

APPROVED MINUTES**Purpose**

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) requires that each State establish and maintain an advisory panel for the purpose of advising the State special education staff regarding the education of eligible children with disabilities.

Meeting Place: Virtual Meeting

Address: GoToMeeting platform

Date: Tuesday, June 23, 2020 (4:30pm - 7:30pm)

Present: Sarah Fabrizio, Rachel Seelig, Scarlett Duncan, John Spinney, Mary Barton, Susan Aaronoff, Jamie Crenshaw, Sara Kruk, Mary Lundeen, Molly McFaun, Randi Low, Vickie Haskins, Jacqui Kelleher, Robin Hood, Karen Price, Sandra Chittenden, Danielle Howes, Kaiya Andrews

Agenda:

- 4:30-5:00 Introductions, Review and Approve Agenda, Review and Approve Minutes
- 5:00-6:00 Further discussion of SPED rules (update on states of extended comment period, work plan)
- 6:00-7:00 Review of roles and responsibility of SEAC, follow up on purpose of/creating subcommittees, executive committee
- 7:00-7:10 Public Comment
- 7:10-7:20 Future agenda items
- 7:20-7:30 Adjourn

Introductions/Call to Order:

The council decided to keep the same format of the May meeting of introducing yourself virtually before you speak instead of individual introductions.

Review and Approve Agenda & past meeting minutes:

Robin Hood made a motion to approve the agenda. Sara Kruk seconds to approve the agenda. The motion was approved.

Minutes from the May (5/18) meeting were discussed:

Jamie Crenshaw would like an amendment to the 5/18 meeting notes. The May notes left out part of the discussion that some of the parents on the council have regarding MTSS and Special Education. Jamie would like added to the May notes that MTSS is part of both general and special education.

Rachel made a motion to add in the proposed changes to the May notes that Jamie identified. Daniel Howes seconded the amendment. The motion passes.

Sara Kruk motions to approve the May minutes. Daniel seconds to approve the May Minutes.

The May Minutes are approved.

Further discussion of SPED rules:

Discussion:

Rachel took our comments on the special education rules to the board. They were well received by the board and the board commented that they would like to hear more from the council in the future.

ACT 112 was also passed which extends the public comment deadline. We now have to the end of December to add additional comments to the special education rules.

Due to this extended time frame and the significant number of parents who are not yet voting members (10 are currently waiting approval from the governor) Rachel proposes to the council use the extended time frame to move our discussion around comments on the special education rules to later in the year.

As part of the special education rules work the council voted on areas of high priority to make a public comment on via an online survey. Currently there are a significant amount of new members on the council who didn't have a chance to vote on the survey. Rachel is going to resend a new survey for council members to vote on the areas of prioritization for the council to make a public comment on. The survey will be sent out once more people are approved on the council.

Review of roles and responsibility of SEAC, follow up on purpose of/creating subcommittees, executive committee:

As the council is getting bigger there is some confusion on the roles and responsibility of SEAC. The purpose of SEAC is to provide policy guidance with respect to special education and related services for children with disabilities in the state. Our membership is based on two laws that govern the council. The first law is the federal law which states that the majority of the group has parents of children with disabilities or individuals with disabilities. These two categories (parents of children with developmental disabilities or individuals with developmental disabilities) and must be a majority of the members on the council. Other members needed for the council are a teacher, representative of high education, state and local officials who carry out McKinney - Vento activities, administer of programs for people with disabilities, representatives of other State agencies involved in financing or delivery of related services, not less than one representative organizations concerned with transition services, of representatives of private schools, vocational business, state child welfare agency, representatives of the state juvenile and adult corrections agencies, a representative of the protection and advocacy system, and a representative of the parent training and information center. With the maximum membership is 37. We are close to the amount of parents needed for the council, however we are currently waiting for parents to be appointed by the governor.

The second law is that we are required to have an executive committee of seven people. With the executive committee majority being parents of children with disabilities or individuals with disabilities. The executive council must be formed by August 1st of 2020. We are approaching this deadline and do not currently have an executive council which is mandated by the Legislator.

As members of the council our we are tasked with the follow five things:

- 1) Advise SEA (Agency of Education) of unmet needs of children with disabilities

- 2) Comment publicly on any rules or regulations proposed by the State regarding the education of children with disabilities
- 3) Advise the SEA in developing evaluations and reporting on data to the Secretary under section 618
- 4) Advise the SEA in developing corrective action plans to address findings identified in Federal monitoring reports under Part B of the Act
 - Advise the SEA in developing and implementing policies relating to the coordination of services for children with disabilities.
 - Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP)
- 5) Advise the SEA in developing and implementing policies relating to the coordination of services for children with disabilities.

We have the following work that needed to be completed within our By-Laws:

Due to authorizing statutes (Act 97), our name needs to be updated as it has been changed by the Legislator, the purpose needs updating as it now limits advice to AOE only, memberships need to be aligned along with appointments. In addition, an executive committee needs to be created.

