



STATE OF CONNECTICUT
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION



Connecticut State Advisory Council for Special Education

Wednesday, January 11, 2023

******* 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. *******

Zoom Virtual Meeting: Members
YouTube Live Stream: Public Participant Viewing
<https://youtu.be/52nMzfljTAY>

(Conference Call Information included below)

Minutes

Members Present: Bryan Klimkiewicz (non-voting), Jolie Medina (non-voting), Sean Cronin (non-voting) Susan Yankee (Chair), Jane Hampton Smith, Joan Nicoll-Senft, Nachi Bhatt, Catherine Summ, Brian K. Smith, Jennifer Lussier, Tom Cosker, Kim Williamson, Allison Kopie, Jeffrey Spahr, Lori Fortuna, Jake Shumbo, Dimpy Malvania, Jon Metcalf, Kevin Keating, Rick Raucci, Cassandra Reilly, Nancy DeCrescenzo, Goviana Morales, Patricia Nunez, Missy Wrigley and Doris Maldonado.

Guest: Thomas Melillo – Milford Student, Alycia Trakas (Bureau of Special Education Consultant) and Meaghan McKenna (UCONN)

Members Absent: Louis Tallarita (CSDE), (CT Women, Children and Seniors), Michael Scanlon (Individual), Lena Esposito (Parent), Marisa Mascolo-Halm (At-Large) and Tammy Raccio (Past Chair)

I. Call to Order and Welcome (9:00 a.m.)

Meeting called to order at 9:07 a.m. by Susan Yankee

II. Council Purpose and Function

Susan Yankee reviews with the Council and the Council

III. Public Comment (9:10 a.m.) 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

IV. Consent Agenda:

Adjustment to move approval of minutes to February full Council meeting.

Jennifer Lussier makes a motion and Sean Cronin seconds. All in favor.

a. 11/30 Full Council Meeting Minutes

V. Executive Committee Report (9:15 a.m.)

Susan Yankee provides report and discusses with Council the priorities this year and captures last year's work with what the Council.

VI. Membership Committee Report

Catherine provided update on student vacancies.

Introduces student – Thomas “Tommy” Melillo who has submitted the SAC Membership Survey and is interested in the SAC who joins us a guest today and the Council is asked to consider appointment. Jake S., Jenn L make a motion simultaneously and Rick R. seconds the appointment. All in favor. Student is appointed.

Catherine talks about the Legislative Recruitment and Student Interest flyer – updates the Council to advise on what they will include and how soon to expect these documents. Hopes to have final drafts for the next coming meeting.

Susan Y. welcomes Thomas M. and Kevin Keating (ConnCASE representative)

- a. Attendance/vacancies
- b. Student Application for Consideration
- c. Membership Flyer(s)

VII. Legislative Committee Report

Jeff Spahr reviews the Legislative Committee work and

Jeff asks Jolie to send out the list of committee members (recently updated) and to send out an email to schedule meetings. Bryan says it would make sense to schedule meetings end of January or early February.

Susan Y. asks for email addresses of new members so that she can send the Committee sign-up link.

Tom Cosker (Disability Rights CT) Talks about Legislative work and to be mindful when working with groups whose visions are not aligned with the SAC. Tells the group that the work they are doing is great and thanks them for their work.

- a. Legislative Update

New Business

VIII. State Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP) (9:30 a.m.)

Bryan K. starts the presentation and introduces Alycia Trakas (BSE Education Consultant) and Meaghan McKenna (UCONN) Indicator 17 on our plan. Improve 3rd grade reading for students with IEP. Meaghan has presented in the past when first establishing a relationship with UCONN. Alycia presents on SSIP with Meaghan and talks about our relationships with other offices involved in the work. Talks CT SEDS in regards to Specific Learning Disability (SLD) and Dyslexia and

reviews resources. Meaghan presents – thanks the partners working on the project and provides email contact for questions on the initiative, reviews sessions. They ask if the Council has questions on presentation?

Bryan K. summarizes the presentation, helps to answer questions and clarifies the work being done.

Jake S. (Individual), Brian S. (DDS) and Lori F. (Parent) join the meeting are introduced to the Council.

IX. Annual Report Summary (10:15 a.m.) Starts at 10:25 a.m.

Bryan K. reviews the components of the Annual report, talks the process and advised the Council that they will receive a copy once finalized and submitted to the General Assembly.

