



STATE OF CONNECTICUT
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION



Connecticut State Advisory Council for Special Education

Wednesday, May 12, 2021

******* 1:00 p.m. to 5:00 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, Patricia Nunez, Dr. Laurie Singer, Bryan Klimkiewicz (non-voting), Jolie Medina (non-voting), Sean Cronin (non-voting), Tammy Raccio (Chair), Tom Cosker (Past Chair), Missy Wrigley, Jane Hampton, Joan-Nicoll-Senft, Catherine Summ, Kasey Considine, Mia Giantonio, Dimpsy Malvania, Marissa Mascolo-Holm, Jake Shumbo, Allison Kopie, Sonia Taylor-Smith, Audra Mae-Talbot and Jon Metcalf

Public Attendee: Robyn Kaplan Cho (Connecticut Education Association/CEA)

Guests: Kim Traverso (SDE), Lisa-Anne Williams and Ashley Kurth (Aperture Education)

Members Absent: Goviana Morales, Monica Hatton, Cassandra Reilly, Doris Maldonado, Louis Tallarita, Rep. Robin Comey, Rep. Tammy Exum, Rep. Liz Linehan and Rep. Jill Barry

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

Tammy calls meeting to order at 1: 04 pm

II. Introductions/Roles/Welcome

All members present introduce themselves.

III. Council Purpose and Function

IV. Public Comment (1:10 pm.)

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. March 10, 2021 Full Council Minutes have been revised by Jolie Medina prior to the meeting. Motion to approve is Joan Nicoll-Senft and Catherine Summ seconds. All in favor.

VI. Executive Committee Report

a. Meeting Updates

Tammy Raccio discussed forming the new Dispute Resolution Ad-Hoc Committee, best practices and what the Committee has been reviewing and would like the SAC to focus on at this time.

b. Dispute Resolution Ad-Hoc Committee

Goal to improve communications and relationships between families and districts to be able to reach resolution without needing to go through Due Process.

VII. Membership Committee Report

a. Membership Update

i. Attendance

Catherine Summ talks attendance and updates Council.

ii. Current/Anticipated Vacancies

Says we have student vacancies to fill and looking to do so and build up representation. Knows the Committee is working hard and student schedules are an issue with being able to attend meetings.

iii. Student/Parent Membership Recommendation

Catherine introduces Dimpy Malvania (Avon Parent), provides a brief summary of Dimpy's survey criteria, and asks the Council if they have questions. Catherine then asks Tammy to make appointment. Jane made a motion to appoint and Jake seconds. All in favor.

Mia Giontonio (Student) who attended last meeting as a student guest has submitted a survey and the membership committee has discussed and approved nomination.

Tammy thanks the Membership Committee and then comments on the request the SAC made to Jake Shumbo asking him for a list of qualities to look for when recruiting student members. Makes a motion to appoint and Jake Shumbo seconds. All in favor.

Bryan Klimkiewicz thanks the Membership Committee for their work and welcomes the Mia and Dimpy to the Council.

VIII. Legislative Committee Report

a. Meeting Summary

Jeff Spahr talks about the meeting and membership. Asks that the Council recruit additional member(s) for this Committee as we had Jen Lussier and Susan Lemke step down. Also, talks about how to access bills on CGA site and briefly reviews the types and specific bills that were discussed.

b. Proposed Bill Summary

HB 6121 (An Act Concerning Workforce Development Pipeline for Persons with Disabilities)

SB 0002 (An Act Concerning Social Equity and Health, Safety, and Education of Children)

Section 10 (Mental health outpatient treatment)

Section 11-13 (Social Emotional Learning)

Section 14 (Virtual Learning)

Section 16 (Virtual Learning 9-12)

Section 18 (Definition of Excused/Unexcused Absence)

Section 19 (Mental Health/Wellness Days)

Bryan Klimkiewicz ends report by commenting on specific bills that the group is reviewing and monitoring additional related bills.

Tammy Raccio also thanks the Legislative Committee for their hard work and updates.

Tom Cosker asks about vocational technical schools and Bryan K. responds.

Brian K. Smith and Marisa-Mascolo Holm are introduced.

New Business

I. Round Table (1:30)

a. Agency Updates

Catherine Summ (BESBE) Talks fall trainings and goal is to have registration go live by next week. Had good turn out last fall and trainings address diff types of visual impairments and challenges in timing and attendance at trainings.

