** Orleans Parish Subgroup Performance scores indicate improvement from [55.5 D in 2024 to 60.6 C in 2025](#) for Students with Disabilities (SWD).
2. **Sufficient Improvement Met Through School System Planning:** The percentage of Authorized Schools in Urgent Intervention Required for SWD performance [decreased from 53% to 20%](#).

#### ii. Enrollment and Support Services

1. **Special Education Enrollment:** Detailed enrollment statistics for students with disabilities are available through the [NOLA-PS Data Dashboard](#).

**Resource Accessibility:** NOLA-PS provides a continuum of services and supports through inclusive and specialized placements, related services and interventions, as well as family and community resources. The District maintains a comprehensive [Special Education Resource Guide](#), offering information on programs and opportunities to support students with exceptionalities.

2. **NOLA Educational Service Agency (ESA):** Launched in August 2025, with eight charter partners, to coordinate shared services including related services, an Assistive Technology Library, and targeted supports chosen by schools.
3. **Release from SPED Consent Judgement:** Achieved through Substantial Compliance with all provisions, an order was issued by U.S. District Judge Jay C. Zainey on March 31, 2026 to [conclude eleven years of federal court oversight](#) stemming from P.B. v. Brumley, Civil Action No. 10-4049.
  - a. The following systems and structures have been implemented by NOLA-PS for ongoing supervision of special education services in Orleans Parish:
    - i. Annual review and distribution of guides on special education rights, enrollment, discipline, and family resources

- ii. Annual trainings for schools covering IDEA compliance and best practices for students with disabilities
    - iii. Comprehensive complaint process to address family concerns and assist with connection to needed supports
    - iv. Scheduled hands-on support offered to all NOLA-PS authorized schools for guidance on understanding and adhering to federal special education regulations
    - v. Development of the Special Education Resource Guide and Specialized Programming Guide, along with hosting outreach events each year to help families learn about available supports across Orleans Parish
    - vi. Coordination of shared services, resources, and supports through the NOLA ESA
    - vii. A dedicated Student Support Ombudsman for families
  - iii. Special Education Financial Data
    - 1. Financial and programmatic information related to special education is reported through LDOE's [Special Education Reporting and Funding](#) systems and is aligned with federal IDEA fiscal accountability requirements.
- 2. For a more in-depth analysis or specific data points, please reference:
  - a. [NOLA-PS Data Dashboard](#)
  - b. [Louisiana Department of Education's Special Education Reporting](#)
  - c. [Louisiana Department of Education's Special Education Funding](#)
- 3. Highlights and Accomplishments of the Council
  - a. Ongoing SEAC Priorities
    - i. **Special Education Outreach** – Opportunities & Events
      - 1. Focus: Partner Organizations, Growing Participation, Location Selection, and Exploring Sponsored Transportation Options
      - 2. Objective: Hosting events to connect students and families to resources in partnership with support organizations.
    - ii. **Special Education Resources** – Information for Parents
      - 1. Focus: Quarterly Gathering/Distribution of Information
      - 2. Objective: Informing families and building connections with support organizations.
    - iii. **Special Education Procedures** – Alignment & Student Transitions
      - 1. Focus: Procedures focused on Post-Secondary Transition, Proactive Identification for Early Steps, and Aligning IEP Implementation Across Networks
      - 2. Objective: Increasing awareness of district-wide procedures across stakeholders and fostering conversations on improved alignment.

- iv. **Special Education Policies** – Legislative Updates & Advocacy
    - 1. Focus: Tracking Priority Bills with SPED Focus and Policy Activism
    - 2. Objective: Keeping families and constituents abreast of what is happening legislatively.
- 4. Areas of Improvement, Next Steps, and Timeline of Upcoming Activities
  - a. The SEAC has identified areas of improvement such as filling current vacancies, increasing consistency of member participation, and utilization of proxies to attend meetings during member absences.
  - b. Next steps include finetuning operations to maximize membership and input, maintaining a SEAC aligned legislative tracker and exploring mobilization of advocacy opportunities, targeting consultative approaches for district-wide special education procedures, and planning preparation for future outreach events.
  - c. The timeline for the SEAC's upcoming activities will be determined at the scheduled 2026-2027 beginning-of-year meeting.
- 5. Parent Engagement
  - a. NOLA Public Schools employs a multifaceted approach to encourage and enhance parent engagement, recognizing families as essential partners in the educational process. Parent engagement in NOLA Public Schools is encouraged through:
    - i. A [districtwide engagement policy](#) requiring collaboration with families.
    - ii. The [Superintendent's Parent Advisory Council](#)'s quarterly meetings to discuss topics, share information and broaden understanding of school-related issues.
    - iii. School-based programs and welcoming environments designed with parent input.
    - iv. District resources that help families navigate rights, attendance, and student support.
      - 1. [Attendance and Engagement Resources](#)
      - 2. [Parent Resources Documents](#)
      - 3. [Family Resource Centers](#)
  - v. [Community-centered events and initiatives](#) that bring families into the educational process.

## How to Join the NOLA Public Schools Special Education Advisory Council

The NOLA Public Schools Special Education Advisory Council (NOLA-PS SEAC) meets on a scheduled basis to provide advice and recommendations regarding special education policies, procedures, and resources. The council also engages in outreach activities to the community at large to increase the level of knowledge, support, and collaboration with respect to special education.

Membership roles include the following special education stakeholder groups:

- **Parents or legal guardians** of students with disabilities enrolled in NOLA Public Schools
- A **high school student** with an Exceptionality enrolled in NOLA Public Schools
- A **representative from an entity** that serves students with disabilities or their families
- A **Principal, Teacher or Paraprofessional** employed in NOLA Public Schools and serving students with disabilities

Those interested in becoming a member of the NOLA-PS SEAC may complete our online application:

[NOLA-PS SEAC Application](#)

If a paper application is required, our Exceptional Children's Services Team may be contacted via email at [ecs@nolapublicschools.com](mailto:ecs@nolapublicschools.com), via telephone at 504-304-4988, or in-person at our central office location:

NOLA Public Schools  
Exceptional Children's Services  
2401 Westbend Parkway, Suite 2060  
New Orleans, LA 70114