

STATE SPECIAL EDUCATION ADVISORY COUNCIL

Holiday Inn and National Conference Center
East Windsor, New Jersey

Meeting Minutes

Thursday, January 19, 2017

Members in attendance: Myriam Alizo, Paul Barbato, Susan Colacello, Mary Ann Comparetto, Beth Kelley, Deborah Lynam, Melanie McGackin, Magaly Milton, Leslie Rubinstein, Chris Shamburg, Amy Smith

Members not in attendance: Barbara Gantwerk, Fred Tchang, Dorothy Van Horn

Resource Representatives in attendance: Kelley Michalowski, Eva Scott, Cheri Thompson

Resource Representatives not in attendance: Donna Holzschuh, Dawn Mergen

Guests and members of the public: Lauren Agoratus, Carlos Avila, Lauren Bennett, Monique Dujae Wilson, Kelly Emanuel, Sol Heckelman, Lori Marabella, Peggy McDonald, Kim Pietruszka, Michele Tyler, Debi Vesper,

I. ACCEPTANCE OF DECEMBER MINUTES

The meeting was called to order by chair Deborah Lynam at 9:46 a.m.

The December minutes were reviewed. One correction was noted. After being properly moved and seconded, they were approved unanimously.

II. CO-DIRECTORS UPDATE

John Worthington and Lorelei Drew-Nevola explained the change in Office names and their functions to the Council.

John Worthington shared with the Council that a Division of Learning Supports and Specialized Services meeting was held with all professional staff on January 13th at The College of New Jersey.

John Worthington updated the Council on the status of the Dispute Resolution Summit tentatively scheduled for April 2017.

John Worthington and Lorelei Drew-Nevola recently presented their second, quarterly update for Directors of Special Education on Go to Meeting. The third and fourth quarter updates will take place in April and July respectively.

Lorelei Drew-Nevola updated the Council on the Year 2 trainings as part of the Least Restrictive Environment (LRE) settlement. Year 3 trainings sessions are in the planning stages. Fifteen added training dates will be added for the public/parents. Dates will be emailed to Council members.

John Worthington discussed with the Council the changes in federal regulation to Coordinated Early Intervening Services (CEIS). State have until July 2018 to change the formula used to determine Disproportionality. The Council had further questions and discussion followed.

John Worthington updated the Council on New Jersey's state plan for the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). Department staff will be invited to present at the February SSEAC meeting.

John Worthington shared the link to the USDOE Guidance on Civil Rights of Students with Disabilities: <https://www.ed.gov/news/press-releases/us-department-education-releases-guidance-civil-rights-students-disabilities>

Lorelei Drew-Nevola shared with the Council the deadline dates for submission of the Annual Performance Report (APR).

III. PRESENTATION

Dr. Peggy McDonald provided the Council with a detailed update on the New Jersey Tiered System of Supports (NJTSS) that included: the components of the federal grant, the early reading grant, subcontracts with NJPSA, SPAN and the Dumont school district, an explanation of the pyramid and the tiered interventions through UDL, an overview of the website <http://www.nj.gov/education/njtss/> and the development of written guidance with Farleigh Dickenson University and Rutgers University. Dr. McDonald answered many questions asked by Council members.

IV. COUNCIL DISCUSSION/ANNOUNCEMENTS

A motion was introduced, discussed and passed unanimously that the Council write a letter to the Commissioner of Education in support of leaving New Jersey's graduation requirements for students with disabilities as they are currently. Deborah Lynam, Susan Colacello, Chris Shamburg, Leslie Rubinstein, Melanie McGackin and Mary Ann Comparetto volunteered to work on the draft copy.

Melanie McGackin asked for clarification on the private school regulation changes before the State Board of Education. Magaly Milton asked about making the minutes more robust. Amy Smith may have a student member interested in being nominated to the SSEAC.

V. PUBLIC COMMENT

Monique Dujue Wilson wishes to encourage parents and Special Education Parent Advisory Panel (SEPAG) members to attend the monthly SSEAC meetings.

Michelle Tyler suggested that the webinar: *LRE & INCLUSION: UTILIZING A TIERED SYSTEM OF SUPPORTS (TSS) TO SUPPORT STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES IN GENERAL EDUCATION SETTINGS* be shared with the SEPAGs.

Lauren Agoratus provided an update on the Medicaid waiver and the SEMI exemption.

Sol Heckelman inquired as to inclusion in the NJTSS Stakeholder meeting.

Lori Marabella stated that Decoding Dyslexia has seen an uptick in emails related to Child Study Team (CST) evaluations and teacher unpreparedness.

VI. ADJOURNMENT

The public portion of the meeting was adjourned at 11:57 a.m.

The next meeting of the SSEAC is scheduled for Thursday, February 16, 2017 at the Holiday Inn and National Conference Center in East Windsor, New Jersey