



Rapides Parish School Board  
**Special Education**  
J.B. Lafargue Center

Vickie Smith  
Director of Special Education

Jeff Powell  
Superintendent

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**SPECIAL EDUCATION ADVISORY COUNCIL 2022-2023**

May 30, 2023

Mr. Brandon Cedus, Chair  
Mr. Gary Brown  
Ms. Pam Carey  
Ms. Janet Grigg  
Mr. Levi Koelling  
Ms. Shanna Mitchell  
Ms. Donna G. Rogers  
Ms. Vickie Smith, Director

Superintendent Jeff Powell  
P. O. Box 7177  
Alexandria, Louisiana 71307

Dear Superintendent Powell,

This letter is a narrative preceding the Rapides Parish Special Education Advisory Council's report to the Superintendent. Our committee was able to convene three times this past school year. The SEAC met October 27, 2022, February 9 and May 9, 2023. All three meetings were held at the J. B. Lafargue Special Education Center, located at 4515 Eddie Williams Avenue, Alexandria, Louisiana. Again, our continued emphasis has been on outreach and transition.

On October 27, 2022, we had one council member from the previous school year to resign, Mr. Justin Knowlton. Changes to the SEAC Policy were discussed. An update on Dyslexia was presented and two websites that are helpful to parents with children who have ADHD or are Autistic were discussed.

At our second meeting on February 9, 2023, Ms. Donna Frazier, the Transition Coordinator for the Rapides Parish School Board, was the Guest Speaker. She gave a brief description of her job duties, roles and responsibilities and primarily discussed our two Post-Secondary Programs available for SPED students – STAR at Louisiana Christian University and SKILL at Central Louisiana Technical Community College. Mrs. Smith also discussed the installation of cameras in special education self-contained classrooms and implementation of the feeder school zone system.

At our last meeting for the school year held on May 9, 2023, Ms. Smith gave an update on the cameras in the classrooms and the special education student placement, within their feeder school zones. Summer learning opportunities for students with disabilities was discussed. A review of SEAC requirements for the 2023-2024 School Year was also discussed. Ms. Rogers informed the Council that her daughter, a former SPED student, will be participating in the Bocce competition at the Special Olympics in Hammond, Louisiana, this summer.

Sincerely,



Vickie Smith  
Director of Special Education

Attachments:  
Council Meeting Agendas  
Council Meeting Minutes

**RAPIDES PARISH SCHOOL BOARD  
P. O. Box 7117  
Alexandria, Louisiana**

October 27, 2022

**TO: MEMBERS OF THE SPECIAL EDUCATION ADVISORY COUNCIL**

**FROM: BRANDON CEDUS, CHAIR**

**The Rapides Parish Special Education Advisory Council will meet at 12:30 p.m. on Thursday, October 27, 2022 in the conference room in the J. B. Lafargue Special Education Center, 4515 Eddie Williams Avenue, Alexandria, Louisiana.**

1. Call to order
2. Invocation, Pledge
3. Roll Call
4. Introduction of SEAC Members
5. Changes to SEAC Policy
6. Update on Dyslexia
7. Input from SEAC Members
8. Other business/discussion
9. Date/time for next meeting
10. Agenda items for next meeting
11. Adjournment

BC:VS:kg

Rapides Parish School Board Special Education Advisory Council (SEAC)  
October 27, 2022

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The Rapides Parish School Board's Special Education Advisory Council (SEAC) met at the J. B. Lafargue Special Education Center, 4515 Eddie Williams Avenue, Alexandria, Louisiana, on Thursday, October 27, 2022, at 12:30 p.m.

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Item #1: Call to Order

Mrs. Vickie Smith, Director of Special Education, called the meeting to order at 12:38 p.m.

Item #2: Invocation and Pledge

Mrs. Smith did the Invocation and Mr. Gary Brown led the Council in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

Item #3: Roll Call

Roll call was taken; a quorum was met. Members present were: Mr. Gary Brown, Ms. Pam Carey, and Ms. Donna Rogers. Representing the Rapides Parish School Board was Mrs. Vickie Smith, Director of Special Education. Council Members Mr. Brandon Cedus, Ms. Janet Grigg, Mr. Levi Koelling and Ms. Shanna Mitchell were absent. Mr. Justin Knowlton has resigned.

