

**CT STATE ADVISORY COUNCIL ON SPECIAL EDUCATION (SAC)****Executive Committee  
Regular Meeting**

Thursday, June 9, 2011  
5:00pm – 6:00pm  
CT State Department of Education  
25 Industrial Park Road  
Room MCR2 (Front of Building)  
Middletown, CT 06457

**I. Call to Order**

**Member Attendees:** John Burke, Beth Hart, Brenda Sullivan, Marcus Rivera.

**Guests:** Anne Louise Thompson

Dr. Burke called the meeting to order at 5:20pm.

**II. Discussion and Action Items****A. SAC Membership**

Ms. Thompson commended the SAC for the respect earned over the years, its role in “making a difference,” and the collaboration between the Department and the SAC last year to have the SAC membership reflect IDEA regulations and CT state statutes.

Ms. Thompson expressed the importance of the SAC leadership role in ensuring that appointing authorities are aware of the SAC membership requirements regarding racial/ethnic/geographic diversity and the representation requirements regarding parents/individuals with disabilities and representation of disability categories. She stressed the importance of this balance as vacancies are filled and membership numbers increase.

The SAC Executive Committee and Ms. Thompson discussed the recent proposed legislation to increase SAC membership to include a member from the Office of Protection and Advocacy for Persons with Disabilities (OPA), the CT Parent Advocacy Center (CT’s Parent and Information Center program under IDEA), the Bureau of Rehabilitative Services (BRS), and also the SAC’s interest in a member who represents the state’s Technical High School system.

The SAC Executive Committee members and Ms. Thompson reviewed the SAC discussion at the May meeting, i.e., SAC member interest in additional representation to offer statewide perspectives across disability categories. The SAC Executive Committee also discussed with Ms. Thompson, current law and the provision in the amendments to CGS Section 10-76i [JSS, P.A. 10-1, Section 419(a)(14)] that permits the Commissioner of Education to make additional appointments to the Council: “such other members as required by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, 20 USC 1400 et seq., as amended from time to time....”

The SAC Executive Committee will propose to the full SAC in June that an informal survey be conducted of SAC members, on a voluntary basis, to determine where there are gaps in the diverse representation. Results of the survey will be used to request that appointing authorities identify individuals to fill vacancies who may help address specific areas of need regarding diverse representation. The SAC Chair and SAC Membership Chair may also offer possible candidates for consideration by appointing authorities.

The Sac Executive Committee also discussed sharing these representation needs with Ms. Thompson, including a request that the Commissioner of Education appoint a SAC member from OPA, CPAC, BRS and state's Technical High School System, given that current legislation is silent on who the appointing authority should be. In addition, the SAC Executive Committee will share with the full SAC, the provision in the IDEA regulations that "the advisory panel must consist of members appointed by the Governor, or any other official authorized under State law to make such appointments...." Ms. Thompson will follow up with the Department leadership on any SAC membership requests and encouraged the SAC leadership to continue open communication with Mr. Rivera and her if there are concerns.

Since Mr. McGaughey and Ms. Prescott are not authorized to serve as SAC members until such appointments are made by the appropriate appointing authorities, the SAC Chair will inform them prior to the June 15 SAC meeting and also thank them for their excellent service to date. They may serve on committees as appointed by the SAC Chair and approved by the Council per the SAC by-laws; they may not serve in an official capacity as committee chairs. They may continue their current committee appointments but a new SAC Suspension and Expulsion Ad Hoc Committee Chair will need to be appointed at the June 15 SAC meeting. Mr. McGaughey and Ms. Prescott will also be encouraged to attend all SAC meetings, as all members of the public are welcomed; to comment at the SAC full membership meetings as part of the public portion; and to comment on issues or offer recommendations as part of SAC agenda items.

#### **B. Appointments to SAC and SAC Committees**

New appointments were proposed for the June 15 SAC meeting, including a new SAC Membership Chair now that Ms. Bidwell has resigned but will maintain a SAC voice on other committees/stakeholder groups. The SAC Suspension and Expulsion Ad Hoc Committee will also need a new chair.

#### **C. SAC July Meeting, Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) Survey, SAC September Retreat**

The SAC Executive Committee will propose that a SAC Special Meeting be held on Monday, July 18, from 2:30-5:00pm in Room 307A at the State Office Building in Hartford to review the OSEP survey areas in small groups with Bureau of Special Education consultants and also opportunities for whole group discussion. These discussions will help inform stakeholder group meetings in the fall, as well as help all SAC members to fully engage in the OSEP interview on September 21. More information will be shared at the June 15 SAC meeting.

Dr. Burke will offer some options for the SAC fall retreat in September, He will also follow up with Mr. Michael Smith at the Bureau of Special Education regarding the admissions process at the state's magnet, charter and technical high schools and equal access for students with disabilities.

#### **D. Annual Report and SAC Committees/Stakeholder Groups: Format for Updates**

Dr. Burke will prepare a brief outline of items that SAC committee chairs and stakeholder representatives may submit for inclusion in the SAC annual report. This outline will be shared at the SAC June 15 meeting. Due to the change in the calendar year regarding the announcement of the SAC Slate of Officers and subsequent appointments to SAC Committees, many of the SAC Committees will not formally meet until the fall. The SAC

Legislative Committee has been meeting regularly and one of the SAC ad hoc committees, the SRBI Ad Hoc Committee, has held meetings.

**E. SAC Legislative Committee Update**

Ms. Sullivan reported that the SAC Legislative Committee is interested in meeting in July to review the comments to the proposed changes to the state special education regulations and to propose recommendations for SAC review. Since Ms. DeFrancis, of the Bureau of Special Education, will offer a response to the comments in August, Ms. Sullivan will review with the SAC Legislative Committee whether an August meeting may be more beneficial. The Committee will also offer a summary of actions taken by the General Assembly on the bills impacting special education that were of interest to the SAC and the Committee.

**F. Agenda for SAC June 15, 2011, Regular Meeting** – The June 15 meeting items were considered for distribution to the full SAC and public.

**G. Consideration of Minutes of April 27, 2011, SAC Executive Committee Meeting**

Ms. Hart moved and Ms. Sullivan seconded to approve the SAC Executive Committee April 27, 2011, minutes. The motion passed unanimously.

**III. Adjournment**

By unanimous consent, the meeting was adjourned at 7:52 pm.

Prepared by: Marcus Rivera, SAC Secretary