



**Due to a lack of Quorum at the May 19 meeting, these minutes have not been approved and will be reviewed at the next meeting in September.*

Special Education Advisory Panel (SEAP)

|| February 10, 2025 Meeting Minutes

Membership of the Special Education Advisory Panel (SEAP)

Member	Representation	Att'd	Member	Representation	Att'd
Valerie Aker- Player	Parent	P	Bethany McDonald	Idaho Department of H&W	A
Theresa Boyer	Parent	P	Lisa McElroy	Parent	P
Barbara Broyles	Higher Education- University of Idaho	P	Cindy Orr	Idaho Department of Juvenile Corrections	P
Janeth Calderon	Parent	P	Kelley Phipps	Parent	P
Nycole Crow	Parent	P	Heather Ramsdell	Higher Education – Idaho State University	P
Brian Darcy	Program Administrator State Education	P	Whitney Schexnider	McKinney-Vento Administration, Parent	P
Jeremy Ford	Parent, Individual with Disabilities, Higher Education - BSU	P	Caleb Tibbetts	Vocational Rehabilitation	A
Malia Hollowell	SPED Teacher	P	Rachel Vachon	LEA School Psychologist	P
Chynna Hirasaki	Idaho Department of Education, Special Education Director	P	Melissa Vian	Parent & IPUL	P
Jennifer Johnson	Parent	P	Joey Ward	Idaho Department of Corrections	A
Emily Kessler	State Department of Education – McKinney-Vento/Homeless Coordinator	P	Julie Wittman	Parent	A
Angela Mascall	Private School	P	Carla Zimmermann	Parent, Individual with Disabilities, SPED Teacher	P
Jill Mathews	State Department of Education – Family and Community Engagement	P			

Guests

Member	Representation	Att'd	Member	Representation	Att'd
Randi Cole	IDE	P	Lexie Pease	IDE	P
Elizabeth Congdon	IDE	P	Lisa Pofelski-Rosa	IDE	P
Shannon Dunstan	IDE	P	Maddie Rice	IDE	P
Kate Hill	IDE	P	Kimberli Shaner	IDE	P
Chynna Hirasaki	IDE	P	Debi Smith	IDE	P
Sharie Monteferrante	IDE	P	Piper Traywick	IDE	P
Emily Boles	SESTA	P	Kari Grier	SESTA	P
Carol Carnahan	ICIE	P	Christine Kruse	ICIE	P
Jennifer Comstock	ICIE	P	Dan Dyer	Idaho Assistive Technology Project	P
Katie Shoup	OSBE	P			

IDE = Idaho Department of Education
IPUL = Idaho Parents Unlimited
P = Present

SESTA = Special Education Support & Technical Assistance
OSBE = Office of the State Board of Education
ICIE = Idaho Competitive Integrated Employment Center

