

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

MINUTES

Thursday, October 20, 2011

Members in attendance: Lauren Agoratus, Myriam Alizo, Dr. Tracy Amerman, Angela Durso, Phil Gartlan, Melanie McGacken, Michael Nevin, Kathy Roberson, Bonni Rubin-Sugarman, Blanche Stetler

Members not in attendance: Beth Kelley, Toba Knobel, Bonni Rubin-Sugarman, Rob Sandusky

Resource Representatives in attendance: Susan Avny, Suzanne Canuso, Karen Carroll, Tracy Nowlin

Guests and members of the public: Arlene Oratidiya, J. L. Seymore

I. ACCEPTANCE OF SEPTEMBER MINUTES

The meeting was called to order at 9:58 a.m. by Chairperson Kathy Roberson. The September minutes were reviewed and approved. All were in favor.

II. PRESENTATION

Barbara Gantwerk, Assistant Commissioner, Division of Programs and Operations shared with the Council a presentation on Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) Flexibility. She discussed with the Council the ten areas of flexibility for states: flexibility regarding the 2013-2014 timeline for determining Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP), flexibility in implementation of school improvement requirements, flexibility in implementation of LEA improvement requirements, flexibility for rural LEAs, flexibility for schoolwide programs, flexibility to support school improvement, flexibility for reward schools, flexibility regarding highly qualified teacher (HQT) improvement plans, flexibility to transfer certain funds and flexibility to use school improvement grant (SIG) funds to support priority schools. There is also an optional flexibility category -- flexibility in the use of twenty-first century community learning centers (21st CCLC) program funds.

To receive flexibility through the waivers a State Education Agency (SEA) must submit a request that addresses the following four principles: college- and career-ready expectations for all students, state-developed differentiated recognition, accountability and support, supporting effective instruction and leadership and reducing duplication of unnecessary burden. The date for SEA waiver submissions begins November 14, 2011. Additional information and an area for public comment can be found on the departments web site.

III. INTERIM DIRECTORS UPDATE

Dr. Peggy McDonald, Interim Director, Office of Special Education shared with the Council that New Jersey will see a 1.5% decrease in funding for Special Education programs from the federal government. There will be no reduction in entitlement funds to LEAs. She also reported that 7% of ARRA funds were not drawn down by districts.

Dr. McDonald informed the Council that the Federal office of special education programs will be in New Jersey from October 31 to November 3, 2011 for monitoring. She asked the Council to attend a session on November 3rd for their input on the department's new Early Literacy initiative.

IV. PUBLIC

Arlene Oratidiya, a parent from the Franklin Township School District introduced herself.

V. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 12:05 p.m. The next full meeting of the Council is scheduled for Thursday, November 17, 2011 at the Holiday Inn in East Windsor.

VII. LUNCH