

**STATE SPECIAL EDUCATION ADVISORY COUNCIL**  
**National Conference Center at the Holiday Inn**  
**399 Monmouth Street**  
**East Windsor, NJ 08520**

**MINUTES**

**Thursday, February 18, 2010**

**Members in attendance:** Lauren Agoratus, Dr. Tracy Amerman, Angela Durso, Scott Elliott, Philip Gartlan, Carolyn Hayer, Dr. Howard Lerner, Kathleen Mullery, Michael Nevin, Kathy Roberson, Rob Sandusky

**Members not in attendance:** William Seller, Blanche Stetler

**Resource Representatives in attendance:** Susan Avny, Jo-Ann Ayres, Karen Carroll, Debbie Stewart

**Guests and members of the public:** Deborah Fernandez, Sol Heckelman, Peggy Thorpe O'Reilly

**I. ACCEPTANCE OF DECEMBER MINUTES**

The meeting was officially called to order at 9:43 a.m. by Dr. Howard Lerner. The December minutes were approved and seconded. **All in favor**

**II. COUNCIL DISCUSSION**

The Council continued discussion of the proposed "social skills" initiative. Dr. Wohle indicated that she considered the Council's input from the December 2009 meeting regarding the need to focus specifically on social skills rather than embedding this priority area into a broader school climate initiative. Dr. Wohle suggested modeling the social skills initiative on NJOSEP's Community Based Instruction (CBI) and Positive Behavioral Supports (PBS) projects.

Peggy Thorpe O'Reilly, Manager, Bureau of Program Development, who has a lead role in the development and implementation of the CBI and PBS projects, described the design of these projects. Dr. Thorpe discussed the process for selection of participating districts. She indicated that an invitation to an orientation session was sent to all districts or a subset of targeted districts; the orientation session is conducted for building/district administrators for the purpose of describing the parameters of the project; district selection is limited to those districts that participate in this overview session; interested districts must complete an application for review by a selected panel.

SSEAC members agreed with this strategy for the social skills initiative and that the project would be directed toward students with significant cognitive disabilities and developmental delays. Additionally the SSEAC members decided that the project application should be disseminated to all districts. The fiscal procedures and thresholds for obtaining a consultant to implement the project were also discussed. SSEAC members were encouraged to submit contact information for potential consultants. Council members discussed the possibility of elementary and high school representation in the initiative as well as allowing the participation of students being educated in separate public and private settings. Dr.

Wohle indicated that the application would be designed to allow for such representation and asked Council to begin formulating specific project objectives.

In other Council discussion, Dr. Amerman inquired as to when the goals and objectives clarification letter would be distributed to districts. Dr. Wohle indicated she anticipated that the memo would be finalized in March.

Michael Nevin updated the Council on presentations he had conducted and was preparing to deliver.

### **III. DIRECTOR'S UPDATE**

Dr. Wohle reported the following:

- The updated State Performance Plan (SPP) and Annual Performance Report were submitted to the USDOE on February 1, 2010
- The president of the Mental Health Council is available to speak with the SSEAC on April 15, 2010; the SSEAC will prepare correspondence to the Mental Health Council requesting special education representation on the Council

### **IV. PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Sol Heckleman offered comments regarding the design of the social skills initiative.

### **V. WORKING LUNCHEON**

### **VI. ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 1:00 p.m. The next full meeting of the Council is scheduled for Thursday, March 18, 2010 at the Holiday Inn in East Windsor.