

# STATE SPECIAL EDUCATION ADVISORY COUNCIL

**Holiday Inn and the National Conference Center  
399 Monmouth Street  
East Windsor, New Jersey**

## **Meeting Minutes**

**Thursday, September 17, 2015**

**Members in attendance:** Lauren Agoratus, Myriam Alizo, Susan Colacello, Barbara Gantwerk, Deborah Lynam, Beth Kelley, Melanie McGackin, Magaly Milton, Peggy O'Reilly, Leslie Rubinstein, Amy Smith, Fred Tchang, Dorothy Van Horn

**Members not in attendance:** Mary Ann Comparetto, Tekelah Sherrod

**Resource Representatives in attendance:** Daniel Frye, Donna Holzschuh, Tracy Nowlin, Eva Scott

**Resource Representatives not in attendance:** Alan Kotzen, Nancy Mimm, Robert Paige

**Guests and members of the public:** Lori Arons, Pauline Bey, Cheryl Connors, Bill Freeman, Sol Heckelman, Alnetta Hooper, Rachael Kassick, Barbara Johnson, Mary Ortner, Carolyn Vezza

## **I. ELECTION AND ACCEPTANCE OF JUNE MINUTES**

The meeting was called to order at 9:57 a.m.

Newly appointed Council members Barbara Gantwerk and Amy Smith were welcomed.

Dr. Dorothy Van Horn was unanimously reelected as Chair of the Council. Deborah Lynam and Susan Colacello were nominated for Co-chair. Deborah Lynam was elected.

The June minutes were reviewed and approved. All were in favor.

## **II. DIRECTORS UPDATE**

Dr. Peggy McDonald was not able to attend the Council meeting due to a meeting in Washington, DC.

Paul Fogarty, Coordinator of the Council made several announcements and reviewed materials distributed to the Council in the absence of Dr. McDonald.

### **III. PRESENTATIONS**

Dr. Ajaya Katta Kumari, Part B Data Manager, Office of Special Education Programs discussed Section 618 of Part B (ages 3 to 21) which requires states to report data to the Secretary of Education and the public on the equity of services provided under *IDEA* for various subgroups. Special Education data may be found at: <http://www.nj.gov/education/specialed/data/2014.htm>

Kathy Ehling, Special Projects Coordinator, Office of Special Education Programs presented on the State Performance Plan (SPP) and the Annual Performance Report (APR) and shared how NJ DOE achieved a “meets requirement” determination. Information about New Jersey OSEP may be found at the Grads 360 website at: <https://osep.grads360.org/#program>

### **IV. COUNCIL DISCUSSION**

The Council suggested topics for monthly presentations at future Council meetings. They include:

1. State Monitoring (building, district, county)
2. DLM
3. Accommodations for Assessment
4. Mental Health Issues
5. Out-of-District Placements/Parental Choice
6. School Climate
7. Social Skills
8. Facilitated IEP's
9. Inclusive Practices/Buddy Programs

### **V. PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Cheryl Connors questioned the ability of the Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services (OSERS) to amend the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) with regard to academic achievement standards and the development of alternate assessments for eligible students with disabilities. She requested a written response.

Lori Arons, Esq. expressed concern to the Council on the usage of the terms “Universal Design” and “Universal Design for Learning” as expressed in *IDEA* and the Assistive Technology Act. She asked the Council to issue guidance

### **VI. ADJOURNMENT**

The public portion of the meeting was adjourned at 11:53 a.m.

The next meeting of the Council is scheduled for Thursday, October 15, 2015 at the Holiday Inn and the National Conference Center in East Windsor, New Jersey.