

GOVERNOR'S COUNCIL ON DISABILITIES AND SPECIAL  
EDUCATION

Legislative Committee Meeting

LOCATION

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

Meeting Date

November 10, 2011  
1:00 p.m.

Attendees:

David Flynn, Chair  
Anthony Cravalho  
Dean Gates  
Banarsi Lal  
Fred Villa

Staff:

Teresa Holt  
Jasmine Woodland

Prepared by:  
Jeannette Rice, Peninsula Reporting

**Call to Order – 1:00 p.m.**  
**Roll Call**

**WELCOME FROM THE CHAIR**

David Flynn noted that they do not have a quorum today.

**APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA**

David Flynn noted a couple of additions to the December meeting agenda:

1. Fred Villa will provide the committee with a schedule of the forums regarding the direction of the university.
2. Dean Gates suggested that they figure out who the lobbyist for Alaska is who will replace John Katz.

Today's agenda and past minutes cannot be approved without a quorum.

**READING OF THE COUNCIL MISSION**

David Flynn recited the Council's mission statement: Creating change that improves the lives of people with disabilities.

***Announcements or Good News***

David Flynn announced that on Tuesday they worked through the autism Midwest Academy process, and one activity that is planned is a Christmas card campaign about autism insurance.

Teresa Holt explained the status of the autism insurance bill, which has mostly passed through the Senate, but is held up by Wes Keller on the House HSS Committee, who will not put it on the agenda because he does not want to force insurance companies to cover autism as a medical condition. The Christmas card-writing campaign is an effort to change his mind. Teresa described plans to engage some other legislators as well.

## **CORRESPONDENCE**

### ***ESEA Reauthorization***

Teresa Holt stated that the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, formerly known as No Child Left Behind, was due for reauthorization, and one proposed amendment was to count special ed students in a separate system from others for AYP, which could result in special ed students getting less education because they “don’t count”. Teresa stated that she hasn’t heard yet what happened at the November 8<sup>th</sup> hearing, but thought that those changes were not incorporated.

### ***Super Committee Information***

Teresa Holt stated that Millie had taken the input from the discussion at the Council meeting and used it to draft a letter to the congressional delegation. Teresa summarized the main points:

- They shouldn’t cut home- and community-based services because institutional services are more expensive.
- They should try to have more people in the community and less in institutions.
- The Council does not believe Medicaid block granting would be a cost-effective way to reduce federal costs.
- They should convene a task force to eliminate silly rules that cost money.
- They should pass the Medicare Drug Savings Act.
- Don’t do any across-the-board cuts.
- Give states flexibility to use funding as they see fit.
- Eliminate disincentives that prevent people with disabilities from going back to work for fear they’ll lose their income.

## **UPDATE OF PERSONAL CONTACTS WITH LOCAL LEGISLATORS**

David Flynn urged everyone to get in touch with their local legislators between now and January to try to make a personal connection, let them know what the Council supports, and open up communication about the issues.

## **REVIEW OF MIDWEST ACADEMY RESULTS**

Teresa Holt explained that the Midwest Academy is an actual academy that people can go to to learn how to effect social change. The Midwest Academy planning format helps organize people's efforts by identifying specific goals and ways to work toward those goals.

### **SESA**

The Council's goals on the SESA Midwest Academy plan are to support HB 198, to remove the sunset provision for SESA funding, and to change the SESA funding formula. Teresa Holt outlined the parts of the plan:

- Organizational considerations: Who will do what?
- Allies: Who will help us support this effort?
- Potential opponents: Who might be against us and what would their arguments be?
- Targets: Whom do we need to influence on this issue?
- Position paper and talking points: What is our formal position, and what are some things people can talk about to promote this position? Develop a brief, consistent message that people can keep in mind.
- Develop factual follow-up documents and collect personal success stories to back up our efforts.
- Public relations campaign: Come up with a catchy idea to help draw attention to the issue.

Teresa explained that as part of the plan, they should try to make SESA a priority with Key Campaign, the Trust, school boards, and others. Discussion ensued about whom various committee members might be able to contact or influence. Dean Gates suggested having a slide show, follow-up documents, and the position paper about SESA available through links on the website.

### ***Alaska Complex Behavior Collaborative***

Teresa Holt explained that the Midwest Academy plan for the Hub is similar to the one for SESA, and that Council members' activities and

networking are really the keys to making the plans happen. The two plans were e-mailed to everyone, and the autism insurance Midwest Academy plan will also be sent out when it is typed up.

## **POSITION PAPERS**

David Flynn reminded everybody that drafts of the position papers have been sent out, and feedback would be appreciated. He hopes to focus on the remaining one for January.

David Flynn said that he and Jasmine would work on creating a page on each issue with talking points and space to note whom they talked to, when, and some details of the conversation. Jasmine suggested a place to write down phone numbers of who else a person should talk to.

Teresa Holt asked everyone to use the Word edit program to show suggested changes if they knew how; otherwise handwritten or numbered changes would be preferable to verbal instructions like “Change the third paragraph to...” David reminded people to use a color other than black to show their changes. Changes should be submitted by December 2<sup>nd</sup>. David Flynn asked Dean Gates and Anthony Cravalho to submit their comments before they go away on business that will prevent them from attending the next meeting.

Anthony Cravalho mentioned that he hoped to change the wording in the autism position paper from just “treatment” to “comprehensive treatment”.

## **DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING**

David Flynn noted that the next two meetings are scheduled for Thursday, December 8<sup>th</sup>, and Thursday, January 12<sup>th</sup>, from 1:00 to 2:30 p.m.

David Flynn also welcomed Margaret Kossler, a Council member who is attending today’s meeting and may be interested in joining the Legislative Committee. She is co-authoring a letter with David about the Christmas card campaign.

## **INTERN UPDATE**

Jasmine Woodland stated that she has been working on getting all the Council members' legislative information updated, but next year the districts will change. She explained that the redistricting is currently in litigation, and the boundaries are not yet determined, but there would be some significant changes. She directed everyone to look at some online resources to know whom they should be talking to.

## **ADJOURN**

The meeting adjourned at 2:30 p.m.