Denise Drummond (Women, Children and Seniors) Meeting with CRT and Disability Rights having conversations on families with special need children's. Has met with stakeholders and discussed needs and challenges to include cultural feels with vaccinations and translation issues at schools. Will be meeting with Latino Commission tomorrow to hear additional concerns.

Tom Cosker (Disability Rights) Focus on reaching out to underserved communities that include families in the educational system, transition issues and biggest thing is struggle to transition to adult services. Communication is issue, he has worked and agency has developed a fact sheet that they can provide to SAC members involved with that work.

Brian K. Smith (DDS) Number of reopening committees who are reopening and looking at first weekend in June. Looking at getting staff back in the office and reopening committees to start home/ provider visits. Waiting on approval from Hartford branch on moving forward with their plans. Talks about more vacancies with DDS providers and will be an impact on providing services and accessibility.

Jane Hampton (CPAC) Parent Roundtable has been developed and had SAC parent members attend. She shares feedback from both Spanish and English speaking groups. Challenges: interpretations, poor quality and translations. Makes it inequitable and would like to help parents understand their rights. Assistive Technology (AT) was raised and parents stating not

being discussed at PPTs. Social emotional learning is a priority and that because parents do not advocate for recovery doesn't mean they don't feel the child doesn't need. May feel overwhelmed and cannot take on additional work. Invites SAC parent members to attend next meeting. Goes on to mention best practices and youth team, which is working on healthy relationships and college students assistance.

Nachi Bhatt (DCF) Supports educational needs through case workers and works with SDE on guidance for families and provided an update on children in care. Difficulty in engaging children and social emotional learning

Allison Kopie (ADS) Level up camp cancelled but services are being provided.

Joan Nicoll-Senft (Higher Education) Talks about many universities not doing a Spring break and looking to move forward with returning to in person learning in the fall and are having in person graduation next week. Discusses teacher recruitment for special education educators and survey responses with sped teachers sharing their voice.

Patricia Niunez (Judicial) Talks about working with DCF and juvenile justice. Discusses providers, behavioral therapy, and additional services.

Kim Williamson (Speech and Language Pathologist) provides written update: The SLP Communities of Practice met today for the 18th meeting of the school year. It has been meeting twice a month and is a great resource for SLPs. Throughout the year, many topics have been discussed with eligibility being the most recent. Many of the meetings include breakout groups, which provide SLPs with a time to talk to one another and get input and feedback from each other. Presenters have also attended the meetings and have provided information on a variety of topics.

II. Break (2:30)

III. Special Education Division Director Report (3:30 pm.) All in favor of motion to return and start meeting at 3:00 pm.

a. Bureau of Special Education Update

Bryan K. provides update to Council on BSE work.

b. Oak Hill NEAT (New England Assistive Technology) Update

Bryan reviews slides with Council.

c. Devereux Student Strengths Assessment (DESSA) Presentation/Overview

Kim Traverso join the meeting. Kim introduces herself and provides overview on the initiative being developed since 2017 and the purpose while discussing the initial survey. Assisting students returning from Covid -19 pandemic is a goal. Kim welcomes from Lisa-Anne Williams with Aperture Education who introduces herself and briefly, mentions work experience and sped related work she has done. Ashley Kurth also introduces herself and provides brief overview of her work. Lisa-Anne shares her presentation with the Council.

Lisa-Ann shares contact information for herself and Ashley Kurth and directs them to contact them to schedule individual meetings and the website for additional information.

The Council asks questions.

Kim T., Lisa-Anne W. and Ashley K. will be sending resources to the Council.

Jolie M. and Bryan K. will share the DESSA and PowerPoint from today with the summer training date for July decided by today's poll, today's meeting draft minutes with the Zoom meeting recording in a follow up email to the Council.

- IV. Priority Break Out Session: (4:15 pm.) Note: Break Out session cancelled due to timing and work will be completed outside of the meeting and will be submitted to the Executive Committee, the group will revisit at our July training. Bryan goes over the sample he developed for reference.

- a. COVID-19 Recovery Services

- V. Adjourn (5:00 pm.)

Bryan Klimkiewicz adjourns meeting at 4:10.

State Advisory Council Meeting Dates/Locations:

Meeting	Date		Time	Location
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		1:00-4:10	Virtual Meeting