



STATE OF CONNECTICUT
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION



Connecticut State Advisory Council for Special Education

Wednesday, May 13, 2020

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

Virtual Meeting

(Conference Call Information included in Meeting Invitation)

MINUTES

Members Present: Jen Lussier, Meg Walsh, Jeffrey Spahr, Nachi Bhatt, Mike Nunes, Brian Smith, Kim Williamson, Tom Cosker, Representative Comey, Bryan Klimkiewicz (non-voting), Jolie Medina (non-voting), Sean Cronin (non-voting), Goviana Morales, Missy Wrigley, Louis Tallarita, Tammy Raccio, Monica Hatton, Alex Steinbrick, Jane Hampton, Joan-Nicoll-Senft, Catherine Summ, Ana Wittig, Allison Kopie and Kasey Considine.

Public Line: Elizabeth Howe (UCONN)

Members Absent: Audra Mae Talbot, Jonathan Metcalf, Jake Shumbo, Representative Barry, Cassandra Reilly, Melvette Hill, Jane Goundrey, Marisa Mascolo-Halm, Rick Raucci, Sheila Crocker, Patricia Nunez and Louis Tallarita.

I. Call to Order and Welcome:

Tom Cosker called meeting to order at 1:03 pm.

II. Introductions/Roles/Welcome:

Review by Tom Cosker.

III. Council Purpose and Function:

Review by Tom Cosker.

IV. Consent Agenda: N/A

V. Public Comment (1:10) SAC meetings are public meetings, members of the public may participate by calling in:

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

Elizabeth Howe (UCONN) joins the call to stay updated on SAC and current work.

Old Business

VI. Executive Committee Report:

Tom provides overview on 4/29 and 5/6 committee meetings, discussions and decisions made by the members on current priority SAC work. Minutes will be provided in follow-up email to meeting.

New Business

VII. Special Education Division Director Report:

Bryan talks about the SSIP work and the way they plan to work through presentations. Wants the BSE involved heavily with reentry and assisting families/districts with concerns on school closings, ESY and distance learning. Working on guidance and receiving input from Commissioner Cardona Round table meetings. Talks about the extensive work the bureau is currently doing to be prepared with education priorities. Tom responds and talks about the fatigue issue that is starting to arise within district, stakeholders and families.

SDE putting out survey to Superintendents on parent engagement for the state to be able to assist with addressing concerns and collaboration.

VIII. Round Table:

Doris Maldonado: Concerned with Governor's group not having special education representation at specifically talks about a recent broadcast. Tom responds to ensure that they put their concerns out to the Commissioner.

Missy Wrigley (Parent): Reiterates the same point made by Doris Maldonado. Concerned that families do not have committee members representing special education. Since being impacted by COVID they should have a voice. SPED is an important piece missing.

Catherine Summ (BESBE): Helpful to know state's plan in order to structure properly on their end Turning trainings into virtual trainings and organizing resources for parents/families during the summer.

Jeffry Spahr (Parent): Talks services to students and possible extensions to make up for losses during school closures. Bryan responds to the extent on what scenarios could look like regarding transition and programs. BSE will put out guidance on this topic and legislature has been vocal, our office has been meeting with stakeholders to address.

Kasey Considine (Dis. Rights CT): What are we looking at for ESY and services due to timing and concerns on getting anxious on a plan. Bryan responds to about current work he is aware of going on to support and serve the families/districts.

Tammy Raccio (Parent): Talks about CABA call and that there was a list provided that gave RESC/district representation information. Looking for contact list to Superintendents.

Allison Kopie (BRS): Talks about transition programs and services, what decisions are being or potentially made. Discusses adult services and all meetings being virtual while some services are on hold until in person meetings are feasible.

Brian Smith (DDS): Working virtually/ remotely at this time. Continued work on transition, most concerns on plans if they are not able to provide or work with specific programs that would have been working with people who have greater risks. Working through similar logistics that other districts face regarding concerns on transportation and COVID in public Governor mandated orders.

Meg Walsh (ConnCASE): Talks ESY and concerns with students attending. Staff concerns with people certified to handle the challenges that will arise. Her district (Southington) working on new hires, budgets and programs including Para educators and social challenges.

Joan Nicoll-Senft (Higher Education): Talks teacher preparation and state assisting/flexibility with teaching requirements. Talks about challenges they face and how they plan to organize around the concern on trainings.

Ana Wittig (CAPSEF): District functions are running smoothly but wants to further be available to the population they service. Plans for handling all the situations and that will arise and working with SDE to incorporate appropriate measures. Bryan provides overview

Jane Hampton (CPAC): Jane talks about CPACs current involvement. Has concerned on transition and services being missed during pandemic not leaving students at a place that they are not comfortable with at end of year. Governor's round table need parent and special education stakeholders.

Mike Nunes (DOC): Using teleconference to hold PPTs, established a transition unit – looking at early releases and working with residing districts. Year round school looking to be back on by July 1, 2020.

Sonia Taylor-Smith (Parent): Concerns with families that have students with underlying health needs and IEPs not addressing health needs only educational. Families advocating for home schooling not wanting to return to school. Bryan and Tom respond to say that there are no set answers to the concerns at this time but the SDE is aware and will be considering these concerns.

Monica Hatton (Parent): Own concerns with her child's (and others) behaviors when expected to return to school. Students need to have options to ease anxieties. Looking for transition guidance for students going into K, middle and high schools for the first time. Superintendent engaged but no in school district collaboration.

IX. Update on the role of the SAC during COVID-19 Statewide School Classroom Closure-update from the workgroups:

Tom and Bryan briefly review SAC roles and representation.

X. Break: N/A

XI. Workgroup meetings (2:50 – 3:45)

- a. Continue to work in your selected workgroup

- b. If your workgroup has completed the discussion on the selected topic, please consider discussing what resources would need to be considered when re-opening schools.

XII. Action Items:

Jolie to send follow up email to Council, including meeting audio and minutes for both executive and council meetings for April and May. Executive Committee to follow up on member requests forwarded to SAC during meeting via chat.

XIII. Adjourn:

Brian Smith made motion and Joan Nicoll-Senft seconded. Meeting adjourned at pm. by Tom Cosker at 3:58 pm.

State Advisory Council Meeting Dates/Locations:

Meeting	Date		Time	Location
1.	September 25, 2019		1:00-5:00	Legislative Office Building, Hearing Room 1C Hartford, CT 06106
2.	November 6, 2019 (Snow Date: Nov 13)		9:00-3:00	Southington Board of Education 200 North Main Street, Southington, CT 06489
3.	January 8, 2020 (Snow Date: Jan 15)		9:00-3:00	Legislative Office Building, Hearing Room 1A Hartford, CT 06106
4.	March 18, 2020 CANCELLED		9:00-3:00	CREC, 111 Charter Oak Avenue, Hartford, CT 06106
5.	April 8, 2020		2:30-4:00	Virtual Meeting
6.	April 22, 2020		2:30-4:00	Virtual Meeting
7.	May 13, 2020		1:00-4:00	Virtual Meeting