X. Break (10:45) Goes until 10:51 am.

XI. Round Table (11:00 a.m.)

a. Agency/Parent Updates

Ana Wittig (CAPSEF) talks about staff and teaching positions. In need of educators to support needs of the students. Now able to accept students who need their service. Talks about Kevin K. joining form ConnCASE. Kids coming back to their baseline and progressing nicely.

Susan Yankee (Parent) talks survey from American School for the Deaf (ASD) and she will add the link in the chat. Survey in regards to funds.

Doris Maldonado. (Parent) speaks to the fact of sped stakeholder roles in special education. She talks about a specific situation and a 504 plan matter that she recently had. Talks about the Surrogate Parent Office and their involvement under the current laws. Bryan K. responds to say that we can connect Doris with the consultant who oversees the program.

Cassandra Reilly (Charters) Talks compensatory education and related services being a current issue along with compliance. Need conversations when addressing the crisis and evaluations. Bryan K. responds on BSE's role and Department work in the areas of concerns.

Tom Cosker (Disability Rights CT) Discussed staffing issues which they are seeing on their end. Seeing that students with more significant needs do not have the staffing supports from educators. Seeing a reliance on teachers with durational teaching permits and substitute teachers. Disturbing to see students with most needs being provided by the least qualified individuals. Continues to work on Transition areas and adult services and employment.

Jane Hampton Smith (CPAC) Talks about interest in interventions being researched based. Increase in behavioral issues and having more disciplinary actions without appropriate supports mostly happening in Dyslexia. Briefly mentions teacher shortage, and parent concerns about teacher qualifications. Who can deliver services are increased questions to CPAC. Chronic Absenteeism and says that it looks as if the guidelines are not necessarily being followed.

Jeff Spahr (Parent) talks about employment and his child's personal experience – would like to see opportunities where the students with IEP's can assist and be compensated. Jake responds to say that would be beneficial to the students.

Jennifer Lussier (Parent) Sees a lot on behaviors. Parents asking about qualifications and wondering if teachers are not certified is the IEP out of compliance? Read an IEP that was not written well and feels that CT-SEDS may help with those challenges. Outplacements and RESC programs for her personal experience and was pleased – says that she felt like a partner and her/child were included in the process.

Rick Raucci (Teacher) Talks interns and student teachers and no compensation – generally the student has to pay for their licenses and degrees, essentially the student is paying . Would like to see education preparation programs across CT, would like to see the burden eased on individuals looking to teach while in a teaching program. Suggests adding to priority work. How caseloads are defined and provide an equity for the district. Kevin K. responds to say that he agrees that it should be caseload versus class size that is the suggested priority work. Bryan K. responds to inform about IDEA and aspects to look at. If issues are not addressed the situations can get worst and therefore, the CSDE is working on this area.

Catherine Summ (ADS-BESBE) Carol Jenkins is her new Director from Nebraska and she is looking forward to working with her.

I. Special Education Division Director Report (11:45 a.m.)

Bryan K. provides report and presents PowerPoint describing indicators.

- a. State Performance Plan Update (input)
- b. 2023-24 Special Education Training and Technical Support

II. Priority Discussions (Continued) (12:15 p.m.)

a. Special Education Teacher/Related Service Provider/Paraeducator Shortages

i. Honor/Respect the Profession

1. Preparation

ii. Recruitment

1. Incentives

iii. Retention

1. Support / Training

b. Least Restrictive Environment

i. Data

ii. Route Cause

iii. Training / Support

c. Student Voice

i. Participation in Meeting (Preparation and Attendance)

ii. Parent Education

- iii. Perspective
- d. Special Education Role in Social Emotional/Behavioral Support
- e. Employment opportunities for Students with Exceptionalities
 - i. Competitive Employment
 - ii. Post-Secondary Transition Activities

Adjourn (1:00 pm.)

Motion to adjourn at 12:51 by Jake S, Lori F. seconds and all in favor.

State Advisory Council Meeting Dates/Locations

Meeting	Date	Time	Location
1.	September 28, 2022	9:00-12:00 pm	Virtual Meeting
2.	October 26, 2022	9:00-10:30 am	Virtual Meeting
3.	November 30, 2022	9:00-1:00 pm	Legislative Office Building: Hartford, CT
4.	January 11, 2023	9:00-1:00 pm	Change to Virtual Meeting
5.	February 22, 2023	9:00-10:30 am	Virtual Meeting
6.	March 29, 2023	9:00-10:30 am	Virtual Meeting
7.	April 26, 2023	9:00-1:00 pm	In-Person Meeting
	May 24, 2023	9-10:30 am	Tentative Virtual Meeting