

**GOVERNOR'S COUNCIL ON DISABILITIES AND SPECIAL
EDUCATION**

Education Committee

LOCATION

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

Meeting Date

**May 21, 2015
1:30 p.m.**

Attendees:

Anthony Cravalho
Taylor Gregg – Co-Chair
Don Enoch
Cassidy Jones
Patrick Pillai
Terese Kashi
Margaret Kossler, Co-Chair
Clayton Holland

Guests:

Adrainne Thomas

Staff:

Christie Reinhardt
Rich Sanders

Minutes Prepared by: Paula DiPaolo, Peninsula Reporting

CALL TO ORDER – 1:30 p.m.
ROLL CALL

Welcome from the Chair

Taylor Gregg welcomed the committee members to the meeting.

Announcements and Good News

Taylor Gregg announced that next Wednesday is graduation in her preschool class. She will also be attending a memorial service in Chicago in June where she will be getting together with family.

Christie Reinhardt announced her son graduating from middle school.

Christie Reinhardt further announced that given the current state of the State budget and the looming layoffs, the Council is uncertain of their future, and Rich Sanders will be working on this for the next few days.

Approval of Agenda

Don Enoch **MOVED** to approve the agenda, **SECONDED** by Terese Kashi. Hearing no objections, the motion **PASSED**.

Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes

Terese Kashi **MOVED** to approve the minutes from the April 16th meeting, **SECONDED** by Clayton Holland. Hearing no objection, the motion **PASSED**.

Reports

Chair's Report

Taylor Gregg reported that she attended her last Governor's Council meeting in May, and her last meeting as Education Committee chair will be next month.

SESA

Patrick Pillai reported the following SESA data for school year 2015:

- 320 students with low incidence disabilities served.
- 1,429 service-related activities entered into the SESA database, and 562 of those were provided via distance education.
- 844 student consultations.
- 202 trainings to parents, teachers, and students.

Patrick reported that SESA is in the middle of building a FileMaker Pro database, and the scope of work of the initial contract to build a fully integrated database is almost complete. They will soon begin working on paperless storage of files.

Patrick Pillai reported that the Autism Walk was a tremendous success. Many parents commented on the usefulness of sharing resources with families impacted by autism.

Patrick stated that they were able to fill the two staff vacancies for autism specialists that will begin working on August 10th. SESA is still recruiting for two other vacancies, multiple disabilities and vision impairment. Lyon Johnson, a SESA specialist, earned his credential as a BCBA and was accepted into the LEND program. Patrick also noted that the SESA board will be losing Terese Kashi and Taylor Gregg who have both done a phenomenal job.

EED

Don Enoch reported the following Department activities:

- Working with Part C to continue to develop the MOA.
- OSEP wants to speak with the Department concerning the discrepancy between the Part C notifications and the Part B notifications for early childhood children transferring into the Part B program.
- Had a conference call with OSEP concerning the Department's APR and the SSIP submission. Don noted that Alaska will most likely be at a "needs improvement" level when the determinations for states come out next year based on Alaska's graduation rates.

- Currently in the middle of the federal programs audit.
- New compliance monitoring schedule has been posted for the next year. They will also be doing technical assistance on-site visits.
- The Department should find out soon whether or not they got the no-cost extension for the GAINS grant. They are also going to rewrite for the GAINS grant resubmission for next year during this summer.
- They are working on an assurances project and collecting the Child Find criteria and learning disability criteria from all the districts.
- The vacancy in his department has been filled.
- Working on a new monitoring software project to change to a results-driven accountability monitoring system.
- Supplemental workbook was distributed to all the districts.
- Currently in the planning stage for the director's training next year.

Don Enoch stated that the other big issue on their plate this year is the Maintenance of Financial Support (MOFS). He stated that the amount of money that the State paid towards special education last year was bigger than the amount they paid this year, and that means the Department doesn't meet the maintenance of effort required, which could cost the Department some money. They are trying to work with a technical assistance center and OSEP to see if they can minimize a penalty or make it go away all together with some additional data collection.

CASE

Clayton Holland reported that CASE has been hearing from the different school districts that it has been a real struggle this year to fill the special education teaching positions. He has also heard that districts are not getting qualified people, and they are also struggling with training for new people.

Clayton stated that everyone is preparing for extended school year services in their districts. He stated that he is doing some of the reporting this summer as well as getting the grant assurances completed and set to the State.

Clayton Holland stated that he has received the data for the report for the restraint and seclusion data districts were required to send in. He did not

hear whether or not there was any issue within the districts to completing this reporting requirement.

FASD Workgroup

Christie Reinhardt reported that Jeanne Gerhardt-Cyrus has taken her daughter to Hawaii to do some FASD Into Action trainings.

