



**STATE OF CONNECTICUT**  
*DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION*



**Connecticut State Advisory Council for Special Education**

**Wednesday, March 10, 2021**

**\*\*\*\*\* 9:00 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. \*\*\*\*\***

Virtual Meeting

(Conference Call Information included below)

**MINUTES**

**Members Present:** Jen Lussier, Denise Drummond, Rick Raucci, Jon Metcalf, Jeffry Spahr, Nachi Bhatt, Brian K. Smith, Kim Williamson, Jeff Spahr, Patricia Nunez, Dr. Laurie Singer, Bryan Klimkiewicz (non-voting), Jolie Medina (non-voting), Tammy Raccio (Chair), Tom Cosker (Past Chair), Missy Wrigley, Jane Hampton, Joan-Nicoll-Senft, Catherine Summ, Kasey Considine, Doris Maldonado and Jake Shumbo

**Guests:** Mia Giontonio (Student) and Tom Boudreau (SDE-BSE)

**Members Absent:** Representative Barry, Jane Goundrey, Monica Hatton, Goviana Morales, Louis Tallarita, Cassandra Reilly, Sonia Taylor-Smith, Allison Kopie, Mike Nunes, Ana Wittig and Sean Cronin (SDE non-voting)

**I. Call to Order and Welcome (9:00 am.)**

Tammy called meeting to order at 9:04 am.

**II. Introductions/Roles/Welcome**

Full Council introductions

**III. Council Purpose and Function**

**IV. Public Comment (9:10 am.) N/A**

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. January 13, 2021 Full Council Minutes

Jolie sends minutes to Council at the beginning of meeting and there is a motion to approve later in the meeting. Nachi Bhatt makes motion and Jen seconds.

Jon Metcalf makes a motion to approve and Jake Shumbo seconds the full SAC meeting minutes from 1/13/21 at 11:24 am. Tammy approves minutes

**VI. Executive Committee Report**

a. Meeting Updates

Tammy Raccio provides update on the meetings and advises the Council on future meetings and reminds the Council that they are looking forward to resume to regular SAC meeting schedules versus before the pandemic.

b. Executive Committee Appointment

Tammy Raccio appoints Catherine Summ to the Executive Committee after Sue Lemke resigns.

Bryan Klimkiewicz talks about the groups interest in a Due Process Ad-Hoc Committee

**VII. Membership Committee Report**

a. Membership Update

i. ConnCASE Representative

ii. Parent Membership Vacancy

One opening and may have additional vacancies in the summer when parents current terms come to end.

iii. Student Membership Update

Potential students interested but due to schedules, they will look to attend meetings in the near future. Catherine Summ asks the Council to feel free to make recommendations. Plans to meet in May to review applications and make appointments.

Catherine Summ talks about filling vacancies, the membership survey, and distribution of the survey by SAC members, suggestions on how to reach out to interested candidates and how to recruit. Asks the Council to also keep legislator participation in mind and to look for a representative interested in joining the SAC regularly.

**VIII. Legislative Committee Report**

a. Meeting Summaries

Jeff Spahr provides a brief summary on the functions of the Legislative Committee and reviews what the subcommittee has been doing and reviewing up to date on current legislation.

b. Proposed Bills

Discusses with the Council the Legislative Committee review process including signing up with the General Assembly (G.A.) for special education related bills to

c. Written Testimony HB6121

Discusses the letter that was submitted to the G.A. on behalf of the Council and Legislative Committee to support House Bill 6121 after consulting with the Executive Committee.

Note: Monica Hatton, Jonathan Metcalf and Goviana Morales join and make introductions.

**New Business**

**I. Special Education Division Director Report (9:30)**

Bryan Klimkiewicz thanks Tom Cosker for his work with Assistive Technology and talks about NEAT.

a. IDEA (Individuals with Disabilities Education Act) Grant Presentation: Tom Boudreau.

Tom B. reviews the presentation with the Council and answers SAC member questions.

b. SEDAC (Special Education Data Application and Collection) Update

Bryan Klimkiewicz reviews the SEDAC PowerPoint with the SAC. On 10/1 the districts report on related activity around several 7 areas. By 12/5 they need to be in compliance when SDE freezes data. Citations are then issued to those not in compliance and SDE follows up for corrections of IEP data.

c. CT-SEDS (CT-Special Education Data System) Update

d. LMIIP (Learning Model IEP Implementation Plan) Review

**II. (Break 5/10min if needed)**

**III. Round Table (10:45)**

a. Agency Updates

Nachi Bhatt (DCF) Talks about remote learning and in person learning. Great communication between educators and families. Pandemic forced everyone to talk more during this time. Hope it continues because it is helpful for all.