Other work that needs to be completed is: ex officio members, meetings, committees, record keeping, expense and compensation, conflicts of interest, and amendment of by-laws.

Due to (Act 97) we need to have an executive committee. The role of the executive committee is to ensure smooth council operations, set agenda, and act on behalf of full council in emergency matters when full council cannot meet. The membership should be set at seven with the chair, vice-chair, secretary, and four other members. The majority must be parents of children with disabilities or individuals with disabilities.

We are allowed to establish short term or standing committees/ task groups and name a chair of these sub committees. The purpose of these committees should be determined and agreed upon by the council. The committee membership is to be voluntary and only council members may serve on committees. Outside representatives can serve as an advisory capacity to participate as fully as possible. However, only active members can currently vote on the committees. In addition, currently only active members can chair these committees.

Sub Committee Discussion:

Is the use of sub committees a framework that we as a council can use moving forward?

Some areas of concern during the discussion of sub committees were; ensuring that we are defining the purpose of each committee and the goal of the committee before people join, deciding how many people would be on a committee, and are we prioritizing creating sub committees when we should be focusing our time on commenting on the special education rules.

The group overall felt that the membership council should divide into smaller committees. The sub committees would be beneficial to keep work moving forward with the change in meetings from 9:00 am to 3:30 pm (6 ½ hrs.) to 4:30 to 7:30 (3 hrs.). During the past few meetings the discussions have felt rushed due to the shorter meeting time. Having sub committees work outside of the full council meetings on their own and then bring their committee work to the full council will hopefully help this issue.

In the discussions Jamie suggested that the sub committees work be given ahead of the full council meeting to review the sub committees work before the meeting. The council agreed that this would be beneficial. Suzie also suggested that we add an additional subcommittee specifically for children with developmental disabilities and who are of color to discuss areas of needs for this population. This was seen as an area of high need by the council due to the current climate. Lastly, it was suggested for there to be either an additional committee group to create a training for new members of the council or for this to be tasked to an existing group. As part of the orientation training another suggestion was made for a dictionary to be created for acronyms that are used so council members understand what other people are talking about during discussions.

Jacqui provided the following resource to help with special education acronyms: On our new special education website - a [list of acronyms](#)! For your viewing pleasure:

The sub committees for the SEAC will be:

- Committee on Unmet Needs of Children with Disabilities
- Committee on Rules and Regulations
- Committee on Evaluations and Reporting
- Committee on Corrective Action Plans
- Committee on Coordination of Services for Students with Disabilities
- Committee on Membership and By-Laws.

The council decided to move forward with sub committees. The council then started to work on areas of need that would fall under each subcommittee. While some areas of need will be specific to some subcommittee's others might fall under multiple sub committees.

Committee on Unmet Needs of Children with Disabilities:

The purpose of this committee is to identify and understand areas of unmet need and make recommendations to the full panel on advice the panel should give to the State Education Agency (SEA) on unmet need. The topics we identified for this committee to explore at this time include unmet needs due to/connected with:

1. COVID-19,
2. Act 173;
3. Adverse Effect;
4. Use of the severe discrepancy model for determining Specific Learning Disability (SLD); and
5. Lack of parent advisory groups (SEPACS) required by Title I of ESEA

Committee on Rules and Regulations:

The purpose of this committee is to support our obligation to publicly comment on rules or regulations regarding the education of children with disabilities. At this time, this group will continue drafting public comment on the Special Education Rules. Everyone needs to complete the new prioritization survey, including the folks still waiting for appointment. We now have more time to work on comments based on the input of all participants, and to determine if there are areas of the rules that were not even identified as needing public comment. This group will then be tasked with discussing those areas of the rules and

drafting proposed written comment. The drafting will be presented to the full State Advisory Panel to review and approve.

This committee's work on drafting comments needs to be completed by October to bring to the full council, so that any changes can be made by our November meeting, and our final comments submitted to the Board of Education in December. After December this committee will meet as needed when rules impacting the education of children with disabilities are open for public comment.

Committee on Evaluations and Reporting:

The purpose of this committee is to support our responsibility to advise the State Education Agency (SEA) in developing evaluations and reporting on data to the Secretary. This committee will be responsible for developing recommendations for advice to the Agency regarding the SPP indicators, including parent involvement and the parent/family survey, significant disproportionality, the state systemic improvement plan (SSIP) state-identified measure (SiMR), and other evaluations and reports. Recommendations of this committee will be presented to the full Panel.

This committee is expected to have ongoing work as evaluations and reports are a regular part of the agency's work. However, there may be times when the committee needs to be more active (for example as the agency sets its targets for the Part B SSP).

