



## Advisory Committee for Federally Funded Programs

Friday, September 20, 2024

**ACFFP Members in Attendance** Lorraine Aklonis; Maurita Bivans, Caria Block-Ropiecki, Bridgette Burt, Diahann DeRuggiero, Linda DiGiacomo, Connie Drakeobrien, Vicki Duff, Amy Fratz, Karli Fratz, Mercedes Gil, Liane Stone Ingalls, James Knipper, Wanda Knox, Lisa Koch, Charles Kolinofsky, Janina Kusielewicz, Rowena Madden, Celeste Merriweather, Bernadette Noll, Brenda Patterson -Toppin, Regina Postogna, Tom Puryear, Michelle Redd, Bickram Singh, Liane Stone-Ingalls, Pheobie Thomas; Stephenie Tidwell, Ana Washington; Aaryenne White

**NJDOE Staff in Attendance**

Clare Barrett, Shawanda Beale, John Boczany, Jill Dobrowansky, Kathy Ehling, Peter Frank, Leslie Franks-McRae, Amy Gallagher, John Iko, Jessica Merville, Diana Pasculli, Haydee Perez, Peggy Porche, Barbara Pugh, Stacy Rogers, Maria Romero, Daniel Sackner, Lisa Sansome, Francine Stromberg, Saba Suleman,

**Guest/Proxies**

Lucas Torres  
Linda Reid

The meeting was conducted remotely via Microsoft TEAMS

**Call to Order and Greeting**

Ms. Kathy Ehling, Assistant Commissioner,  
Division of Educational Services

The meeting was called to order at 10:30 am. Ms. Ehling welcomed everyone present to the first meeting of the Advisory Committee for Federally Funded Programs (ACFFP) for the 2024-2025 school year. She went on to briefly remind the group assembled of the role and responsibilities of the committee. Ms. Ehling told the group she was reminded of a quote by Nelson Mandela who said, "Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world." She concluded by saying, today's meeting is more than a formality. It is an opportunity to shape policy that will impact students across the state for years to come.

**Review of May 17, 2024, ACFFP Meeting Highlights**

Ms. Peggy Porche, Planning Associate,

Office of the Executive Director/Deputy Assistant Commissioner,  
Division of Educational Services

The May 17, 2024, meeting notes were sent out in advance electronically for members to review. Ms. Porche asked the assembled body if there were any questions, comments, or concerns. Seeing no comments in the Chat Box, it was moved by Ms. Regina Postogna and seconded by Ms. Wanda Knox that the meeting notes be accepted. Ms. Porche requested the meeting notes be entered into the records as accepted by the body. Ms. Porche then acknowledged the advanced feedback received from Ms. Wanda Knox.

### **Federal Update**

Ms. Diana Pasculli, Executive Director and, Federal Liaison  
Division of Educational Services

In the past few weeks, the US Department of Education has issued a few new Non-Regulatory Guidance documents, some of which are currently open for public input, as well as some new rules. More specifically new non regulatory guidance was released on School Improvement, Title I, Part D, and 21<sup>st</sup> Century Learning Centers. In addition, last week the USDE published notices in the Federal Register inviting public comments for two types of collection for Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education. Finally, President Biden released a statement on the school shooting in Georgia, and in the last two weeks Secretary Cardona visited five Midwestern states as part of his back-to-school bus tour. In addition, it has been announced that the FAFSA forms will be released on December 1<sup>st</sup> this year. (no slides were made available).

### **ESSA State Plan Update**

Ms. Diana Pasculli, Executive Director  
Division of Educational Services

Ms. Pasculli thanked the committee members for their keen eye and review of the state plan along with the useful feedback. Currently the team is reviewing any final feedback that was received and finalizing all the documents to be submitted to the USDE for review and approval. A few of the changes were in the formatting of the entire plan, streamlined and shortened it based on updated guidance from the USDE. The actual changes to content are fairly targeted and limited. Remember the changes will not go into effect until the plan is approved and districts will not receive the new plan until the 2025-2026 school year. Finally, remember this is a living document that will continue to be reviewed and improved upon and, we really do rely on this group to provide that ongoing feedback and dialogue. (no slides were made available)

### **ESSA Implementation**

Ms. Any Gallagher, Manager  
Office of Supplemental Educational Programs

Ms. Gallagher provided the group with a brief update of broadcasts recently published by the Office of Supplemental Educational Programs to highlight changes and/or updates. The first broadcast is the Title