Ana Wittig (CAPSEF) Hears that many are going into in person and hearing about many being vaccinated helping numbers remain within compliance so things are moving forward. Agrees with Nachi about communication and collaboration.

Rick Raucci (Public Teacher) had a large amount of teachers vaccinated. Less teachers are out due to vaccinations. Talks about a mentoring program that was established due to COVID and now they are doing one time a week versus one time a month. Because of this they are building better relationships in their district.

Jane Hampton (CPAC) One of things hearing not sped related but impacting. Districts making moves to change what they were doing since the start of the COVID pandemic. Many general education issues are affecting the children with IEPs. Is glad to hear that teachers are able to relax due to vaccines but families are home are not all vaccinated. Those parents reluctant to send their children to school due to various reasons. Also talks aspiring leaders and early childhood inclusive programming groups. Working on Best Practices one on

Transition Assessments in the Spring, parent training leadership in the Summer, early childhood doing a lot of presentations for families, partnered with UCONN and Birth to 3 representative. I

Kasey Considine (Dis. Rights CT) Talks about Comp education and student regression. Talks related services annual reviews and PPTs. Asks if you are hearing about the 21-22 age range and having issues with being educated. Refers them to call Disability Rights for assistance.

Patricia Nunez (CT Judicial Branch) Talks about seven education providers for their student out of juvenile justice care. Talks initiatives pending legislation, current recommendations about a unit in DCF being created to oversee the students that the Judicial Branch oversees. Develop operation plan, time lines and funding. Also talks about education data, building into a system to include school attendance.

Catherine Summ (BESBE/ADS) Teachers being vaccinated and are excited. Will be able to provide services that are screened by Catherine. Activities still being provided virtual curriculum. Looking into a universal program for parents and organizations. Wants to ensure that parents and guardians are aware of national assistance. They are being careful and will provide virtual options in the Summer.

Brian Smith (DDS) Increase in youth with health needs and family concerns when families have not been vaccinated hesitant to return to school. Talks Birth to 3, resources and transition. DDS enjoying the positivity and excited to return to normality. Tammy comments on the summary and asks Bryan to consider the SDE's involvement with

b. Parent Updates

Audra Mae Talbot (Parent) Both children have returned to in person learning, which is good for her situation but also sees a lot of good and bad in the. Seeing some districts across the state encourage in person learning. Says districts have to respect parent voice and the SEPTO needs a stronger alliance. Sees many increased special education referrals for general education students suffering with anxiety. Mentions that supports are needed across the state for these students.

Monica Hatton (Parent) Districts in general are good. Hears that some want to go into private. Talks specific scenarios, diversity and inclusion coach. Monica talks about her situation at home and hopes that the state and districts be mindful and consider allowing some of the opportunities putting into practice are still available after districts return to normal.

Jon Metcalf (Parent) As a martial arts instructor he sees a lot of shifting in social emotional learning. Says that worldwide there needs to be a focus on assisting students suffering with the long lasting effects of the pandemic.

**IV.** Action Items

Jolie will send follow up reminder email to SAC and post 1/13/21 approved minutes.

**V.** Adjourn/Break (11:30 am.)

The group takes a lunch break.

**VI.** Priority Break Out Session: (1:00 pm.)

a. COVID-19 Recovery Services

**VII.** Adjourn (2:30 pm.)

**State Advisory Council Meeting Dates/Locations:**

<b>Meeting</b>	<b>Date</b>		<b>Time</b>	<b>Location</b>
1.	September 30, 2020		1:00-4:00	Virtual Meeting
2.	November 18, 2020 (Snow Date: Nov 25)		9:00-2:30	Virtual Meeting
3.	January 13, 2021 (Snow Date: Jan 20)		9:00-2:30	Virtual Meeting
4.	March 10, 2021 (Snow Date: March 17)		9:00-2:30	Virtual Meeting
5.	May 12, 2021		1:00-5:00	TBD