



STATE OF CONNECTICUT
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION



Connecticut State Advisory Council for Special Education

November 10, 2021

***** 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. *****

Zoom Virtual Meeting

(Conference Call Information included below)

MINUTES

Members Present: Nachi Bhatt, Bryan Klimkiewicz (non-voting), Jolie Medina (non-voting), Sean Cronin (non-voting), Tammy Raccio (Chair), Missy Wrigley, Jane Hampton, Joan Nicoll-Senft, Catherine Summ, Mia Giantonio, Dimpsy Malvania, Jake Shumbo, Doris Maldonado, Cassandra Reilly, Denise Drummond, Brian Smith, Allison Kopie, Jennifer Lussier, Rick Raucci and Jeffrey Spahr.

Public Attendee: Amy Burlingame, Lori Fortuna, Susan Yankee and Michael Scanlon.

Members Absent: Goviana Morales, Louis Tallarita, Rep. Tammy Exum, Jon Metcalf, Marisa Mascolo-Halm, Tom Cosker, Patricia Nunez and Kim Williamson.

I. Call to Order and Welcome (1:00 pm.)

Tammy Raccio calls meeting to order at 1:01 pm.

II. Introductions/Roles/Welcome

Members introduce themselves and roles.

III. Council Purpose and Function

Tammy R. reviews the purpose of the function

IV. Public Comment (1:10 pm.)

At 1:17 pm. Jolie Medina reports that there are no public participants on the line.

SAC meetings are public meetings; members of the public may participate by calling in:

- Call-In Number: 1-866-880-0098
- Participant Passcode: 89689633

Old Business

V. Consent Agenda:

- a. September 22, 2021 Full Council Minutes

Jennifer Lussier makes motion for a change in wording under membership to clarify statement pertains to Committee and not a particular person in the group.

Rick Raucci made a motion to approve the minutes and Joan Nicoll-Senft seconds. The Council is all in favor of approval.

VI. Executive Committee Report

Tammy Raccio discusses the following agenda items with the Council and provides updates.

a. Meeting Updates

b. Annual Report

Executive Committee has worked on and will work on further during today's meeting

c. Committee Options/Appointments

Catherine will review.

VII. Membership Committee Report

Catherine Summ talks membership agenda items.

a. Membership Update

i. Attendance

Council is updated.

ii. Current/Anticipated Vacancies

Council is updated.

iii. Vote on new appointments

Lori Fortuna is introduced and goes on to provides background information as a perspective parent representative recommended by former member Sonia Taylor-Smith. Jake Shumbo makes a motion, Brian Smith seconds and the Council votes in favor of appointment.

Michael Scanlon is introduced and goes on to provides background information as a perspective individual with disabilities representative. Jake Shumbo. makes a motion, Brian Smith. seconds and the Council votes in favor of appointment.

Susan Yankee is introduced and goes on to provides background information as a perspective parent representative. Jane Hampton makes a motion, Jake Shumbo. seconds and the Council votes in favor of appointment.

Catherine Summ tells the council of Joan Nicoll-Senft's upcoming retirement as of June 1, 2022. The Council thanks Bryan Smith asks Joan to provide a list of qualities to refer to for her roles as Higher Education Representative on the Council

Tammy Raccio thanks the Council for attendance and Membership for their work in recruitment.

NOTE: Brian Smith and Bryan Klimkiewicz introduce themselves to the Council. (not in attendance during that portion of the meeting.)

VIII. Legislative Committee Report

a. Legislative Summary

Jeffrey (Jeff) Spahr (Chair) provides an update with examples of legislation that SAC has reviewed and tracked for further review.

Tammy thanks the Legislative Committee and makes an announcement to members about who to contact if there is interest in Council subcommittees.

Bryan Klimkiewicz provides further comment to the update provided by Jeff Spahr, and he will reach out to Tammy Raccio and the Executive Committee to ask for a SAC representation.

Nachi Bhatt responds to Bryan's comment and request.

