

Bonjour Ms Tennyson,

Please find the summary of the discussions held by the Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC) during our meetings on November 19, 2025, and March 18, 2026. The committee has identified several organizational strengths, ongoing challenges, and proactive recommendations to better support our students with exceptionalities.

Current Strengths

The committee noted several areas where ISL is currently succeeding in its support for families and students:

- **Communication:** High-quality communication between special education teachers, service providers, counselors, and families is fostering a strong sense of community.
- **Staffing:** Having a full-time Speech-Language Pathologist on staff is a significant benefit.
- **Effective Tools:** When parents are included in discussions regarding accommodations, tools like "the accommodations stamp" have proven successful.

Areas for Improvement and Ongoing Concerns

Several recurring themes were discussed regarding processes that require further clarity or development:

- **Stigma and Support:** There is a perceived stigma around receiving services. The committee is concerned about whether general education teachers receive enough support when disability-related behavior issues arise in the classroom.
- **Testing Clarity:** Parents are seeking more transparency regarding LEAP testing, specifically the options for opting out and the potential ramifications of those decisions.
- **Accommodation Procedures:** During the March meeting, questions were raised regarding how accommodations are determined and whether they are considered optional.

Proposed Initiatives and Action Items

The committee proposed several creative solutions to improve the student and family experience:

- **Social and Community Inclusion:** To make events more inclusive, the committee suggested "Special Nights" or sensory-friendly options like a silent disco. There is also a desire to see more information specifically for students with disabilities included in the school "tidbits".
- **Student-Led Advocacy:** We discussed the potential for "Child Ambassadors" for students with exceptionalities and professional development/presentations for students to encourage a positive understanding of neuro-typical and non-typical differences.
- **New Family Support:** The creation of a "Welcome to ISL" packet specifically for families of new students joining after the start of the year or in later grades.
- **High School Transition:** Families expressed a need for high school transition information to begin as early as the end of 5th grade or the beginning of 6th grade.