

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

MINUTES

Thursday June 7, 2012

Members in attendance: Dr. Tracy Amerman, Angela Durso, Phil Gartlan, Beth Kelley, Melanie McGacken, Michael Nevin, Kathy Roberson

Members not in attendance: Lauren Agoratus, Myriam Alizo, Bonni Rubin Sugarman

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

Guests and members of the public: Natasha Chase, Sol Heckelman, Alice Hunnicutt, Jacy Lance, Michelle Mahabirsingh, Tina Mann, Charlene Staley Evans, Felicia Vazquez, Sarah Vazquez

I. ACCEPTANCE OF MAY MINUTES

The meeting was called to order at 10:01 a.m. by Chairperson Kathy Roberson. The May minutes were reviewed. All were in favor.

II. PRESENTATIONS

Michael Nevin shared his story of overcoming various challenges while in high school and college and eventually finding his voice as a motivational speaker. Michael praised the Dare to Dream conferences where he continues to share with students his story of advocacy, overcoming obstacles and achieving personal dreams. Michael is currently employed by 1st Cerebral Palsy of New Jersey and will be returning to college to complete his studies.

Sarah Vazquez shared with the Council her journey from school to adulthood. Sarah is currently employed by Neighbours, Inc., an innovative non-profit organization created specifically to support people with disabilities and their families in choosing and designing a life for themselves within their local towns and neighborhoods. Additionally, Sarah is a national speaker, author, dancer and homeowner.

Bob Haugh, Transition Coordinator, Office of Special Education gave the Council an overview of the Transition Post-School Outcomes Study. Federal law requires that all states conduct a follow-up interview with students one year after school ends. New Jersey has just finished its fifth cohort (2009-2010 school year) and had a 76% return rate from the surveys sent. There is an 84% engagement rate by former students to include employment, training programs, or postsecondary education.

III. DIRECTORS UPDATE

Dr. Peggy McDonald introduced Charlene Staley-Evans as the new Acting Manager, Bureau of Program Development, Office of Special Education.

Dr. McDonald informed the Council the Office of Special Education applied for a Response to Intervention (RTI) Grant. Recipients will be announced in September.

Dr. McDonald brought the Council up to date on the work of the Teacher Effectiveness Committee.

Dr. McDonald commented on the progress made on the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) and guided the Council to the Language Arts and Math Model Curricula now posted on the NJ DOE web site.

IV. PUBLIC

Sol Heckelman praised the two speakers.

Alice Hunnicutt commented on Employment First

V. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 11:55 pm. The next full meeting of the Council is scheduled for Thursday, September 20, 2012 at the Holiday Inn in East Windsor.

VII. LUNCH