

**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  
September 15, 2010**

**Attendees:**

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

**Community Members/Guests:**

Geri Benshoof  
Terese Kashi  
Christie Reinhardt

**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**

There were no announcements.

**Approval of the Agenda**

Tonja Updike **MOVED** to accept the agenda. The motion to approve the agenda **PASSED**.

**Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes**

Anna Attla **MOVED** to accept the minutes from the August 26, 2010 meeting. The motion **PASSED**.

**Correspondence**

Teresa Holt stated that the Council received an invitation to attend a special education conference at the University of Fairbanks, September 30 through October 1. Millie Ryan has approved Teresa Holt to attend that conference. Teresa invited committee members from Fairbanks to attend.

Teresa reported that the other correspondence they received was a verbal request from Commissioner LeDoux to help Art Arnold put together a group to talk about restraint and seclusion in Alaska and to have something drafted by the December State Board of Education meeting. Teresa asked committee members to e-mail her suggestions of parents who have been affected by restraint and seclusion in school that she can forward to the Department.

Teresa stated that the issue with the restraint and seclusion bill on a national level is whether or not to include it in the IEP. She stated that reasons she has heard in favor of putting it in the IEP is that it is legally binding for the schools to implement. She stated that a reason not to put it in the IEP is because restraint and seclusion is an issue for all students, not just students with disabilities. Another reason to not put it in the IEPs is that staff tend to

use it more often if it's in there.

Julie Broyles suggested that they could look to see if other states have it set up so that if restraint and seclusion is used a certain number of times, the teams need to revisit the IEP to determine the effectiveness of the plan.

### **Review of Indicators 17 and 18**

Teresa Holt stated that indicator 11 is the percent of due process hearings adjudicated within 45 days. She stated that they had suggested in their last indicator comments to Art Arnold that they look at giving some more guidance to the hearing officers.

Teresa stated that indicator 18 is the percent of hearing requests resolved through resolution agreements.

Teresa explained the due process steps and the resolution agreement steps to the committee members.

Tonja Updike asked why the numbers went down so drastically for 2007/2008. Teresa shared the data from 2008/2009. Christie Reinhart suggested that part of the problem with parents withdrawing their cases may be due to the length of time it takes.

Teresa explained that some of the reasons the hearings are taking so long include:

- Scheduling issues of hearing officers and attorneys
- Postponing hearings for child evaluations
- Amount of time spent examining and cross examining witnesses and future scheduling conflicts.

Teresa read the suggestions they provided to the Department for these indicators last year and asked for further suggestions from the committee or a request by the committee for further follow up on their previous suggestions.

Julie Broyles suggested getting more information about the training that hearing officers receive as well as offer a suggestion about parents getting more information about their options.

## **Report from the State Board of Education**

Geri Benshoof stated that the board met in Mat-Su and they passed a regulation about funding review for intensive needs. They also passed regulation on the scholarship program. She stated that they are going to be reviewing all of the regulations at their next meeting in December.

Geri stated that she asked Cindy Curran for a special education report, specifically how much money goes through for special education money and how many students there are. Geri stated that Cindy will be providing that to her in December.

Geri stated that there is a real push for virtual classes, because the feeling is that in many places in the smaller districts and schools, it is hard to have highly qualified staff in those areas. She stated that the commissioner is a visionary in this area and understands how things can be done. Geri stated that she encouraged the Board to look at the delivery of special education services via the Internet. She noted that some districts that are currently using it like it while some others do not.

Teresa Holt added to the report by stating that there is a committee that Alyse Galvin is working on dealing with early literacy, and she asked for volunteers from the Ed Committee to serve on the early literacy committee.

Teresa stated that Paul Sugar will have some data to report back on the pilot pre-K projects in December, and she will share that with the committee.

Teresa stated that Phyllis Carlson is the new rural education director, and they are gathering together a steering group of Alaska Native leaders to talk about how to improve education in rural communities.

Geri Benshoof added that the Board is also looking at an honors diploma for students who meet the requirements of the performance scholarship.

Fred Villa asked if distance classes can be used for credit towards the scholarship program. Geri stated that yes, they can be used and districts are responsible for quality credits. Geri also noted that there is nothing in the regulations that applies to the high school qualifying exam as it relates to the

scholarship program.

Teresa Holt also stated that the following five districts in Alaska are on improvement plans: Yup'ik School District, Lower Yukon, Yukon Flats, Yukon/Koyukuk and Northwest Arctic Borough. Geri Benshoof stated that the issue is quite complicated and sensitive, but since testing started, scores have been going down. Geri noted that attendance is also an issue.

### **Report from SESA**

There was no report from SESA available for this meeting.

### **Report from ASSEC**

Teresa Holt stated that she and Anna Attla have been attending the ASSEC planning meetings. The dates for the conference are February 21 – 23 at the Sheraton Hotel in Anchorage. Teresa reviewed the tentative agenda and keynote speakers, and she asked the committee members for suggestions of what they would like to see at the conference. Suggestions included:

- Hearing officers/information about due process hearings
- Parent panel in collaboration with Stone Soup Group
- Youth panel.

Teresa stated that the Council will again be awarding the Inclusive Practice Award and they will be sending out nomination forms in the next month or so.

### **Report from DEED**

Teresa Holt stated that Tracey Thomas has been added as staff to the Department and she will be the 619 coordinator. Art Arnold has also just hired Sam Norden (ph) who will be starting with the Department in January.

### **Important Future Meetings/Conferences/Trainings**

Special Education Directors Conference – September 15 – 17 in Anchorage. Teresa reviewed the conference agenda with committee members.

Council Meeting – October 13 – 15, 2010, Anchorage.

### **Time and Date of Next Meeting**

The next scheduled teleconference for the Education Committee is October 7, 2010 at 2:00 p.m.

Teresa Holt stated that the dates of the face-to-face meeting in Barrow will be November 3 – 5, 2010.

### **Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 3:30 p.m.