

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

**MINUTES**

**Thursday, April 22, 2010**

**Members in attendance:** Lauren Agoratus, Dr. Tracy Amerman, Angela Durso, Scott Elliott, Philip Gartlan, Carolyn Hayer, Kathleen Mullery, Michael Nevin, Kathy Roberson, William Seller, Blanche Stetler

**Members not in attendance:** Dr. Howard Lerner, Rob Sandusky

**Resource Representatives in attendance:** Susan Avny, Robert Paige

**Resource Representatives not in attendance:** Jo-Ann Ayres, Karen Carroll, Debbie Stewart

**Presenters and members of the public:** Jeff Nelson, Shrabanee Shah, J.L. Seymore, Michelle Mahabirsingh

**I. ACCEPTANCE OF MARCH MINUTES**

The meeting was officially called to order at 10:00 a.m. by Co-Chair Carolyn Hayer. The March minutes were approved and seconded. **All in favor**

**II. DIRECTORS UPDATE**

Dr. Peggy Thorpe O'Reilly shared with Council that the federal review of New Jersey's Annual Performance Review (APR) necessitated three areas of clarification/correction:

- Indicator 3: Assessment - There was a typographical error
- Indicator 12: Child Find - Recalculation for this indicator was requested. The recalculation did not change the final percentage of 90%
- Indicator 20: Timely and Accurate Data - NJOSEP accepted USOSEP's scoring of Table 2 for Personnel Data and recalculated the total score, obtaining a percentage of 95%

The revised APR has been posted to the Department web site.

Dr.. Thorpe O'Reilly distributed the memo: *Guidance with Respect to Federal Regulations Implementing the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act of 2004 – Revoking of Parental Consent* to Council. She announced that it was introduced at discussion level to the State Board at their April 21<sup>st</sup> meeting. The amendment will move to proposal level at the May State Board Meeting.

Dr. Thorpe O'Reilly shared with Council that NJOSEP is conducting webinars for Cohorts 4 and 5 of the Post School Outcomes Study. She asked the Council for their thoughts whether to keep or omit the last four questions of the survey for Cohort 4. After lengthy discussion, Council recommended keeping the four questions in the Cohort 4 study for data consistency.

### **III. PRESENTATION**

Jeff Nelson, retired Director of Special Education for the West Morris Regional High School District, spoke to Council both as an educator and parent about the services provided by the National Association of Mental Illness of New Jersey (NAMI NJ). In particular, he spoke about the “Family to Family” 12-week training course that NAMI NJ offers through the 21 affiliate county offices in New Jersey.

Shrabanee Shah, a parent advocate and trainer for NAMI NJ’s “Educating the Educators” program shared with Council her experiences in finding supports. She also discussed the stigmas attached to mental illness and the need for early interventions.

### **IV. PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Michelle Mahabirsingh introduced herself as the parent of two autistic sons and thanked Council for their informative and intelligent discussion.

### **V. LUNCHEON**

### **VI. COUNCIL DISCUSSION**

Dr. Thorpe O’Reilly reviewed previous discussions with Council regarding the Social Skills Initiative. She asked Council for their input about specific project details. Council made further recommendations/refinements. Dr. O’Reilly asked Council members to email her in the next month with: 1) examples of existing programs; 2) selection criteria; 3) identification of potential consultants.

Michael Nevin reported that he has been working with students on their workshop presentations for the Dare to Dream conferences.

### **VII. ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 1:00 p.m. The next full meeting of the Council is scheduled for Thursday, May 20, 2010 at the Holiday Inn in East Windsor. This meeting will begin at 10:00 am.