

The Arc Michigan Education Committee
Meeting Minutes
September 4, 2025

The meeting came to order at: 10:05am.

Present: Debbie Whitford, Michelle Driscoll, Darlene Heard-Thomas, Emily Henderson, Tina Miller, Sherry Kenworthy, Kenya Harper, Sue Lind, Katherine Mills, Hayley Cason Grobbel, Andrea Beachnau

Approval of Meeting Minutes: June Meeting Minutes were sent via email for members to review. Hayley Cason Grobbel and Andrea Beachnau moved to approve the Minutes. Approved with no changes.

Governmental Affairs/Legislative Update:

Emily Henderson, Governmental Affairs Consultant and Lobbyist for Arc Michigan with McCall Hamilton.

Not a lot of policy happened over the summer. Committees have been meeting this week, may not see a lot of movement due to budget finalities. There is currently no state budget which may lead to a possible shutdown October 1st. Republican-led House of Representatives passed their General Omnibus recommendations for FY 26 with no designated funds. There were budget cuts of over \$5 billion. School Aid was cut; anything that was designated was cut to increase per pupil funding. It is not expected that the House recommendations to be what the final FY 26 budget will look like.

No increases next FY. Rules for the One Big Beautiful Bill are due by June 2026. Once there are more negotiations behind the scenes, we might start to see news about progress on the budget. House and Senate budgets are so far apart.

Emily shared this link for the [Tracking Status Report](#) on Education bills. It is a live link and can be bookmarked to check current status on bills of interest to the Arc MI Education Committee. Education Committee members will receive bi-weekly updates on Education bills via email.

Discussion on [SB 492](#) (guidelines on unenrolling students), introduced by Senator Moss.

Questions/concerns/comments:

- If still enrolled in a school district, truancy officer gets involved if student is not attending school
- How does this bill help students who are not attending school?
- Seeing lots of requests for help regarding students who have not been enrolled in school for years
- Lots of students go to ABA therapy and do not attend school/attend school with reduced school day if school allows this
- ABA says if parents don't enroll in ABA, the children may lose their spots
- Schools not allowing reduced day schedules
- ABA encouraging parents to home school their children
- Regarding children in foster care-hopefully, this bill will catch students who move, and their file is transferred. Hope it does not delay enrolling children in school as the school waits for the file to be transferred

Emily will contact Senator Moss to schedule a meeting with the Arc MI Education Committee for us to hear more details about the bill.

SEAC Report Summary:

There is no SEAC Report Summary this month. SEAC Orientation is in mid-September.

Additional Business: New MDE OSE Guidance:

[Supporting Attendance for Students with Disabilities](#) addresses these key issues:

- Why attendance matters
- School attendance rules
- Identifying students who need help
- Behavior and discipline
- Understanding chronic absenteeism
- How schools can help
- IEP considerations
- Other factors to consider, such as transportation and housing
- Medical absences

Please submit questions about this document to Michelle. Questions will be submitted to MDE OSE to be addressed during their Staff and Advocates Development Conference session on 10/7

Development of new Position Statements:

[Arc Education Committee - Evaluation & Eligibility Working Document.docx](#)

- Evaluation and Eligibility will be 2 separate documents. Begin with Evaluation
- Continue to add your comments/ suggestions to this working document
- **Michelle will send a poll to schedule a date/time for a workgroup to tackle this position statement. If you cannot make the meeting, you may still submit feedback when you receive the draft.**

2025-2026 Monthly Meeting Dates: All regular meetings are 10:00-11:30am

September 4, 2025

October 2, 2025

November 6, 2025

December 4, 2025

January 8, 2026

February 5, 2026

NO MARCH MEETING (in person Staff and Advocates Development Conference)

April 9, 2026

May 7, 2026

June 4, 2026

July and August meetings as needed

Zoom Link (same for all 2025-2026 meetings)

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87299435497?pwd=UDbm6eZCqDaD7lEVqOMXosaOibDoaU.1>

Meeting ID: 872 9943 5497 Passcode: 476032

Adjournment: 11:00am

Respectfully Submitted,

Michelle Driscoll for Debbie Whitford