Committee on Coordination of Services:

The purpose of this committee is to support our responsibility to advise the State Education Agency (SEA) in developing and implementing policies relating to the coordination of services for children with disabilities. The two areas identified for this committee's work, at this time, include:

1. Access to services for students who have both a developmental disability and a mental health diagnosis
2. Coordination of Services at the transition from Part C to Part B

This committee may be tasked with developing advice and recommendations on other areas of coordination of services moving forward. Recommendations of this committee will be presented to the full panel for approval, before being given to the agency as advice. We expect this committee to have ongoing work.

Committee on Corrective Action Plans:

The purpose of this committee is to support our responsibility to advise the State Education Agency (SEA) in developing corrective action plans to address findings identified in Federal monitoring reports. This committee will first meet with Jacqui or her designee to understand the timeline for monitoring and issuing corrective action. The committee will be responsible for making recommendations on advice on the processes for corrective action, as well as advice on any plans for corrective action for LEAs. In addition, this group will be responsible for developing recommendations for advice on the state's OSEP report and corrective action plans that need to be implemented at the state level. These recommendations will be presented to the full Panel for approval.

This committee is expected to have ongoing work, as a subset of school districts are monitored each year, and OSEP review and potential state-level corrective action is ongoing.

Committee on Membership and By-Laws:

The purpose of this committee is to support our work to bring our membership into compliance with the IDEA, and to bring our by-laws into compliance with Act 97. This committee will:

1. Review and make recommendations to the full committee on updates to the by-laws to comply with Act 97
2. Recruit applicants to fill vacant roles,
3. Support applicants in completing the application process,
4. Develop an orientation/training for new members

The by-laws work is expected to be intermittent. The membership work is likely to be ongoing as members complete their three-year appointments.

Rachel will send out a survey for people to decide if they would like to join each subcommittee.

Executive Council Discussion:

There are ten parents of children with special needs who are in the que waiting for approval for the governor. Jackie is hoping to hear about seven of the parents next week and will make a push for the other three parents to be approved. For the executive council there needs to be a majority of council members of people with disabilities or parents of children with developmental disabilities. Currently there are four parents on the SEAC who serve in this capacity. Because of this Rachel suggested having a short July meeting to vote on the executive committee once the seven waiting members are approved.

Sarah Fabrizio mentioned while it is frustrating that parents are waiting, there is also work then needs to be completed by the council. While we are hopeful that the seven parents waiting will be approved next week there are no guarantees due to COVID.

To continue moving the work forward, Sara Kruk makes a motion to vote on an interim executive committee until December for six months. Sarah Fabrizio seconds the motion. The motion passes.

The council opens up nominations for the four additional executive committee members

Sara Kruk nominated by Sara Fabrizio seconded by Randi

Sara Kruk nominated by Robin Hood, Randi seconds

Susie nominated Scarlett and seconded by Randi

Jamie nominated Sandra Chittenden and seconded by Randi

Jamie and Sandra nominated Katie and seconded by Randi

Kaiya Andrews nominated Kaiya Andrews and seconded by Randi

More parents were nominated then spots allowed - the council went into vote via private chat and email.

The four executive members voted into the executive council are: Sara Kruk, Robin Hood, Sandra Chittenden, and Kaiya Andrews.

The executive board will consist of the following seven members until December of 2020: Rachel Seelig (Chair) Carrie Lutz (Vice Chair) Sarah Fabrizio (Secretary) Sara Kruk, Robin Hood, Sandra Chittenden, and Kaiya Andrews

Sandra Chittenden and Kaiya Andrews are elected pending their receipt of appointment papers.

Next Steps:

Rachel will send out a survey for which committee you would want to join, and if you would like to chair a committee, only members with a receipt of appointment papers can chair a committee. Rachel will also send out a survey for prioritization of comments on the special education rules.

Public Comment:

Susan Aaronoff thinks this is fantastic. She also encouraged the committee to stay informed with the current legislation and to comment on the legislation.

Future agenda items:

As we are moving into an executive council Rachel is looking for feedback to set the agenda. Some items were suggested for future agendas

- SEPAC parent advisory groups - unmet need group and rules group
- Improving the parent survey
- Anti-Racism / Implicit Bias training
- COVID Updates that we are aware of - directives etc.
- Update from AOE - guidance from federal government
- AOE - Webpage

Rachel requested for anyone to email her if there any other additional items.

Jacqui requested feedback from the council on the current webpage and widgets. She would like to know what's working and if you have any suggestions.

Robin Hood makes a motion to adjourn the meeting. Sarah Fabrizio seconds. The meeting adjourned at 7:05.

Meeting Schedule (Hold the Dates):

Thursday, September 24, 2020 - 4:30pm to 7:30pm

Monday, October 19, 2020 - 4:30pm to 7:30pm

Thursday, November 19, 2020 - 4:30pm to 7:30pm

Monday, December 14, 2020 - 4:30pm to 7:30pm