

**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 18, 2011**

Attendees:

Tonja Updike
Anna Attla
Don Enoch
Taylor Gregg
Justine Sheehan
Donna Swihart
Fred Villa

Community Members/Guests:

Geri Benshoof
Jeanne Gerhardt-Cyrus
Terese Kashi
David Tarcy

Staff:

Jennifer Jones

Prepared by: Paula DiPaolo
Peninsula Reporting

CALL TO ORDER – 2:00 p.m.
ROLL CALL

Welcome from the Chair

Announcements and Good News

David Tarcy from Alaska Research and Evaluation Services introduced himself and stated that they will be talking later about post-school outcomes.

Tonja Updike announced that Terese Kashi is interested in becoming a voting member for this committee.

Review of the Council Mission Statement

The Council mission statement was recited.

Approval of Agenda

Fred Villa **MOVED** to approve the agenda. The motion **PASSED**.

Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes

Fred Villa **MOVED** to approve the minutes from the May 26, 2011 meeting. The motion **PASSED**.

Correspondence

Report from OSEP Mega Conference

Tonja Updike stated that she and Jennifer Jones and Amy Simpson attended the OSEP Mega Conference in Washington, D.C. She stated that the conference was very worthwhile, and they felt that Alaska is doing very well in many areas.

Jennifer Jones stated that Tonja and Amy Simpson have written summaries of their thoughts and experiences of the conference. Jennifer will e-mail those to committee members as well as links to the conference website to view the sessions that were video recorded.

Thank-You Letter to Senator Mark Begich

Jennifer Jones stated that Senator Mark Begich signed on as a co-sponsor for Senate Bill 1403, which is an amendment to Part B of IDEA to provide full federal funding.

Met with Commissioner Hanley to Discuss the Exit Exam

Jennifer stated that they met with Commissioner Hanley to discuss the Council's thoughts on how the exit exam process could be improved. She stated that in her research she found that there are a few states that allow their IEP teams to decide what the process will be for each individual student on how they are going to graduate. Commissioner Hanley would like the Council to further explore how that is happening. Jennifer stated that she will be writing a report for him, and she will provide that to committee members.

Report from State Board of Education

Geri Benshoof stated that the next State Board of Education meeting is in Anchorage on September 13th and 14th. They will be having a board retreat on September 12th and she stated a report on special education in the state will be forthcoming. She stated that she thinks that the information about IEP teams deciding how children would graduate and post-school outcomes would be important information to share at this retreat.

Report from SESA

A report from SESA was not available.

Report from DEED

Don Enoch stated that they have hired for one position, but lost another person, so they seem to be in a perpetual state of being one person short.

Don stated that they are working on the draft of the special education handbook, and it is getting very close to being finished. They are hoping to have it available for the Council to review as well as the SPED directors at the end of September. He also noted that the monitoring handbook has been updated and revised for the fiscal year.

Don Enoch stated that the State Annual Progress Report and the State Performance Plan were successfully submitted and accepted by the Office of Special Education Programs at the federal level. They had no deficiencies and only two items for clarification of what they were reporting.

Don noted that the monitoring schedule has been posted to the website and the upcoming directors' training agenda has also been posted online. He stated that anyone who is normally in attendance at this conference should contact him, and he will make sure they are logged in as being allowed to attend.

Don stated that he, Karen Lipson, and Sam Jordan also attended the OSEP Mega Conference. He stated that they met with Hillary Tabor, their OSEP representative for Alaska, and she went through some of the changes that they will be dealing with that will reflect more on accomplishments for states rather than meeting the standards criteria. He noted that Alaska is the only state that has met standards for the last six years, and it's time for them to raise the bar and look at what things they need to accomplish as opposed to just meeting requirements. He stated that this will most likely translate to them falling into the category of "needs improvement", which is where they want to be.

Don stated that the Special Education Directors' Conference will be in Anchorage at the Hilton Hotel

Review of Post-School Outcomes Survey

David Tarcy referred committee members to the summary of last year's post-school outcomes. He stated that they are still in the process of collecting the data, and they will hopefully finish that up within the next three or four weeks.

David stated that there was a change in reporting requirements last year. The former indicator asked what percentage of youth who had IEPs are no longer in secondary school and who have been competitively employed, enrolled in some type of post-secondary school, or both within one year of leaving high school. They had asked for one number in the past. Now the revised requirements have asked that they report on three different numbers as follows:

- The percent of youth who are enrolled in higher education within one

- year of leaving high school
- The percent of youth who enrolled in higher education or are competitively employed within one year
- Percent of youth enrolled in higher education and some other post-secondary education or training or competitively employed or in some other employment within one year of leaving high school.

David Tarcy reviewed the survey results with committee members and stated that they have a 50 percent return on their surveys, which is a good response rate.

David stated that people should feel free to contact him with any questions they may have on the survey data. Jennifer Jones noted that every committee member should provide input, be it on the telephone, in person, in writing, which ever way people feel most comfortable.

Geri Benshoof commented that she is a little disappointed in how few of the specific learning disabilities go into higher education. She felt like they could have some goals to increase that.

Council Bylaws Revision

Tonja Updike stated that all Council committees, including the Education Committee, have been asked to review their bylaws and make any suggestions. She asked committee members for suggestions on the best way to accomplish this discussion. The Executive Committee would like to have the comments for consideration by their September 6th meeting.

Jennifer Jones stated that they serve as the Special Education Advisory Panel, and they have certain federal requirements that they have to fulfill, which are currently in the bylaws. She noted that an area they need to consider is the seats people need to fill that they have been having a hard time filling, such as Department of Corrections, the state child welfare agency, private charter school representative, etc., and see if they can identify some people to fill these roles as a committee member.

Jennifer stated that she will send all the committee members a copy of the section of the bylaws that relate to the Education Committee.

Jennifer Jones will set up a conference call for two weeks from now for a

discussion of the bylaws and will e-mail all committee members the date and time. People may also send their comments and suggestions directly to Jennifer or Tonja Updike.

Important Future Meetings/Conferences/Trainings

- Face-to-face meeting, possibly mid September. Jennifer Jones stated that they are thinking more along the lines of doing the face-to-face after the October Council meeting. Committee members should e-mail Jennifer Jones with dates that will NOT work for them to attend a face-to-face meeting in November and December.
- Special Education Directors' Training
- State Board of Education, September 13, 14.

Work Plan

Jennifer Jones stated that they need to have their work plan completed prior to the October Council meeting. She stated that she will send out a Doodle to everyone regarding the education work plan session, and everyone will have an opportunity to comment and give suggestions on specific activities they need to be focusing on.

Time and Date of Next Meeting

After some discussion, the group decided to change their meeting start time to 1:30 and continue it on the first Thursday's of each month. Jennifer Jones will e-mail committee members with a list of upcoming dates and times for the teleconferences.

Tonja Updike mentioned that they are planning to send calendars to the Council and committee members of any upcoming events. If anyone would like to add an event of interest to the calendar, pass it along and they will make sure it gets added.

The next teleconference is scheduled for Thursday, September 1, 2011, at 1:30 p.m.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 3:00 p.m.