Item #4: Review of Minutes from the May 24, 2022 meeting

On motion of Ms. Pam Carey and seconded by Ms. Donna Gayle Rogers, the minutes were accepted. All in favor.

Item #5: Introduction of SEAC Members

We have 3 meetings per year. We had 3 returning members present; Ms. Pam Carey, Ms. Donna Rogers and Mr. Gary Brown. We will have 1-3 openings on the Council this year only. Those positions will be filled at the February 2023 meeting.

Item #6: Changes to SEAC Policy

The openings on the Council for this year only consist of seats for parents of special education students only. If the parents who are selected to finish the year like serving on the Council, then they may want to reapply next year to serve a full two-year term thereafter. The change to the SEAC Policy will be adopted at the Rapides Parish School Board November 1<sup>st</sup> Board Meeting. The application will then be added to the Rapides Parish School Board website.

Ms. Donna Rogers informed us that her role has changed now from a parent (her daughter has completely transitioned out of the SPED program) to just a school employee. Ms. Pam Carey is now also a grandparent of a special needs child.

Item #7: Update on Dyslexia

Mr. Jason Talbot, Dyslexia representative from Nichols State University, in Thibodaux, did a presentation on Thursday, October 6<sup>th</sup>, for designated personnel from all schools parish-wide and on Friday, October 7<sup>th</sup>, for Pupil Appraisal personnel.

Rapides Parish School Board does have a screener. It's a part of Dibbels. The committee went with a specific program (Intervention) for Dyslexia. It's very easy to use. It will be considered a Tier 3 Intervention. We would like to have him come back for a Presentation Part 2. We're making a Dyslexia brochure for the schools and for parents.

Item #8: Input from SEAC Members

Ms. Carey wants more information regarding RTI.

Two websites that are helpful to parents with children who have ADHD or are Autistic were discussed: ADDITUDE.com / LASARD.org.

Item #9: Other business/discussion

Calvary Baptist Church will sponsor its "Tim Tebow Night to Shine" Valentine Dance on Friday, February 10, 2023.

Item #10: Date/time for next meeting

It was suggested that the meeting be on a Tuesday or Thursday and that the date would be determined closer to February, but enough in advance to clear calendars.

Item #11: Agenda items for next meeting

The members want an update on Dyslexia. Any member can email Mrs. Smith with a request for an item to be added to the agenda.

Mrs. Donna Frazier will have the Transition Fair on December 15<sup>th</sup> so they want to invite her as a guest to the February meeting. Mr. Urbina will probably be a guest every other year.

Families Helping Families will start doing two SPED webinars every week.

Item #12: Adjournment

On motion of Ms. Pam Carey and seconded by Mr. Gary Brown, the Rapides Parish Special Education Advisory Council October 27, 2022, meeting was adjourned at 1:48 p.m.

**RAPIDES PARISH SCHOOL BOARD  
P. O. Box 7117  
Alexandria, Louisiana**

February 9, 2023

**TO: MEMBERS OF THE SPECIAL EDUCATION ADVISORY COUNCIL**

**FROM: BRANDON CEDUS, CHAIR**

**The Rapides Parish Special Education Advisory Council will meet at 12:30 p.m. on Thursday, February 9, 2023 in the conference room in the J. B. Lafargue Special Education Center, 4515 Eddie Williams Avenue, Alexandria, Louisiana.**

1. Call to order
2. Invocation, Pledge
3. Roll Call
4. Dyslexia Brochure and Program
5. Cameras in Sp Ed Self-contained Classrooms
6. Transition Updates
7. Other business/discussion
8. Date/time for next meeting
9. Agenda items for next meeting
10. Adjournment

BC:VS:kg

Rapides Parish School Board Special Education Advisory Council (SEAC)  
February 9, 2023

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The Rapides Parish School Board's Special Education Advisory Council (SEAC) met at the J. B. Lafargue Special Education Center, 4515 Eddie Williams Avenue, Alexandria, Louisiana, on Thursday, February 9, 2023, at 12:30 p.m.