IX. Dispute Resolution Ad-Hoc Committee

Tammy Raccio provides an update to the Council. Bryan Klimkiewicz advises the Council on rise of Due Process complaints and they discuss briefly. Bryan K. asks that the Council keep this information to mind as the group schedules a meeting in the near future.

a. Summary of Meetings

New Business

I. Round Table (2:00 pm.)

a. Agency/Parent Updates

Jane Hampton (CPAC): Challenges family are faces and staff shortages, more restraint and seclusion and disciplinary action calls. Outplacement and LRE is an issue. Feels that programs are full, and the issues are heartbreaking.

Ana Wittig (APSEPs): As far as outplacements they are holding because of staffing shortages. Worst she has ever seen in 35 years. Says they are getting creative and trying sign on bonuses and . They are doing their best and trying to increase para salaries, which affect their tuition rates and need to be considered; do understand the need.

Joan Nicolle-Senft (Higher Ed): cannot coordinate DSAPs fast enough. Students and staff are already in school and never seen them so depleted. Rings true on every level what was discussed by Ana W. and Jane H.

Catherine Summ (BESBE): Shortages in her field and attempting to recruit on a continuous basis. Looking to get creative in their efforts and to their support staff who are overworked but has seen proposals coming in from teachers and is a good sign.

Rick Raucci: (Public School Teacher): Teacher shortages not only state but nationwide. Happy back in the classroom and shortages impacting quality of life teachers need to do this work.

Brian Smith (DDS): Says all around employment staffing is an issue for DDS but are employment opportunities from students in programs. Seeing improvements and benefits with individuals reengaging and returning to programs. Not fully running day program creating a back log. Lots of questions on triannual assessment and districts trying to prioritize. Tammy and Bryan Klimkiewicz talk briefly in response to Brian S.'s update. Bryan K. will also mention during his review and provides information in reference to the concern districts have.

Nachi Bhatt (DCF): Sees issues on evaluations and timelines, what is necessary on IDEA levels.

Charles Cicarella (ConnCASE): reiterates with further detail what Nachi Bhatt, Bryan Klimkiewicz and Bryan Smith talk about in regard to evaluations and times lines. Massive dialog that has to happen in reference to the IEP piece in order to have the conversation.

Note: Cassandra Reilly introduces herself not in attendance during that portion of the meeting.

Cassandra Reilly (Charter School): Updates us on employment now with Brass City Charter and talks about funding and challenges with staff and being able to compete with other programs in the state with a lack of resources. Financial impact as far as org not being reimbursed for services; as a result, affecting students.

Susan Yankee (Parent): Working on emergency plans as students return to school.

II. Special Education Division Director Report (2:30 pm.)

Bryan Klimiewicz reviews a PowerPoint on the following agenda items with Council. Provides further details and examples. He answers questions.

- a. SPP/APR Stakeholder Process
- b. CT-SEDS/IEP Quality
- c. Teacher Shortage / Diverse Workforce
- d. ESSER 3 Potential Funding (Initiatives)

III. Priority Break Out Session:

Bryan Klimkiewicz leads group work with the Council. They discuss the current and new priority areas and he answers questions.

Susan Yankee makes clarifies legal change to term Deaf/Blind it should now be Deafblind.

- a. Further develop Priorities for Annual Report (3:00 pm.)
 - 1. Special Education Recovery Policies and Procedures**
 - o Equitable Access to Acceleration Activities and Recovery
 - 2. Best Practices for Reengagement**
 - a. Social/Emotional/Mental Health (Students and Educators)
 - b. Community Access
 - c. Routines

IV. Adjourn (4:00 pm.)

State Advisory Council Meeting Dates/Locations:

Meeting	Date		Time	Location
1.	September 22, 2021		9:00-3:00	Virtual Meeting
2.	November 10, 2021		1:00-4:00	Virtual Meeting
3.	January 12, 2022		9:00-2:30	Virtual Meeting
4.	March 16, 2022		1:00-5:00	Virtual Meeting
5.	May 12, 2022		1:00-5:00	TBD