Christie noted that the FASD Workgroup has not met since the last Education Committee meeting. She also reported that the Council at the May meeting determined the FASD Workgroup would remain a workgroup instead of becoming an ad hoc committee.

Autism Ad Hoc Committee

Christie Reinhardt stated that the Council voted for the Autism Workgroup to become the Autism Ad Hoc Committee. They anticipate the lifespan of this ad hoc committee to be between five and seven years. They are developing their five-year plan, and the five key areas they have determined and developed workgroups around are:

- Screening and diagnosis
- Workforce development and training
- Early intervention and education
- Funding and systems issues
- Comprehensive and integrated supports.

Christie Reinhardt reported that the Autism Ad Hoc Committee will meet for a half day before the fall Council meeting to formalize their five-year plan. She encouraged anyone interested in participating in this committee to contact her. Terese Kashi volunteered to serve on the committee as a community member.

Old Business

Discussion of the May Council Meeting

Addressed above.

New Business

Telepractice Ad Hoc Committee

Christie Reinhardt stated that another action of the Council during the May meeting was the formation of a Telepractice Ad Hoc Committee. Rich Sanders will staff this committee, and the Council would like representatives from each of the Council's committees to serve on this ad hoc committee. Christie also noted that telepractice work plan priorities for the various committees would be transferred to the work plan of this new committee.

Christie Reinhardt stated that Ernie Manzie has volunteered to serve on the Telepractice Ad Hoc Committee. Anthony Cravalho volunteered to serve as well.

Discussion and Development of New Work Plan

Christie Reinhardt led a discussion regarding the work plan of the Education Committee over the upcoming year. She stated that the Council approved their work plan during the May meeting. The goals for the committee this year and discussion under the topic areas is as follows:

7.1.1 Research and advocate for services, programs or regulations changes that will improve the scope, delivery, and effectiveness of post-school transition.

- Discovery pilot program curriculum is in the development stage through the Center for Human Development and should be available by fall. They will study the pilots to determine if this curriculum has any effect on graduation rates.
- May also possibly include an activity to research other states that have lowered the transition age to determine the effect.
- Another activity could be examining tribal transition grant funding through TVR that is only allowed to serve Native populations. Non-native children with disabilities in rural areas are unable to receive transition services under this scenario.

7.1.2 Increase the graduation rate for students with disabilities.

- One of the activities includes gathering the data collected by the SSIP stakeholder group to see if anything rises to the surface.

7.1.3 Research suspension and expulsion rates of students with disabilities.

- Christie Reinhardt reported that it has come to light that there is currently a class action lawsuit against the Anchorage School District on behalf of two elementary school-aged students for ASD not providing enough documentation and information to the parents around their students' multiple suspensions. Parents are being called to pick up their children from school, but there were no suspension or incident reports filed so the school did not have to do manifestation meetings. Christie stated that the Education Committee can invite attorney Jim Davis from the Northern Justice Project to present to the committee on this issue at the next meeting.
- Another activity can be comparing the suspension and expulsion reports between districts and also seeing if they are reporting on antecedents.
- Another possible activity is disability training beyond school staff, but also administrators and security and police officers working within the schools.

7.1.4 Research use by parents of procedural safeguards and parental rights, in particular due process rights.

Christie Reinhardt opened up the discussion to the committee members to see if they had any additional suggestions of activities for their work plan for the year.

Margaret Kossler stated that another area of need she sees is the amount of training provided to teacher's assistants as well as the quality of the teacher's assistants that are hired, which is concerning to her because TAs work so closely with the students.

Adrainne Thomas, a professor of special education at UAA, stated that UAA will be revitalizing their special education minor. She stated that she has also been thinking about getting possible certification through the PACE program at UAA. She stated that she has not spoken to anyone at the university about it yet, but she has some ideas regarding distance education and asynchronous training for paraprofessionals.

Membership and New Chair

Christie Reinhart reported that with Taylor Gregg leaving the Council, Margaret Kossler has agreed to put her name forward as chair of the Education Committee. Amy Simpson, the new Council chair, has requested that each committee put forward two names to serve as committee chair so that she can determine a good balance of power that is representative of the Council. Christie asked that any interested committee member contact her.

Upcoming Meetings and Conferences

OSEP Conference – August 2015. The committee has not put forth a formal request for travel given the current state of the budget.

Time and Date of Next Meeting

The next Education Committee meeting is scheduled for June 18, 2015 from 1:30 to 3:00 p.m.

Adjourn

Margaret Kossler **MOVED** to adjourn the meeting, **SECONDED** by Terese Kashi. Hearing no objections, the motion **PASSED**, and the meeting adjourned at 2:55 p.m.