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Item #1: Call to Order

Mrs. Vickie Smith, Director of Special Education, called the meeting to order at 12:35 p.m.

Item #2: Invocation and Pledge

Mr. Brandon Cedus did the Invocation and Mrs. Smith led the Council in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

Item #3: Roll Call

Roll call was taken; a quorum was met. Members present were: Mr. Brandon Cedus, Ms. Pam Carey, Mr. Levi Koelling, Ms. Shanna Mitchell and Ms. Donna Gayle Rogers. Representing the Rapides Parish School Board was Mrs. Vickie Smith. Council Members absent were Mr. Gary Brown and Ms. Janet Grigg.

Item #4: Transition Updates

Transition Updates was originally scheduled as Item #6 on the Agenda, but it was bumped up to #4 and numbers 4 and 5 shifted down.

Donna Frazier, the Transition Coordinator for the Rapides Parish School Board, was the Guest Speaker. She described her job duties, roles and responsibilities associated with the position. She also addressed the Spring Transition Fair and CBT Prom.

There are 2 Post Secondary Programs: 1) STAR at Louisiana Christian University and 2) SKILL at Central Louisiana Technical Community College. In addition to their academics, the STAR students have jobs at Mac's Foods, Hotel Bentley or the Alexandria Zoo. The SKILL students function at a slightly higher academic level than the STAR students. There is a third program locally, but it isn't part of the Rapides Parish School Board. It is at LSUA and cost approximately \$7,000.

Item #5: Dyslexia Brochure and Program

Rapides Parish School Board has designed a brochure regarding Dyslexia. The brochures will be dispensed to parents and displayed at the schools. Dyslexia can affect all students. All

schools should now have at least one person that is trained to tutor a student. This program is great for any struggling reader; they don't have to be dyslexic.

Item #6: Cameras in Special Ed Self-Contained Classrooms

In order for a parent to make a request, their child must be in the special education classroom 50% or more during the day, thus self-contained. A lot of classes already have cameras in the classrooms, but they have video and no audio. With these new cameras, the video is kept 30 days. Parents can't view at their discretion. The parents must complete and submit paperwork to the principal and the principal will then access the tape, not the parent.

There is a 45-day time period from the time a parent requests a camera in a classroom until the camera is installed.

Item #7: Other business/discussion

Low Incidence – The Rapides Parish School Board is looking at keeping all students in their feeder schools as much as much as possible.

Item #8: Date/time for next meeting

Our next meeting will be in May. We will attempt to have it in early May, possibly Tuesday, May 9<sup>th</sup> or Wednesday, May 10<sup>th</sup>.

Item #9: Agenda items for next meeting

Every person should bring thoughts about suggested topics/guest speakers for next school year. Suggested agenda items can also be emailed to Mrs. Vickie Smith.

The GUMBO contact person is Pam Carey at Families Helping Families.

Item #10: Adjournment

Meeting was adjourned at 1:40 p.m.



**RAPIDES PARISH SCHOOL BOARD  
P. O. Box 7117  
Alexandria, Louisiana**

May 9, 2023

**TO: MEMBERS OF THE SPECIAL EDUCATION ADVISORY COUNCIL**

**FROM: BRANDON CEDUS, CHAIR**

**The Rapides Parish Special Education Advisory Council will meet at 12:30 p.m. on Tuesday, May 9, 2023 in the conference room in the J. B. Lafargue Special Education Center, 4515 Eddie Williams Avenue, Alexandria, Louisiana.**

1. Call to order
2. Invocation, Pledge
3. Roll Call
4. Update on Cameras in SPED self-contained classrooms
5. Update on SPED student placement for next school year
6. Summer Learning Opportunities for SWD
7. Review of SEAC requirements for 2023-2024 SY
8. SEAC Report for 2022-2023
9. Recommendations for SEAC for 2023-24
10. Other business/discussion
11. Adjournment

BC:VS:kg

Rapides Parish School Board Special Education Advisory Council (SEAC)  
May 9, 2023

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The Rapides Parish School Board's Special Education Advisory Council (SEAC) met at the J. B. Lafargue Special Education Center, 4515 Eddie Williams Avenue, Alexandria, Louisiana, on Tuesday, May 9, 2023, at 12:30 p.m.

