

**GOVERNOR'S COUNCIL ON DISABILITIES AND SPECIAL
EDUCATION
Education Committee Meeting**

**LOCATION
Governor's Council Conference Room
3601 C Street
Anchorage, Alaska
Teleconference**

**Meeting Date
June 17, 2010**

Attendees:

Julie Broyles, Chair
Anna Attla
Ric Nelson
Fred Villa
Tonja Updike
Chris Wilkens

Community Members/Guests:

Geri Benshoof
Terese Kashi
Christie Reinhardt
Dean Konopasek
Barbara Murray
Jason Burke

Staff:

Teresa Holt
Heidi Frost

Prepared by: Paula DiPaolo
Peninsula Reporting

CALL TO ORDER – 2:00 p.m.
ROLL CALL

Welcome from the Chair

Announcements and Good News

Committee members introduced themselves to the new members and guests.

Teresa Holt announced that Geri Benshoof was elected as first vice chair of the State Board of Education.

Teresa also announced that they have a July 7, 2010 meeting with Diane DiSanto, who is the education staff from Senator Begich's office. Teresa Holt, Julie Broyles and her son, and possibly Jennifer Card will be attending that meeting.

Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes

Teresa Holt noted a change on the minutes of April 8, 2010 under announcements and good news. Lori Roth's name was incorrectly spelled "Laurie".

Tonja Updike **MOVED** to accept the minutes from the April 8th and May 13th meetings as amended. The motion **PASSED**.

ADA/504 Update

Jason Burke stated that he has come to the meeting to get feedback on what kiNDs of support he can provide the Education Committee in helping school districts fulfill their obligations under civil rights laws.

Jason stated that he's planning on having a conference September 27th – 30th at the Egan Center in Anchorage that would include multiple tracks, with education being one component of that with a focus on technology issues.

Jason Burke discussed the Amendments Act and explained that ADA is about awareness and improving the understanding of disabilities as being part of the human experience. It's to help get a better sense of the barriers that exist for

people and to help overcome those barriers. Out of the federal Voc Rehab Act of 1973 came a lot of ideas about the misperceptions people have about disability and how they generate stereotypes. That was part of what the feds used in implementing the amendments to the ADA.

The Amendments Act extends 504 to all states and local governments. It also establishes ADA coordinators, very similar to 504 coordinators, who have a responsibility to provide access for people that need it and to give people an understanding about disability. The job of an ADA coordinator is about awareness and promoting awareness. Every department and division in the State has an ADA coordinator, but whether they know they have one and know what they are supposed to be doing is another matter.

504 coordinators in the school district have much of the same function. They are supposed to be taking proactive steps to help people understand about disability and removing barriers. Every school district has to have a 504 coordinator, which oftentimes becomes the principal of the schools.

The guidance has been that school districts should take a proactive approach at creating policies to address how people are going to assign persons and resources to support 504 plans. He stated that the biggest issue is that a student shouldn't be labeled with a disability in a school environment if they didn't have to be.

On the other hand, the idea of giving somebody the benefit of understanding their own limitations and working toward advocacy for their condition must also be weighed so that they have the ability to ask for accommodations during a class or through testing. Jason stated that as part of his job, he tries to do outreach to school districts whenever he goes to an area to find good ways to promote best practices to support districts and schools.

Jason asked the Education Committee for whatever input and feedback they may have on how to set up the conference in September. Christie Reinhart suggested forming a subcommittee to work with Jason, and she volunteered to participate in it.

Christie Reinhardt asked if they received the results back from the 504 questionnaire. Teresa Holt stated that they have, and they are waiting to present those results to the State Board of Education. Teresa highlighted that

they called each district to see who the 504 coordinator was, and most people who answered the phone could not identify that person. She added that most of the people who were 504 coordinators for the districts stated that they didn't have any training on 504 and were going to the Internet for information.

Jason Burke stated that people can reach him at jason.burke@alaska.gov or 907/465-6929 and his cell number is 907/586-8186.

Review of Indicators 15 and 20

Teresa Holt stated that indicator 15 is the indicator regarding the Department of Education's general supervision over all the districts. She noted that there were a couple of big numbers of non-compliance that were all corrected in a year, but she was curious as to why those numbers were so big. Teresa noted that because they corrected the non-compliance, the Department passed that indicator. She stated that she can send an e-mail to Sharon Fishel and Art Arnold for clarification.

Indicator 20 shows if the Department did their Annual Performance Report in a timely and accurate manner. They received 100 percent on that indicator.

One of the suggestions was to provide the monitoring reports online so parents know when their school is out of compliance. Another was send a letter to parents whose children are on IEPs to let them know their school is out of compliance.

Report from the State Board of Education

Geri Benshoof stated that they had a meeting last week and they distributed the inclusive practice award booklet to each board member. She also passed out the FASD folders from Teri Tibbett to all the State Board of Ed members.

Geri stated that the commissioner is continuing to work on the four areas of the education plan that was drawn up a year-and-a-half ago.

The board discussed the Alaska Performance Scholarship (the former Governor's Performance Scholarship), and they put some regulations up for public comment for when they meet again in September.

Geri stated that they passed PE standards for the state. She also noted that the commissioner is quite interested in special education.

Geri noted that there is a general feeling that the board is not real happy with the high school qualifying exam, but it has to be repealed by the legislature because it is a state law.

Teresa Holt added that the commissioner approached her at the State Board of Education meeting and applauded the Council's letter that was sent to Senators Murkowski and Begich regarding restraint and seclusion. He also reiterated his request for the Council to try to work with the Department to come up with a solution for the exit exam.

Report from SESA

There was no report from SESA available for this meeting.

Report from DEED

There was no report from DEED available for this meeting.

Important Future Meetings/Conferences/Trainings

Teresa Holt stated that the Executive Committee approved travel for two conferences, the first being the OSEP Mega Conference the first week of August in Alexandria, VA. They approved for Teresa Holt and one Education Committee member to attend. The Department has approved for Julie Broyles and Eric Gebhart to attend.

The other conference approved by the Executive Committee is the Council for Exceptional Children, April 25 – 28th in National Harbor, Maryland. The Education Committee can send two people to that. Teresa will send an e-mail to committee members to determine interested parties for both conferences.

Time and Date of Next Meeting

The first choice of locations for the face-to-face meeting was Barrow. The hotel choices are the King Eider Inn, the Top of the World Inn, and the Airport Inn. There is one room in town that is large enough for all of them to meet.

The places they can visit include the North Slope Borough School District; Cassie Wells is the special ed director there, and the Infant Learning Program. Fred Villa suggested connecting with the college there as well.

At this face-to-face meeting, they will also be holding a community forum for feedback for the Council's five-year plan. Duane Mayes will probably come up for this meeting to help facilitate the community forum. Council members will be required to come and participate in this meeting.

Staff will need to research accessibility in Barrow as far as accommodations are concerned.

Teresa Holt stated that the dates they are most likely looking at are the very last week of August/first of September or the end of September. Teresa will e-mail a meeting-o-matic out to everyone to determine the best dates.

The next scheduled teleconference for the Education Committee is August 26th at 2:00.

Adjournment

Anna Attla **MOVED** that the meeting be adjourned. The meeting was adjourned at 3:30 p.m.