

**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  
December 9, 2010**

**Attendees:**

Julie Broyles, Chair  
Anna Attla  
Sharon Miranda  
Fred Villa  
Ernie Manzie

**Community Members/Guests:**

Janean Butler  
Kay Holmes  
Terese Kashi  
Dean Konopasek  
Patrick Pillai  
Dave Thomas, Alaska Special Education Mediation Services

**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 new members and guests.

**Election of New Voting Members**

Election of new voting members was tabled until the January meeting.

**Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes**

Sharon Miranda **MOVED** to accept the minutes from the October 7<sup>th</sup> and the November 3<sup>rd</sup> through 5<sup>th</sup> meetings. The motion **PASSED**.

**Correspondence**

**Resignation of Commissioner LeDoux and Art Arnold**

Teresa Holt announced that Larry LeDoux has resigned from his position as the Commissioner of Education, and Art Arnold has accepted a job with the Department of Vocational Rehabilitation.

**Request for Attendance at EED Stakeholder Meeting in Juneau 1/6 – 1/7**

Teresa Holt stated that the Council was requested to send representatives to the Department of Education's special education stakeholder meeting. She stated that she, Julie Broyles and Eric Gebhart will be attending that meeting to review the APR.

**Inclusive Practice Award**

Teresa Holt stated that she sent out the application for nominations for the inclusive practice award to everyone she could possibly think of. She noted that they have received one back so far.

## **Review of Indicators 16 and 19**

Teresa Holt reviewed the State compliance process (indicator 16) and mediation services (indicator 19) with the committee members. Teresa reviewed the complaint investigation summary where it breaks complaints down by district. She suggested that in the future, the committee could look at the issues that come up in each complaint investigation and see if there are any trends. They could later then suggest to the special ed directors or at ASSEC to target those issues.

Fred Villa suggested that they think about reviewing the statistics on a periodic basis, like every three to five years.

Julie Broyles stated that she would be interested in knowing what the final decisions are in the complaints to discover whether or not the complaints were valid. Teresa Holt stated that she will talk to Art Arnold or his replacement to get the corrective action report for the complaints that ended up with a corrective action.

Dave Thomas reviewed the mediation process with the committee. He highlighted the following:

- The service is available to all parties across the state, parents and school districts.
- No cost per party (other than time).
- Five mediators in the state that travel to the mediation.
- Mediation is a confidential session.
- Parties can discuss any issue during mediation.
- Requirement usually that school district representative has the ability to commit both financial and personnel resources.
- Mediations take eight to ten hours and are often emotionally based.
- Both parties must agree to mediate.
- Looking for an end result of a written agreement which is binding on both parties.
- Mediation does not require an IEP team to be in place.

Dave Thomas noted that they now tend to do more facilitated IEP meetings than mediations.

He stated that the mediation process is not controlled by the district, and the mediators run the meeting. He believes that many of the districts are uncomfortable with giving up that perceived control and having the district representative making decisions for district employees without those people being present at the mediation.

In terms of outreach, Dave Thomas stated that they have done some sessions at Stone Soup Group as well as the Elementary and Secondary School Principals Association. Mike Hanley, the new commissioner of education, has experience with mediations in his school and is a supporter of it. Dave stated that they also go to special ed director's meetings. He noted that parents overall are pretty open to mediations and/or facilitated IEPs. He commented that another avenue might be incorporating or assisting Disability Law Center to provide information to the parents.

Janean Butler also suggested that Stone Soup Group could help the Council to create a parents guide to mediation.

Dave Thomas stated that they also provide training sessions for parents across the state at no cost. He believes they are scheduled to present at Stone Soup Group's parent conference.

## **Review of Face-to-Face Meeting in Barrow**

### **Site Visits**

Teresa Holt commented that they really enjoyed the site visits to Hopson Middle School and Ipalook Elementary. They were impressed by the Inupiat language immersion.

Teresa reviewed the highlights of the trip as written in the minutes from the November 3 – 5 meeting.

Notable information from the site visits includes:

- Core staff have been there ten years or longer.
- Quarter of the staff has high turnover.
- Attendance is low, truancy is an issue.
- SESA services are very valuable.

- SESA providing a school-wide positive behavioral support program in the elementary school.
- Universal preschool program was great.
- Evident that Barrow is a rich community with many resources.

*HSGQE and Graduation Rate – Decide on recommendations to propose to the Department*

Teresa Holt reviewed with the committee the recommendations for the HSGQE that were brainstormed at the face-to-face meeting. She asked if they should incorporate all of these suggestions into a draft position paper or try to narrow them down to just a few.

After some discussion, it was decided that they would highlight the following suggestions:

- Incorporate end of course examinations with differentiated diplomas.
- IEP teams could decide what students with disabilities need in some sort of waiver combination.
- Continue to have the HSGQE, but not require it for graduation. The graduation requirement would be an assessment related to the student's Personal Learning and Career Planning.

Teresa Holt then reviewed the remaining steps under this goal which include:

- Investigate the alternatives and draft up recommendations for the commissioner and the State Board of Education and potentially the Legislative Committee if someone introduces a bill.
- Advocate for early literacy versus the HSGQE.
- Advocate to implement programs to intervene when a student does not pass the SBAs that are taken each year in grades 3 – 10.

*Special Education Teacher Bachelor's Prep Program at University of Alaska*

University of Alaska Sitka is going to start one in 2011. This goal is complete.

*Ensure SESA has Adequate, Permanent Funding*

A Midwest Academy training session was done, and the information will be

transferred into Education Committee's work plan.

### Advocate for Training for Regular Ed Teachers on Special Ed and 504

Steps under this goal include:

- Ask commissioner of Department of Education to have an Alaska Section 504 coordinators' conference.
- Research what dates the regular education conferences were and select three of them, and advocate with the organizers to present on special ed and 504.
- Talk with Cyndy Curran about continuing education units for 504 for special ed classes.
- Talk with Stone Soup Group and PTA to brainstorm ideas about how to get information and training to parents on special ed and 504.

### Advocate for State or Federal Regulations on Restraint and Seclusion

Teresa Holt stated that the federal Senate bill died. She also noted that they had been asked by the former commissioner to bring this forward to the spring State Board of Education meeting. She asked committee members to review the recommendations regarding Restraint and Seclusion in Schools she drafted and to get comments or suggestions back to her prior to the Executive Committee meeting for approval and delivery to the new commissioner as soon as possible.

### Report from the State Board of Education

There was no report from the State Board of Education available for this meeting.

### Report from SESA

Patrick Pillai stated that there is nothing new to report as they are just winding down for the year.

### Report from DEED

There was no report from DEED available for this meeting.

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

ASSEC – February 21<sup>st</sup> through 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2011, Anchorage. Teresa noted that Anna Attla and Eric Gebhart will be able to present the inclusive practice award in Julie’s absence which she is at Key Campaign.

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

The next scheduled teleconference for the Education Committee is January 20, 2011 at 2:00 p.m.

### **Adjournment**

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