

Report to Developmental Disabilities Council

October 2026

Special Education Advisory Panel (SEAP) Update

The Special Education Advisory Panel (SEAP) met on September 2, 2026, at the Claiborne Building in Baton Rouge. A quorum was present, and the Panel approved the minutes from its June 17, 2026, meeting. The Panel received informational reports focused on key statewide special education priorities, including Louisiana's State Performance Plan (SPP) and Annual Performance Report (APR), with discussion centered on the upcoming target-setting process and stakeholder engagement and the Division of Diverse Learners' Compliance Framework which highlighting the Division of Diverse Learners' approach to technical assistance and support for school systems.

Finally, the panel discussed the Local Special Education Advisory Council Report, including [guidance](#) and [communication processes](#) designed to strengthen local stakeholder engagement. The guidance was developed in response to a recommendation from the previous SEAP meeting and establishes a more consistent process for collecting local SEAC reports, reviewing the information submitted, and ensuring appropriate follow-up occurs based on identified needs and feedback.

The meeting provided SEAP members with updates on the continued efforts to strengthen IDEA implementation, using data to inform statewide improvement efforts, and engaging stakeholders in decisions affecting students with disabilities. No public comments were received. The meeting was called to order at 9:04 a.m. and adjourned at 10:31 a.m.

Division of Diverse Learners' Leadership Collaborative

The Louisiana Department of Education's Division of Diverse Learners hosted its Leadership Collaborative on September 3, 2026, at the Claiborne Building in Baton Rouge. More than 145 participants attended, including special education leaders from school systems across Louisiana and family engagement partners committed to supporting students with disabilities and their families.

The Collaborative provided a full day of professional learning, discussion, and networking centered on strengthening systems of support for diverse learners. Participants explored strategies for leveraging

family and community partnerships to strengthen meaningful family engagement, connect families with available resources, and build collaborative systems of support for students with disabilities. Professional learning also focused on applying IDEA-aligned instructional and behavioral practices to address challenging student behavior through strong instruction, proactive supports, disability-informed decision-making, and appropriate procedural protections. Participants considered how system leaders can strengthen local behavioral support structures while maintaining a focus on access to meaningful instruction and improved student outcomes.

The afternoon focused on strengthening local dispute resolution practices through early communication, collaborative problem-solving, and leadership practices that build trust and strengthen partnerships with families. Participants explored strategies and resources for addressing concerns early and supporting timely, student-centered resolution before disagreements escalate to formal disputes. Throughout the Collaborative, participants engaged with colleagues, family engagement partners, and state and national experts to reflect on current practices and identify opportunities to strengthen local systems.

The day concluded with participants identifying leadership actions and next steps to apply the learning within their school systems. The Collaborative provided a meaningful opportunity for statewide learning and collaboration while reinforcing the Division of Diverse Learners' continued commitment to supporting system leaders, strengthening family partnerships, and improving educational experiences and outcomes for students with disabilities across Louisiana.

Pupil Appraisal Institute

The 2026 Pupil Appraisal Institute was held on August 14, welcoming approximately 90 participants for targeted professional learning designed for pupil appraisal professionals, assessment staff, related service providers, and other district personnel. The Institute addressed key priorities impacting the identification, evaluation, and support of diverse learners, including the federal 1% alternate assessment participation cap, Louisiana's dyslexia framework, tiered monitoring, identification of students with DeafBlindness, and gifted identification. Through state, national, and district expertise, the Institute provided participants with practical guidance to strengthen compliant evaluation practices, improve identification and decision-making, and support access and outcomes for diverse learners across Louisiana.

Pupil Appraisal Institute- Charter Day

A dedicated Pupil Appraisal Institute Charter Day occurred on August 24, welcoming over 65 participants for support responsive, specific to the needs of charter school evaluation teams and leaders. Professional learning focused on recent updates to *Bulletin 1508*, determination processes and data, Louisiana's five-step dyslexia referral process, and the state's tiered monitoring framework for alternate assessment participation. This focused convening strengthened charter school teams' understanding of state and federal requirements, while providing practical guidance for using data, strengthening evaluation and referral practices, and planning appropriate supports for students with disabilities.

English Learner (EL) Institute

The Division of Diverse Learners hosted the first session of the 2026–2027 English Learner (EL) Institute on August 26, bringing together over 75 participants for professional learning and collaboration focused on strengthening support for English Learners across Louisiana. The Institute addressed beginning the school year with strong systems for EL support, strengthening Tier 1 instruction, using English Language Proficiency Test (ELPT) data to inform instruction, federal program updates, and resources to support implementation. The Institute provided educators and leaders with actionable strategies and resources to translate state guidance and student data into effective classroom and system-level practices that improve access to high-quality instruction and outcomes for English Learners.