

**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
August 26, 2010**

Attendees:

Julie Broyles, Chair
Anna Attla
Taylor Gregg
Sharon Miranda
Fred Villa
Tonja Updike

Community Members/Guests:

Geri Benshoof
Belinda Burns
Jeanne Gerhardt-Cyrus
Kay Holmes
Candice Brower
Terese Kashi

Staff:

Teresa Holt

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 Chris Saddler and Mo Sanders have resigned from the Council/committee. Debbie Kitelinger did not get reappointed to the Council.

New members who have been appointed to the Council include: Heidi Haas, Ernest Manzie, and Art Delaune.

Approval of the Agenda

Teresa Holt added a discussion of correspondence to the agenda.

Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes

Anna Attla found a typographical error on the second page of the minutes where the word “kiNds” should be “kinds”.

Anna Attla **MOVED** to accept the minutes from the June 17th meeting as amended. The motion **PASSED**.

Correspondence

Teresa Holt stated that the State Board of Education released some new regulations concerning the rate of students needing to graduate increasing from 55.58 percent to 85 percent, which is a federal mandate.

Julie Broyles commented that she thinks this will hurt the rural Alaskan schools which are already having a hard time meeting AYP.

Teresa Holt stated that she is uncertain if they should give comment on this because they do not have enough information at this time.

Teresa also stated that they gave comments over the summer on who would be eligible for intensive needs services under the state regulation. She will e-mail those comments to the committee members.

Report from OSEP

Geri Benshoof stated that she has a one-page report from her attendance at the conference. She highlighted different events of the conference. She stated that the conference was five days for her and she is glad she went. Geri also noted that all the Race to the Top grants have been chosen and the only western state that received a grant was Hawaii.

Teresa Holt stated that the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) is not going to be reauthorized this year. She stated that it also looks like the restraint and seclusion federal legislation might be melded into the ESEA. She noted that IDEA will also not be reauthorized this year. Another law that passed was Rosa's Law, which will remove the word mental retardation at the federal level.

Teresa reported that an interesting session she attended was on universal design for learning. She stated that she would like to see ASSEC bring these folks up to present. Teresa noted that there is a website for hands-on teacher applications, www.UDLcenter.org, and if people Google OSEP UDL Toolkit, there are other applications for parents and teachers. Teresa noted that the conference used iLink and all the videotaped sessions and PowerPoints are available online. She will send committee members the link to find the information.

Terese Kashi informed the committee about netTrekker, which is similar to the universal design for learning that Teresa mentioned, and she will forward that information to Teresa.

Julie Broyles highlighted a couple of sessions she found interesting. One was the National Secondary Transition Technical Assistance Center. She said there is a lot of useful information available on their website.

Another session Julie found interesting was Recruiting and Retaining Personnel from Cradle to Career that discussed programs to assist paraprofessionals or teachers' aides in getting their teaching certificates to

become special ed teachers.

The last highlight from Julie's report was a session titled Challenges in Linking Special Education Teacher Evaluation to Student Performance. Her concern with this is regular ed teachers being reluctant to have special ed students in their classrooms if their evaluation is based on students' performances.

Review of Indicators 11

Teresa Holt stated that indicator 11 is the percent of children evaluated within 45 school days of receiving parental consent for initial evaluation. Teresa explained that Alaska is at 96.8 percent. She also stated that the reasons the evaluations didn't happen are due to weather, scheduling, expert reports, family emergencies and custody issues. The reasons why the evaluations didn't happen that the school district wasn't held liable for include parents refusing to bring their child in, the student moved, or parents aren't cooperating.

Discussion by committee members on the following points included:

- Smaller districts or rural areas don't have access to getting cognitive testing or achievement testing completed.
- Eligibility testing would be difficult through the use of the Internet.
- There needs to be a further breakdown of rural versus urban because it is difficult for rural areas to get itinerant specialists.
- Needs to be an improvement in the coordination and scheduling of itinerant people in the rural areas.
- Change in the rules for surrogate parents making educational decisions has taken place since the years of this indicator report, and they should see improvement in subsequent years.
- Make a change in the way schools approach the parents to help with the number of parents not attending meetings.
- Making the school more of a comfortable place for parents and be more sensitive in the approach to parents – more outreach to families.
- Recognize that families have a lot bigger issues on their plate than a meeting with a school – families are in crisis.
- Refer families to Stone Soup Group for an IEP special education training meeting.

Priority Activities

1. *Support bills to remove the requirement to pass the HSGQE in order to receive a diploma and create accountability solutions to EED.*

Teresa Holt stated that the two things that need to be addressed in this are the increased graduation rate requirement of 85 percent, and the request from the commissioner for the Council to come up with solutions or alternatives to the HSGQE. She stated that they need to address these at their face-to-face meeting.

2. *Advocate with an Alaskan university to create a four-year program (including distance education) for special education.*
3. *Ensure that SESA has adequate, permanent funding and the removal of their sunset provision.*
4. *Advocate for training for regular education teachers on special education and 504.*

Teresa stated that they would need to discuss this with the State Board of Education. They have already sent suggestions to the Department of Education.

5. *Follow the restraint and seclusion bill.*

Teresa Holt suggested that if this federal bill does not pass, perhaps they would look at resurrecting their group of stakeholders to look at passing something at the state level.

Report from the State Board of Education

Geri Benshoof stated that the board met by teleconference to make some changes to what was previously called the Governor's Performance Scholarship. There are requiring this year's graduating class to have one extra credit of science or math. She would encourage all school districts to look at that.

Geri stated that the next State Board of Education meeting is September 9th

and 10th and the Governor's Performance Scholarship is up for public hearing right now.

Report from SESA

There was no report from SESA available for this meeting.

Report from DEED

Teresa Holt stated that there have been significant changes to the Department's staff, and Sharon Fishel, Susan Steele and Chris Wilkens are no longer with the Department. The Department currently consists of Art Arnold and Tracey Thomas. They are in the process of hiring two new people.

Important Future Meetings/Conferences/Trainings

Special Education Directors Conference – September 15 – 17 in Anchorage.

Teresa explained that this conference is at no cost, and everyone from this committee is invited to attend. If people outside of Anchorage would like to attend, they should let Teresa know as soon as possible so she can check with Millie Ryan to see if there are travel funds available.

Time and Date of Next Meeting

Teresa Holt stated that the dates of the face-to-face meeting in Barrow will need to change. After a group discussion, it was decided that November 3rd through the 5th would be the best dates.

The next scheduled teleconference for the Education Committee is September 9th at 2:00 p.m.

Adjournment

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