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Item #1: Call to Order

Mrs. Vickie Smith, Director of Special Education, called the meeting to order at 12:43 p.m.

Item #2: Invocation and Pledge

Mrs. Smith did the Invocation and Ms. Donna Gayle Rogers led the Council in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

Item #3: Roll Call

Roll call was taken. Members present were: Mr. Gary Brown, Ms. Pam Carey and Ms. Donna Gayle Rogers. Representing the Rapides Parish School Board was Mrs. Vickie Smith. Council Members absent were Mr. Brandon Cedus, Ms. Janet Grigg, Mr. Levi Koelling and Ms. Shanna Mitchell.

Item #4: Update on Cameras in SPED self-contained classrooms

The state did provide funding. We have purchased 6 cameras. There is a procedure for purchasing and installing each camera. The cameras aren't ordered until they're requested because technology changes. After being installed, there must be a 5-day notice before a camera can be activated and a label put up designating that a camera is in that classroom. The cameras aren't activated until everyone that comes to that classroom has been notified. Mrs. Smith stated that we haven't had any requests to view an audio or video of any camera footage. Parents can only see their child and the specific incident regarding their request.

The cameras are only installed in SPED self-contained classrooms.

Item #5: Update on SPED student placement for next school year

It would have taken 22 classes (22 teachers and 22 paras) to establish feeder schools in all home school zones. The Board only approved 8 for next school year, so the decision was made to put the bulk of the new classes in our rural schools. However, once feeder school system comes into full fruition, all sped students will go the schools in their feeder zones.

Item #6: Summer Learning Opportunities for SWD

It is now mandated that all 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> grade students reading below grade level must attend summer school (30 hours / 15 days / Monday-Thursday / all during the month of June). Monday, June 19<sup>th</sup>, is a holiday. They are trying to keep the class sizes small.

Item #7: Review of SEAC requirements for 2023-2024 SY

The new recommendation will be that we have 10 members: 50% parents/grandparents, 10% sped stakeholders and 40% principals, teachers, paras, etc. The application process will start in September and the first meeting for the 2023-2024 school year will probably be in November. The new council will determine the time of the meeting, whether to continue meeting at 12:30 p.m. or change it to after work. The council will also choose a chairperson.

Item #8: SEAC Report for 2022-2023

Mr. Brandon Cedus normally compiles this report at the end of the school year, but due to his illness Mrs. Smith said that she will be compiling it. Most of the report consist of excerpts from the minutes.

Item #9: Recommendations for SEAC for 2023-2024

Any council member who has a suggestion/recommendation for a topic of discussion at one of the council meetings may email their suggestion to Mrs. Smith.

Item #10: Other business/discussion

Ms. Rogers' daughter will be participating in the Bocce competition at the Special Olympics this summer, held at Southeastern University, in Hammond, Louisiana. Mrs. Smith said we had some students who participated in the district prom and the Calvary prom, as well.

Our Rapides Games are similar to the Special Olympics, just they're for Rapides Parish only. Ms. Carey has told us of when Rapides Parish hosted an event that was similar to the Special Olympics and it was for several Central Louisiana parishes. Through recent inquiries, it has been determined that the Rapides Parish students enjoy the bowling games the best.

The Transition Fair, with Donna Frazier, was a success. Ms. Frazier did 2 fairs this year, but plans to only do 1 fair next year.

Item #11: Adjournment

Mrs. Smith thanked the council members for coming and told them she looks forward to seeing and working with them next school year should they decide to reapply to serve on the council next school year.

Meeting was adjourned at 1:27p.m.