A = Absent

#	Topic	Topic Owner(s)	Discussion	Next Steps
1	Call to Order & Approval of November 4, 2024 Minutes	Malia Hollowell	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Motion: Brian Darcy Second: Nycole Crow All in Favor: Yes 	
2	Welcome and Introductions	Chynna Hirasaki, Department		
3	November Meeting Follow-Up	Chynna Hirasaki, Department	<p>DR Update for the 2024-2025 school year updates 2/3/2025</p> <p>Facilitation: 100 State Admins Complaints: 25 Meditation: 25 Due process hearings: 9</p> <p>Overall, these numbers show a modest increase compared to last year.</p> <p>Question: What are the most common concerns? Answer: The main issues involve parent involvement, managing discipline for students with disabilities, and ensuring that Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) are properly implemented.</p>	
4	Grant Update: RSA, SMART 2.0, Pyramid Project	Randi Cole, Lexie Pease, Shannon Dunstan, Department	<p>RSA</p> <p>Partners: This section serves as a reminder of who the RSA staff's partners are and that the RSA staff are in the second year of implementation.</p> <p>Presenters: Jennifer Comstock and Christine Kruse presented the Idaho Transition Framework provided by ITC.</p> <p>Handouts: Additional handouts are available in the designated folder.</p> <p>Local Interagency Leadership Teams (LILTs): An update was provided on the progress of the RSA staff's Local Interagency Leadership Teams.</p> <p>Activities: The RSA staff shared updates on several initiatives, including the work of the Idaho Interagency Council on Secondary Transition, local transition teams, postsecondary transition fairs, and efforts to update guidance and resources for secondary transition.</p> <p>Next Steps: Moving forward, a newsletter will be released soon. The RSA staff will continue their engagement efforts at the local level, work on making the website more seamless, and aim to build a statewide community of practice through training and professional development.</p> <p>SMART 2.0</p> <p>Overview and Collaboration: The SMART 2.0 program was reviewed with a focus on its collaboration with the Content and Curriculum teams. SMART Coaches worked together closely, and team integration was highlighted during a symposium.</p> <p>School Participation: A total of 635 school-based education partners are involved. Out of these, 130 schools have SMART coaches, 11 schools have in-building coaches, and 10 schools receive MTSS support.</p> <p>Resource Review and Teacher Assessments: Resources provided to schools and educators were evaluated. In the first year, teachers scored 51% on a pre-test focused on key concepts. It was noted that while teachers were gaining knowledge, this was not fully translating into their classroom practices.</p> <p>Year 2 Focus and Progress: The focus in Year 2 showed improved understanding and increased teacher knowledge. The Teacher I-LIFT tool, which includes a coach rubric, is used as a measure of fidelity—not as an evaluation of teachers. The goal is to reach an 80% level of implementation,</p>	

			<p>with opportunities for further growth.</p> <p>Cohorts and Professional Development: The program features two-year cohorts for teachers and coaches, supported by professional development from experts, as well as four-year cohorts. These groups work together to enhance their skills and share best practices.</p> <p>MTSS and Strategic Partnerships: A review of schoolwide MTSS initiatives included discussions about setting goals and implementation plans. A partnership with IPUL has been established to streamline parent education and participation, and the National Center on Improving Literacy will partner with SMART and IPUL to provide training and technical assistance. Action plans will be developed following upcoming meetings.</p> <p>Implementation and Future Plans: Questions addressed during the review confirmed that SMART 2.0 is implemented across all tiers, including general education, special education, paraprofessionals, and other staff, using evidence-based training. Implementation methods vary between the individual two-year cohorts and the school-wide MTSS approach. Although there are currently 10 schools in the systemic approach, plans are in place to add at least 10% more schools, with a waiting list already in place. Training is based on methods such as letters training and speech-to-print, and is tailored to meet the needs of individual educators.</p> <p>Pyramid Project</p> <p>Overview and Application Process: Applications for the Pyramid Project are preparing to be released while awaiting the Request for Proposals (RFP) for child care services.</p> <p>Funding and Allocation: Some Head Start facilities have not yet received their allocations, with two facilities still pending funding as of last Friday.</p> <p>Regional Collaboration: This initiative is a collaborative effort among Idaho, Washington, Oregon, and Alaska.</p> <p>Local Activities in Idaho: An early learning conference is scheduled in Idaho this year. Additionally, coaches will receive training, and home visiting programs have been launched.</p> <p>Parent Resource Development: A parent resource tool has been developed for agencies to use when creating newsletters and supporting families. However, it is not yet accessible directly to parents due to current accessibility issues.</p> <p>Questions and Clarifications: During the discussion, questions were raised regarding which Head Start facilities did not receive funding—this information was not available. There was also a query about the H&W contract, and it was noted that the current contract is under RFP, with Idaho STARS designated. Lastly, when asked about where other agencies can access parent resources via Padlet, the suggestion was made to consult the NCMPI website, although it was acknowledged that the volume of information on the site can be overwhelming.</p>	
5	<p>Department Updates: SLD, 24-25 Idaho Special Education Manual Review Process, e-IEP RFP, Idaho Special Education Director Network (ISDN)</p>	<p>Chynna Hirasaki, Department</p>	<p>24-25 Sped Manual Review</p> <p>Chapters 1-4 and 6-7 of the Special Education Manual are currently available on the website for review and comments. Chapter 4, which covers eligibility, is particularly detailed, and Chapter 5 will be released next.</p> <p>Chapters 8-10 have been reviewed with input from field experts, and experts have also been identified for Chapters 11-13. The entire manual is scheduled to be open for public comment in April 2025.</p> <p>The manual includes references to the Code of Federal Regulations (CFRs) and now adds information on homeschooling, the Department's general</p>	