I, Part A, to expand access to preschool education. In February 2024, the USDE released guidance to support the use of Title I, Part A funds to expand access to preschool. The second broadcast addressed the enrollment of students based upon immigration status. This is a broadcast you may typically see at the beginning of each school year, however, there are a few changes this year so please take the time to go back and read over it. The third broadcast mentioned addresses immigrant students as well as migratory. (see slides 7 through 14) students. Again, this is a broadcast you will typically see at the beginning of the school year, however, again there have been changes and we urge you to go back and revisit the broadcast with an eye out for changes. She also reminded those assembled of the existence of scheduled office hours and referred everyone to the slide being presented (see slides 7 through 14)

### **Grants**

Ms. Jill Dobrowansky, Manager  
Office of Grants Management  
Division of Business and Finance Services

Ms. Dobrowansky reminded the members assembled of the upcoming deadlines for AARP-ESSER III, we are coming to the end of the multiyear grant. The project period ends on September 29<sup>th</sup>, with final expenditure report currently open. The grants office is currently offering multiple technical assistance sessions and office hours to support districts. Registration is open on the DOE Events calendar on the Department's website. As an FYI, the New Jersey Department of Education, in accordance with the USDE, offered late liquidation for districts. Late liquidation request must be filed with the NJDOE before the September 30<sup>th</sup> deadline and approved by USDE. We are excited to provide the opportunities for districts to finish their outstanding project for Perkins Secondary and Postsecondary ended on June 30<sup>th</sup> for ESEA and IDEA for fiscal year 24 that ends on September 30<sup>th</sup>. (see slides 16 through 21) Office of Grants Management.

### **Assessments**

Mr. John Boczany, Director  
Office of Assessments  
Division of Teaching and Learning Services

The Office of Assessments would like to give the committee some updates regarding statewide assessments coming up this year, as well as reporting from last year, a broadcast memo was released which referenced the requirements for districts to provide results to parents, guardians and students for the NJSLA, (New Jersey Student Learning Assessments) as well as the Dynamic Learning Maps Assessments. These reports must be provided to parents by October 15<sup>th</sup>, districts also have the requirement to present their results publicly each year. Districts have 60 days from receipt of final reports, which for this past year the sixty-days would be November 12<sup>th</sup> of 2024 for public presentation of data.

Now as the Department starts to look forward to the 24-25 school year, the NJDOE has secured contracts with Pearson and New Meridian for NJSLA, (English Language Arts and Mathematics Assessments.) FYI, the contracts is still in place for the Science Assessment, and there are no changes to the blueprints of the assessments for this upcoming administration.

With the Dynamic Learning Maps, the DLM, the instructionally embedded component of the assessment is again being offered optionally to districts for use in the fall through December of 2024.

The DLM year end assessment will continue to be the focus of the accountability assessment for students with the most severe cognitive disabilities.

As we look towards our multilingual learners, the Access for ELLs assessment and the WIDA alternate assessment, continue to be offered to satisfy requirement. The assessments program has been expanded to include kindergarten assessments this past year. As another note, with the Weeda alternate access the final report for the 2024 administration is still pending. In addition, with the addition of the kindergarten assessment as well as changes to the WIDA alternate access test at the other grade levels, they're still in the process of establishing new cut scores, of which New Jersey does still have to present to the State Board of Education before we can release reporting.

National Assessment for Educational Progress, or NAEP is conducting field testing this year. This is important because they are both requirements for the NAEP program and any district that is receiving Title I funds and have been selected. The selection process is random, and participation is required as a stipulation for receiving Title I funds.

FYI, the state assessment calendar has been released, it can be found on the Department's website and will serve as a reminder as to which test will be offered in which time period. (see slides 25 through 30)

#### **Overview of the Comprehensive Needs Assessment**

Ms. Jennifer Rallen Riccards

Ms. Leslie Anderson

Region 4 Comprehensive Center

The focus of this presentation was to introduce two major projects, one that has been around for a few years and one that is more recent. The first one is the Maximizing Federal Funds website 2.0 version. The second is a Needs Assessment collaborating with teams across state agencies.

The original purpose of the Maximizing Federal Funds website was to offer suggestions on how to transition successful programs originally funded with ESSER funds to other eligible federal funding sources so they would not end when the funds were expended or expired. The website is now being updated to look at just how to provide assistance and support on thinking about using federal funds in a braided way. In addition, the website is being updated to include materials on chronic absenteeism.

The second project has been ongoing with the Department for the past year involves trying to build a culture of continuous improvement both at the state and local level, and that starts with the high-quality needs assessment to be able to understand what is critical in terms of what a district or state needs. The focus is on helping districts engage in systematic data driven ongoing efforts to improve student outcomes and reduce gaps in performance. The ultimate goal is to have an Assessment Toolkit available to, aid in continuous improvement through high quality needs assessments. (see slides 32 through 61)

**Meeting ended at 11:54 am**

**Next Meeting, Friday, January 24, 2024**

**MEETING WILL BE REMOTE VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS**

**STARTING AT 10:30 AM**