

# **State Special Education Advisory Council (SSEAC)**

**Robert Wood Johnson Fitness and Wellness Center  
3100 Quakerbridge Road  
Mercerville, NJ**

## **Meeting Minutes**

**Thursday, June 13, 2019**

**Members in attendance:** Paul Barbato, Viviana Litovsky, Deborah Lynam, Vanessa Lombardo, Kristy Ritvalsky, Chris Shamburg, Leslie Rubinstein, Kerri Walsifer

**Members not in attendance:** Susan Colacello, Barbara Gantwerk, Andrea Moore, Lynda Shanahan, Amy Smith, Susan Vandermark

**Resource Representatives in attendance:** Donna Holzschuh, Scott, Cheri Thompson

**Resource Representative not in attendance:** Kelley Michalowski

**Guests and members of the public:** Lauren Agoratus, Kathy Goldenberg, Debora Esposito, Sol Heckelman, Lori Marabella

### **I. Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order by Deborah Lynam, Chair at 10:00 a.m.

Dr. Kim Buxenbaum was welcomed to the meeting as the newly appointed Director of the Office of Special Education.

### **II. Acceptance of May Minutes**

The May minutes were reviewed. They were approved, with two abstentions.

### **III. Office of Special Education and State Board of Education Updates**

Dr. Kim Buxenbaum shared her background and experience with the Council.

Dr. Buxenbaum reminded Council members that there was still time to register for the Department's *Equity for All Conference* to be held on July 31, 2019.

Kathy Goldenberg, Vice President of the New Jersey State Board of Education announced the new hires appointed at the State Board meeting on June 5, 2019.

Kathy Goldenberg shared that she attended several conferences: School Superintendent's, Career and Technical Education (CTE) and Social Emotional Learning (SEL).

Kathy Goldenberg announced that at the State Board of Education meeting on June 5, 2019 the Board voted to approve several assessments and to extend the current graduation requirements through the 2021-2022 school year.

#### **IV. Presentation**

Dr. Damian Petino, Program Consultant from the Office of Special Education presented an update on the activities of the State Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP) – Indicator 17 and the State Identified Measurable Results (SIMR).

#### **V. Old Business**

Dr. Christopher Shamburg gave an update on the work of the Restraints and Seclusion Committee. He will email Deborah and Kim the work that has been completed to date.

#### **VI. New Business**

Dr. Christopher Shamburg moved to create a committee to study recommendations to be made to the Commissioner on changes to New Jersey assessments. The motion was seconded and approved. Council members interested in this committee to date are Chris, Deborah and Kerri.

#### **VII. Announcements**

Kerri Walsifer announced that the Monmouth County School District will be sponsoring a conference on Social Emotional Learning (SEL) on October 2, 2019 at Brookdale Community College.

#### **VIII. Public Comment**

Debbie Esposito from the Statewide Parent Advocacy Network (SPAN) informed the Council of two upcoming SPAN webinars on Inclusion and on the New Jersey Tiered System of Supports.

Sol Heckelman representing the New Jersey Association of School Psychiatrists shared his belief that a flaw in state assessments is that child study teams tend to focus on eligibility. He stated that school psychologists can be a bridge to general education.

#### **VIII. Adjournment**

The public portion of the meeting was adjourned at 12:17 p.m.

The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, September 19, 2019 at the Robert Wood Johnson Fitness and Wellness Center in Mercerville, New Jersey.