			<p>monitoring processes, and SEAP. These updates aim to clarify the content and improve the overall flow of the manual.</p> <p>Comments can be submitted using a form on the website. The Department committee will review all feedback, and the final version of the manual is expected to be finalized by August.</p> <p>e-IEP RFP</p> <p>Overview and Process: Subject matter experts reviewed the SOP and finalized the technical specifications, which were then approved by DAG. After proposals were received, they were forwarded to procurement and subsequently sent to Chynna and the RFP committee. Evaluators met on Friday for professional development, and they are currently scoring the proposals, with their evaluations due on Thursday for committee review.</p> <p>Vendor Demonstrations and Award: Vendor demonstrations are scheduled for February 20th. Following these demonstrations, the proposals will be sent back to procurement for the final award decision.</p> <p>Questions and Clarifications:</p> <p>Number of Vendors: Only one vendor has submitted a proposal.</p> <p>Implementation Date for the 25-26 School Year: Yes, implementation is planned for the 25-26 school year, with a contingency plan in place if the search is unsuccessful.</p> <p>Name of Vendor: The vendor's name cannot be publicly disclosed at this time.</p> <p>West Ada's Use of the Free Ed Plan: The Department covers the ed plan. If it is not available, a line item is provided for the LEA to choose their own plan.</p> <p>ISDN</p> <p>A survey was conducted in the fall, receiving 28-30 responses from across the state.</p> <p>The results were shared and discussed with the DAC.</p> <p>The feedback highlighted a need for mentors and a conference.</p> <p>There was positive feedback for the OnTrack class.</p> <p>It was suggested that special education may not need to be included at the ESEA conference.</p>	
6	Idaho SESTA Update	Emily Boles, Director	<p>Upcoming Statewide Trainings and Support</p> <p>Statewide Trainings: Behavioral Practices and Comprehensive Evaluation trainings are scheduled across 7 locations each around the state.</p> <p>Staffing: The program is fully staffed with 12 coordinators. Brooke, the newest coordinator, recently joined from Hawaii.</p> <p>Idaho Tiered Behavior Supports Project: This project supports LEAs that choose to implement PBIS. It currently serves 320 educators across 26 LEAs by providing professional development, support, and follow-up, achieving a 97% satisfaction rate.</p> <p>Typical Day for a SESTA Coordinator: A coordinator's day includes preparing training slides, answering help desk questions, meeting with fellow</p>	

			<p>coordinators, partnering with LEAs for professional development, ensuring compliance through file reviews, exchanging feedback with colleagues, and managing email communications.</p> <p>Summary of Support: In total, the program has reached 3,000 educators and 161 LEAs, covering 88% of LEAs in Idaho.</p>	
7	<i>Morning Break</i>			
8	Transition to Mini-Groups	Chynna Hirasaki, Department		
9	Mini-group work: Outcomes, Transitions, Funding, Support & Monitoring	Mini Group Leads		
10	Transition to Main Group	Chynna Hirasaki, Department		
11	Mini-group Whole Group Share Out	Chynna Hirasaki, Department	<p>Mini-Group Work Summary</p> <p>Outcomes: The group reviewed Indicator 14 survey results covering education, training, and employment. The survey had a 40% response rate, which is lower than in previous years but acceptable for a phone survey.</p> <p>Findings include that 79% of respondents stayed in jobs for 90+ days, 40% worked full time, 24% had not worked since high school, and 96% earned at least minimum wage.</p> <p>Open-ended responses emphasized the importance of transition supports during school, though a significant percentage of respondents appeared disengaged.</p> <p>The group discussed possibly changing the survey methodology or discontinuing the survey, and provided valuable input on these ideas.</p> <p>Transitions: The discussion revisited last year's work on transitions, covering pathways from early childhood (Part C) through to college.</p> <p>Topics included planning for graduation and teaching transition skills, as well as addressing challenges like early childhood transitions and parent understanding.</p> <p>Transitions from juvenile corrections back to local education agencies were also discussed, with an emphasis on ensuring new evaluations are properly communicated. A transition coordinator will be assigned at IDJC to help with this process.</p> <p>The evaluation of early childhood outcomes before and after preschool was also reviewed.</p> <p>Funding: Changes in funding were discussed, particularly concerning the special needs fund for high-cost students. Although Idaho receives less than the maximum allowed funding to ensure more funds go to LEAs, a request for \$3 million (scalable) from the state is being made.</p>	

