KALAMAZOO RESA
Special Education
Parent Advisory Committee

PAC Meeting Minutes

Date: Thursday, September 24, 2026
Time: 4:00–5:00 p.m.
Format: Microsoft Teams

Attendees

Angela Telfer (KRESA), Shelly Hawthorne (KRESA), Angela Capitano (Parchment), Miranda Scott (Schoolcraft Guest), Molly Ray (ESA), Victoria Bower (Gull Lake), Angela Gross (Kalamazoo), Latrieva Boston (Parchment), Anne Gordon (SSA), and Kristin Ghiringhelli (KRESA)

Purpose of the Parent Advisory Committee

- **Provide input on the ISD Plan:** Represent parent perspectives and provide input when the state requires the plan to be revised.
- **Receive deviation notifications:** Receive notice of district requests to deviate from special education rules; the PAC does not approve or decide these requests.
- **Plan PAC meetings:** The chairperson works with Kristin and Angela to develop agendas and support meeting facilitation.
- **Represent and communicate with families:** Share information and gather parent input within local districts while serving in an advisory role.
- **Support Excellence in Special Education recognition:** Review nominations and select award recipients for each district.

Membership

District	Representatives / Vacancies
Climax-Scotts (2)	2 vacancies
Comstock (2)	2 vacancies
Galesburg-Augusta (2)	2 vacancies
Gull Lake (2)	Victoria Bower, current chairperson; Jennifer Martin
Kalamazoo (4)	Angela Gross; 3 vacancies
Parchment (2)	Angela Capitano; Latrieva Boston, current co-chair
Portage (3)	Kendall Newhouse; Sarah Baird; 1 vacancy
Schoolcraft (2)	Leigh Hall; 1 vacancy
Vicksburg (2)	2 vacancies
Paramount Charter (1)	1 vacancy

Election of Officers for 2026–2027: By unanimous approval of the members present, Victoria Bower was elected to serve as chairperson and Angela Gross was elected to serve as co-chair for the 2026–2027 school year.

- **Future Meeting Topics:**
  - **Selected Topic for the November 19 Meeting:** Working effectively with special education advocates, including related information on facilitation and mediation.
  - **Potential Future Meeting Topics:**
    - Manifestation determination reviews

- **Least restrictive environment:** Considerations and local guidance used to support these discussions.
- **Peer-to-peer or student buddy programs:** Programs across districts and grade levels.
- **Paraprofessional access to information:** Ways paraprofessionals can receive the information needed to support students' IEPs, recognizing that attendance at IEP meetings is determined by the local district.

Director's Report and Discussion:

All directors present shared information about how to resolve parent concerns.

- **Addressing IEP concerns:** Families should first contact the student's case manager or service provider and review progress reports and service data. Unresolved concerns may be directed to the building administrator, special education supervisor or coordinator, and regional directors. If those options still do not resolve the concerns, parents can contact KRESA Special Education Office to speak with Shelly Hawthorne, Program Improvement and Accountability Director, or Angela Telfer, Executive Director for Special Education.
- **Meeting options:** Parents may request an informal team meeting for a focused concern or a formal IEP meeting with required team members.
- **Additional support:** Free mediation and facilitation are available through Special Education Mediation Services. Families may also seek advocacy through The Arc's local Kalamazoo chapter or use formal dispute options, including a state complaint or due process.
- **Supporting parent participation:** Parents may bring an advocate and request accommodations; documentation may be needed depending on the requested support.
- **Clear communication:** Special education administrators and school staff should present information in ways families understand and support their meaningful participation.

Upcoming Meetings

- **Thursday, November 19, 2026, 11:00 a.m.–12:00 p.m.**: Microsoft Teams. Planned topic: Working effectively with special education advocates, including related information on facilitation and mediation.
- **Thursday, January 21, 2027, 4:00–5:00 p.m**.: Microsoft Teams.
- **Thursday, March 11, 2027, 6:00–8:00 p.m**.: Excellence in Special Education selection and dinner meeting in KRESA Conference Room A.
- **Thursday, May 20, 2027, 11:00 a.m.–12:00 p.m**.: Microsoft Teams.

Virtual meeting platform: Kristin will review options for a better virtual platform for future meetings.

Announcements

- ASK Family Services has relocated from downtown to 4341 Southwest Edge, behind Barry's and near the former D&W/Stacy's area in Atriums East.
- An open house at the new location is anticipated near the beginning of the year; details will be shared later.

Adjournment

The meeting concluded at approximately 5:04 pm.