



STATE OF CONNECTICUT
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION



Connecticut State Advisory Council for Special Education

Wednesday, January 13, 2021

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

Virtual Meeting

(Conference Call Information included below)

MINUTES

Members Present: Jen Lussier, Jeffry Spahr, Nachi Bhatt, Mike Nunes, Brian Smith, Kim Williamson, Tom Cosker, Representative Comey, Bryan Klimkiewicz (non-voting), Jolie Medina (non-voting), Tammy Raccio (Chair), Tom Cosker (Past Chair), Susan Lemke, Marissa Mascolo-Halm, Missy Wrigley, Louis Tallarita, Tammy Raccio, Williamson Monica Hatton, Jane Hampton, Joan-Nicoll-Senft, Catherine Summ, Allison Kopie, Sonia Taylor-Smith, Kasey Considine, Doris Maldonado and Jake Shumbo.

Members Absent: Audra Mae Talbot, Jonathan Metcalf, Representative Barry, Jane Goundrey, Rick Raucci, Monica Hatton, Goviana Morales, Ana Wittig and Sean Cronin (SDE non-voting)

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

Meeting called to order by Tammy Raccio 9:09 am.

II. Introductions/Roles/Welcome

Tammy reviews with the Council.

III. Council Purpose and Function

Tammy reviews with the Council.

IV. Public Comment (9:10 am.)

SAC meetings are public meetings; members of the public may participate by calling in:

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

Jolie makes a call to Elizabeth Lengvinis (parent) who asks to listen in on meeting at about 10:30 to familiarize herself with the SAC and its role. Has interest in SAC membership that I will be forwarding to her and Catherine Summ.

Old Business

V. Consent Agenda:

- a. November 18, 2020 Full Council Minutes

Nachi approved and Catherine seconds all in favor and minutes accepted.

VI. Executive Committee Report

a. Meeting Updates

Tammy reviews a summary of what has been happening with this committee since last meeting.

b. Annual Report Presentation

Tammy reviews annual report PowerPoint with te

New Business

VII. Round Table

a. Agency Updates

Mike Nunes (DOC)

Catherine Summ (ADS-BESB) talks about new ideas that they continue to implement post COVID even when homebound and can't be together in person. March 25 tentatively scheduled remote networking opportunity to learn about resources for families. National and state

Nachi Bhatt (DCF) continues mission in remote and in person agency work. Thanks tammy to frame remote learning review and DCF wants to note they appreciate communication with districts and educators.

Brian Smith (DDS)

Jane Hampton (CPAC) regression update. 3 trends seeing prominently ...high needs criteria being set by districts conflicts with parents who feel they are, students with both general education and IEP instruction, CPAC offering youth and student panels.

Jeff Spahr

Ana Wittig (CAPSEF) problems identifying who is high need. Criteria doesn't always fit the bill

Joan Nicole-Senft (Higher Education)

Kasey Considine (Disability Rights) DRCT has received calls from students who did not receive the services in their IEP/could not access the services in their IEPs during the initial COVID classroom closure and who have now aged out. They were awarded comp ed but because of limitations to the provision of in-person services, there is a question of where students can receive these comp education services. When it comes to comp education that was awarded because students couldn't access what was provided remotely, where can a student go to get that in person once they've aged out? The longer we are in this pandemic the more students we may have in this situation. It would be helpful if there could be some proactive identification of places where these students receive these comp ed services, and

perhaps because of the age of this group, it might be helpful for there to be coordination between BSE and DDS on this.

b. Break (10/15min break)

c. Parent Updates

Monica Hatton: Talks about hearing that services are not being provided properly. She is worried about districts that are not well funded if this is pattern of better-funded districts. Also, regression with distance learning and

Doris Maldonado: Telehealth and instruction as far as IDEA supports and services not being provided. Talks about free internet as a civil right that needs to be worked on in regards to online learning. People are being subject to try and get to hotspots and places are closed due to COVID. Also mentions homelessness and families being affected and impacts.

Missy Wrigley: Remote learning at high school level concerns and not being able to contact families. Concern that this is not all about access to online education may be more a concern of not wanting to attend. Cautious and look at individual districts about going into remote learning and not something that all should do because another does.

Tom Cosker: Parent concern on IEP implementation plan from parents and districts. Need for flexibility is critically important on in person versus remote learning.

Jon Metcalf: Parents are looking for organizations and opportunities for social skill development during the pandemic.

VIII. Special Education Division Director Report

a. CT-SEDS Update

Bryan reviews where we are with the CT Special Education Data System (SEDS) where the SDE will house forms and data while making the site translatable to several languages.

b. Learning Model IEP Implementation Plan Review

Bryan reviews this process and talks BSE audits and timing to begin is looking like they will start later this month. Responded to Doris's question on mobile phone accessibility.

c. Dispute Resolution Update

Mary Jean discussed dispute process during COVID. Issues related to the pandemic and noticed that less filing and hearings all across the country. Normal activity but not COVID related. Families probably overwhelmed and the situation is continuing and last year we predicted this would be in the past. The nature of the pandemic does not let you request processes when things have not returned to normal.

Goes on to discuss hearing decisions with the Council. Talks about what hearing officers found important and mentions nothing binding and know different offices can have different results. Talks about to hearings in particular: student and autism related disability and aging out in regards to 22 years of age.

Mary Jean goes on to answer Council member questions and the Council will respond to SDE with any additional questions they have to be answered in the meeting follow up email that goes to the full Council.

IX. Action Items

X. Adjourn/Break (11:30 am.)

XI. Legislative Committee Meeting: (12:30 pm.)

Members meet in breakout room. Agenda posted and minutes taken.

XII. Membership Committee Meeting: (12:30 pm.)

Members meet in breakout room. Agenda posted and minutes taken.

XIII. Priority Break Out Session: (1:00 pm.)

Started at 1:

- i. Special Education Policies and Procedures related to COVID-19
- ii. Best Practice Strategies Remote Learning
- iii. Least Restrictive Environment

XIV. Adjourn (2:30 pm.)

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)		9:00-3:00	TBD
5.	May 12, 2021		1:00-5:00	TBD