			<p>A survey of special education directors and business managers revealed anecdotal feedback, and discussions covered how to determine available funds per student (with a threshold above \$15K, capped at \$100K per student, and similar caps for LEAs).</p> <p>Legislative actions are underway, including a bill not yet in committee, adjustments to the funding formula, and considerations for IDEA funding and School Choice bills.</p> <p>Support & Monitoring/DR: The GSFR process was modified this year: each LEA had one file randomly selected for review, and official notices of non-compliance are scheduled for release.</p> <p>The process aims to identify systemic issues and create improvement plans. Key concerns include PLAPF, goal statements, and related service provisions tied to student disability.</p> <p>A new indicator (Indicator 18) will now include credible allegations data, addressing issues beyond the GSFR/paperwork review. Additionally, the removal of the state exception rule for Indicators 11 and 12 next year is expected to enhance data quality.</p>	
12	IPUL Update	Melissa Vian, IPUL	<p>IPUL is celebrating 40 years of parent centers, which have been a vital resource for families navigating the education system. Over time, these centers have evolved to better support parents of children with disabilities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In 1985, Idaho Parents Unlimited (IPUL) was created to help families. • In the 1990s, a federal law (IDEA Part D) made parent centers a requirement. • In the early 2000s, Community Parent Resource Centers (CPRCs) were added to serve specific communities. <p>IPUL isn't just about education—it's also the Family-to-Family Health Information Center, meaning they help with healthcare-related questions too. Last year, they supported over 4,200 families and professionals.</p> <p>Parents usually turn to IPUL when they're having trouble with school support, behavior concerns, 504 plans, or IEPs. They are currently developing a training module on 504 plans.</p> <p>Other resources available:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Legislative updates and how families can get involved. • Monthly podcasts on important topics. • Spanish translations of materials on their website. <p>One key focus: Bridging the communication gap between home and school, ensuring stronger family-school-community partnerships to support children's success.</p>	
13	<i>Working Lunch – Legislative Priorities Update</i>	Chynna Hirasaki, Department	<p>Specific Learning Disabilities (SLD): The final approval process is underway.</p> <p>Student Centered Funding Formula: A new way of funding schools is being introduced today.</p>	

