



Advisory Committee for Federally Funded Programs

Friday, May 17, 2024

ACFFP Members in Attendance

Lorraine Aklonis; Maurita Bivans, Caria Block-Ropiecki, Bridgette Burt, Gerry Crisonino, Vincent DeLucia, Linda DiGiacomo, Connie Drakeobrien, Kasey Dudley, Barbara Evans, Amy Fratz, James Knipper, Wanda Knox, Charles Kolinofsky, Janina Kusielewicz, Jeannine Lanphear, Phillis Lewis, Michale Patron, Brenda Patterson -Toppin, Tom Puryear, Michelle Redd, Bickram Singh, Liane Stone-Ingalls, Mercedes Tellez-Gil, Pheobie Thomas; Ana Washington

NJDOE Staff in Attendance

Kelly Allen, Clare Barrett, Shawanda Beale, Cary Booker, Eileen Burch, Antoinette Caldwell-Wong, Michelle Dohrenwend, Jill Dobrowansky, Kathy Ehling, Aida Epifanio, Peter Frank, Leslie Franks-McRae, Amy Gallagher, Barbara Haake, Lisa McCormick, Jessica Merville, Susan Naple, Peggy Porche, Barbara Pugh, Lori Ramella, Gregory Roberts, Maria Romero, Daniel Sackner, Lisa Sansome, Rani Singh, Crystal Siniari, Francine Stromberg, Saba Suleman, Azan Waddell, Constance Webster, Anthony Wright

Guest/Proxies

Tan Danielle
Linda Reid (Rosie Grant)

The meeting was conducted remotely via Microsoft TEAMS

Call to Order and Greeting

Dr. A. Charles Wright, Executive Director/Deputy Assistant Commissioner, Division of Educational Services

The meeting was called to order at 10:30 am. Dr. Wright welcomed everyone present at the May meeting. He then offered the following quote:

“What we are seeing today is not just the impacts of the pandemic. While we know our students were tremendously disrupted, as were their families, and that some students dealt with the loss of loved ones at home and school, the results also indicate decades of underinvestment in our students. If we are serious about leading the world in student achievement, where we belong, we must act with urgency now, but also invest in long term strategies that will keep our students achieving at high levels”.

Remarks by U.S. Secretary of Education Miguel Cardona on Nation’s Report Card

Review of March 22 , 2024, ACFFP Meeting Highlights

Dr. A. Charles Wright, Executive Director/Deputy Assistant Commissioner, Division of Educational Services

The March 22, 2024, meeting notes were sent out in advance electronically for members to review. Dr. Wright asked the assembled body if there were any questions, comments, or concerns. Seeing no comments in the Chat Box, Dr. Wright requested the meeting notes be entered into the records as accepted by the body. Once again, we would like to acknowledge advanced feedback received from Ms. Wanda Knox.

Federal Update

Ms. Aida Epifanio, Federal Liaison
Office of Strategic Operations

Ms. Epifanio began by informing the assembled body that in late March, Congress reached a funding deal for the U.S. Department of Education (USED) for the remainder of FY23-24.

USED will receive \$79.1 billion for the FY that lasts through September 30th, which includes a cut of about \$100 million to the USED's budget even as it provides a small increase to key K-12 programs, including increases of \$20 million each to Title I grants and IDEA.

On April 19, 2024, the USED released updated Title IV regulation that strengthen protections against sex discrimination in federally funded education programs. The new regulations include a new definition of sexual harassment and new procedures for investigating Title IV violations.

A summary of new Title IX Regulations can be found at the following website:

<https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/docs/t9-final-rule-summary.pdf> and Fact Sheet:
<https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/docs/t9-final-rule-factsheet.pdf>

Ms. Epifanio recognized six New Jersey high school seniors who are this year's U.S. Presidential Scholars. (Please see slides 5 through 12 for more details and additional links to valuable resources)

ESSA State Plan Revision Project and Key Proposals

Ms. Leslie Franke-McRae, Director, Office of Supplemental Educational Programs
Mr. Azon Waddell, , Office Comprehensive Support
Ms. Jessica Merville, Director, Office of Performance and Management

Mr. Azan Waddell started the group presentation with an overview of the state plan review process by emphasizing the process is grounded in the 1965 law...that all students will receive a high-quality education. As a result of the ground lost in the past few years due to COVID it is imperative that we accelerate and focus on closing educational achievement gaps.

For those interested in seeing the revised ESSA State Plan, Mr. Waddell directed members to the NJDOE Website, where you can review the latest red line revision recommendations at <https://www.nj.gov/education/essanj/>

Ms. Jessica Merville continued the dialogue by presenting an insight into the development process the working groups utilized. The working groups were comprised of diverse internal stakeholders from more than sixteen offices across the Department who were led by Working Group Leaders who spearheaded the process. Holistic discussions and focused conversations were held by all groups as they reviewed their respective sections to produce innovative research-based proposals to move the Department's work forward.

The external stakeholder group included representation from more than forty statewide organizations that support and advocate for educators and students on a wide array of topics. Five sessions were held from January to March to facilitate rich discussions and feedback on potential enhancements to the NJ School Accountability Systems.

Ms. Leslie Franks-McRae assisted by Ms. Lori Ramella presented *Key Proposals: Additional Improvements and Research*. They invited those assembled to become more verbal in order to let the groups hear more from all of you about their wish list items, related to the state plan. It was pointed out that the state plan contains multiple sections. The focus of the part of the group presentation was on Title I, Part C: Education of Migratory Children; Title III, Part A, Subpart 1: English Language Acquisition and Language Enhancement; and Homeless Children and Youth.: McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistant Act, Title VII, Subtitle B. (please see slides 14 through 71 for more details)

ESSA Implementation

Ms. Leslie Franks-McRae, Director
Office of Supplemental Educational Services

Ms. Franks-McRae used this platform to introduce the membership to two new additions to the office. Mr. Peter Frank, and Ms. Amy Gallagher each offered a brief background statement.
(no slides provided)

Title I, Part D, Subsection 2

Ms. Francine Stormberg,
Program Development Specialist
Office of Fiscal and Data Services

Ms. Stromberg focused her presentation on the Middlesex County Youth Detention Center (YDC) where Title I, Part D funds are utilized to facilitate a curriculum entitled "The Master Plan." She then presented a six-minute video featuring the founder and author of the Master Plan. The program is a 15-week program with two facilitators (one who has experienced incarceration and one certified through the Chris Wilson Foundation). As a result of this program the Middlesex County YDC has reported an improvement in student grades, class participation, and completion and quality of classwork.
(please see slides 16 through 80 for more details)

Office of Grants Management

Ms. Jill Dobrowansky, Grants Specialist

Ms. Dobrowansky reminded the members assembled of the upcoming deadlines for AARP-ESSER III, ESEA-IDEA – Perkins expenditures and reports.

(please see slides 82 through 85 for more details and contact information)

Office of Comprehensive Support

Mr. Azan Waddell

Mr. Waddell began his presentation with a historical school improvement award (SIA) allocation review. This review reflected the total awards from 2018 through 2024. He continued to present a breakdown of the gains and successes made by the schools/districts being served. In addition, information was presented on the technical support offered and the accomplishment of that support.

(please see slides 87 through 97 for more information)

Meeting ended at 11:51 am

Next Meeting, Friday, September 20, 2024

**MEETING WILL BE HYBRID-REMOTE VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS AND
IN-PERSON AT THE LRC CENTRAL, 200 RIVERVIEW PLAZA, TRENTON, NJ**