			<p>Idaho Special Needs Fund: Would support high needs students by offering an additional funding source for LEAs.</p> <p>School Age Definition: The definition of “school age” may change, allowing students to receive services until their 22nd birthday instead of aging out earlier.</p> <p>Graduation Requirements: Updates have been introduced, but no final decisions have been made yet.</p> <p>School Choice: Three different bills have been introduced that could impact school options for families.</p>	
14	Special Education Teacher Apprenticeship & Principal Apprenticeship	Kathleen Shoup, Office of the State Board of Education	<p>There are new apprenticeship programs designed to help people become Special Education (SpEd) teachers and school principals while working in schools.</p> <p><u>Special Education Teacher Apprenticeship:</u> Approved by the U.S. Department of Labor and listed on the State Board website.</p> <p>Open to classified staff already working in special education.</p> <p>Requirements: 18 years old, high school diploma or GED, employed in a public school (LEA).</p> <p>Must be accepted into a special education prep program (community college or university).</p> <p>The program leads to a bachelor’s degree and teacher certification.</p> <p>Apprentices are mentored by certified special education teachers and follow an individualized training plan.</p> <p><u>Principal Apprenticeship Program:</u> Open to current educators looking to become principals.</p> <p>Requirements: 18 years old, bachelor’s degree, employment in a public school, acceptance to a principal program.</p> <p>On-the-job hours count toward internship requirements.</p> <p>Requires four years of full-time experience working with students.</p> <p>Leads to a master’s degree in school leadership.</p> <p><u>Other Key Details:</u></p> <p>Fast-track GI Bill funding is available.</p> <p>The State Board website has guidance documents and application details.</p> <p>Quality assurance measures ensure high standards. Schools that don’t meet them could lose approval.</p>	

			<p>Funding comes from federal and state sources, including the Workforce Development Commission.</p> <p><u>Questions:</u></p> <p>How is this being advertised? Through webinars, conferences, and the State Board website.</p> <p>Are there different endorsement options? Yes, they're listed on the website.</p> <p>How does this compare to ABCTE (another certification route)? ABCTE requires a bachelor's degree first, while apprenticeships allow people to earn their degree while working.</p> <p>Who sets salaries? The state sets a minimum wage (similar to paraeducators), but districts can pay more.</p> <p>Do mentors get paid extra? Not at this time.</p> <p>Why was this program created? To address the teacher shortage and increase access to federal funding.</p>	
15	<i>Afternoon Break</i>			
16	Assistive Technology Trends	Dan Dyer, Idaho Assistive Technology Project	<p>Assistive technology (AT) helps students with disabilities access learning, communicate, and gain independence. Here are some key updates:</p> <p>AT Services for Schools & Families</p> <p>Schools can try out AT tools with students before making decisions.</p> <p>A lending library is available for anyone to borrow AT tools—locations in Boise and Coeur d'Alene (CDA).</p> <p>Specialists work 1:1 with schools to find the right tools for students.</p> <p>AT samples were available at the meeting for hands-on demonstrations.</p> <p>Tools for Life Conference (March 17-18 in Moscow, ID)</p> <p>A major event focused on assistive technology and accessibility.</p> <p>Tech Support for AT</p> <p>Assistance is available for choosing, using, and troubleshooting AT devices.</p> <p>The biggest area of need is for communication-related tools, helping students who struggle with speech.</p> <p>AI in Assistive Technology</p> <p>Artificial intelligence (AI) is being integrated into education and accessibility tools:</p>	

			<p>-AI Chatbots – Can be customized with specific knowledge to assist students.</p> <p>-Brisk – An AI tool designed for education.</p> <p>-Be My Eyes App – Uses AI to help people with visual impairments navigate the world.</p> <p>-Microsoft’s Reading Coach – Supports literacy development.</p> <p>-Google Tools:</p> <p>Illuminate – AI-powered learning assistant. NotebookLM – AI note-taking and research tool.</p> <p>These AT advancements are making learning and communication more accessible for all students!</p>	
17	SEAP Membership Review	Chynna Hirasaki, Department	<p>SEAP Membership Updates – Parent-Friendly Summary</p> <p>22 applications have been submitted for SEAP membership.</p> <p>Director and the executive team will review the applications and provide updates at the next meeting.</p>	
18	Satisfaction Survey	Chynna Hirasaki, Department	Completed by team members	Review responses at next meeting
19	<p><i>Meeting Adjourned</i></p> <p><i>-Future Meeting Dates:</i></p> <p><i>Monday, May 19, 2025, ISDB</i></p> <p><i>Gooding, ID</i></p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Motion: Jennifer Johnson</i> <i>Second: Brian Darcy</i> <i>All in Favor: Yes</i> 	

Action Items from Previous Meetings

Follow-Up Items	Date Opened	Owner	Due Date	Complete/Comments	Status