

STATE ADVISORY COUNCIL ON SPECIAL EDUCATION (SAC)

Regular Meeting

April 20, 2011

2:30 PM – 5:00 PM

State Office Building, Room 307A
165 Capitol Avenue
Hartford, CT 06106

AGENDA

I. Call to Order

Burke

Members Present: Ana Acevedo, Michelle Bidwell, John Burke, Donna Cambria, Rep. Daniel Carter, Joanna Cooper, Sheila Crocker, Beth Hart, Stephanie Johnson, Uswah A. Khan, James McGaughey, Christine Murphy, Katherine Musto, Kelly Neyra, Charlyne Olko, Nancy Prescott, Marcus Rivera, Brenda Sullivan, Julie Swanson, Nancy L. Taylor, Fernando Tiago

CSDE/SERC: Marcus Rivera, Sarah Harvey, Terry DeFrancis, Linda Adorno and Nikki Hendry

Member Informed Absence: Ann Marie Cullinan, Richard Douglas, Catherine Foley Geib, Benjamin Strong

Mr. Burke called the meeting to order at 2:30. Members and guests introduced themselves.

II. Report of the Chair

If SAC members have recommendations for the full SAC to consider, as a result of their committee work, they may email Mr. Burke and Mr. Rivera their suggestions and Mr. Burke and Mr. Rivera will review with the Executive Committee and the full SAC.

III. Report of the Bureau Chief

Ms. Harvey of the Bureau of Special Education offered this presentation on Ms. Thompson's behalf. Ms. Thompson had to attend to other state matters out of state and sent her regrets. The update included the following:

- CSDE sent clarification to OSEP regarding the 2010 State performance plan; e.g., clarified language, from "appropriate" to "in compliance" regarding policies/procedures/practices; added clear directions on navigating website.
- Letter on SRBI from Commissioner will be mailed to districts soon.
- May 19th CSDE holding a workgroup where parents can ask questions ; an audio conference will also take place on SRBI.
- June 8th Public Forum on SRBI at the Four Points Sheraton in Meriden.
- Focused Monitoring Visits to Lebanon, Groton, Putnam, Thomaston, Brooklyn,

Stratford, North Haven are in progress.

- ConnCASE leadership forum in March looked at case law. SAC members expressed interest in the outcomes here. Ms. DeFrancis shared that SERC collects evaluation forms; there was time for Q&A with districts.

IV. Items for Discussion

A. Annual State Application for Federal Fiscal Year 2011 under IDEA Part B

- Terri DeFrancis shared information from the handout on the Annual State Application for Federal Fiscal Year 2011.
- Pages 15-16 compare IDEA and State policies and practices.

B. Proposed Revisions to the Procedural Safeguards

- Document is easier to read; used OSEP model.
- Districts can hand out the procedural safeguards electronically which will likely take effect July 1, 2011.
- Used OSEP definition for "school district."
- Document clarifies initial consent for placement vs. initial consent for special education.
- Held two public hearings about the safeguards- received no comments or any testimony.
- SAC members wanted to ensure that the procedural safeguards will be translated into Spanish; this was confirmed.
- SAC members sought clarification on Part B "optional authorized activities," and parent refusal of child's special education identification.
- SAC members thanked Ms. DeFrancis and the Bureau for making the document more comprehensible.

Burke

Burke

Rivera

C. Overview of the General Supervision System (3:05pm)

- Sarah Harvey shared a PowerPoint presentation on the General Supervision System. The system for identification and correction of noncompliance were discussed.
- SAC members requested and received clarification on timelines, and the distinction between individual and systemic noncompliance and settlement agreements.
- SAC members discussed the important value of visiting districts and reviewing records. They raised concerns about parents settling outside of due process; i.e., not making informed decisions.
- Sarah Harvey will attend a few SAC meetings to help the SAC prepare for the conference call with the Office of Special Education Programs.

D. CSDE Annual Performance Report: SAC Executive Committee Review

- Shared out the CT performance summary for SPP targets.
- SAC members shared their involvement in stakeholder groups to set targets and review improvement activities.
- Questions about indicators can be emailed to Mr. Burke and Mr. Rivera. Current questions will be reviewed with the Bureau of Special Education, SAC Executive Committee, and the full SAC. SAC members are invited to attend SAC Executive Committee meetings.

E. SAC 2010-11 Priority Areas and Proposed Ad-Hoc Committees

Dr. Burke directed members and guests to the handout on Ad-Hoc Committees. SAC members discussed their priorities for 2010-11 and participation on committees.

1. **Complaint Resolution and Due Process**—continue to address 2009-10 issues. Ms. Sullivan will chair this committee.
2. **SRBI Tenets, Implementation and Referral to Special Education**—Ms. Johnson will Chair this committee.
3. **Accountability in Approved Private Special Education Programs**—to what extent are these programs held to the same standards as public schools from a programmatic unit? Are data collections comparable to public schools? Are there indicators that show progress on goals and objectives? Dr. Burke will chair this committee; members— Ms. Acevedo, Ms. Cullinan, Rep. Carter, and Ms. Bidwell.
4. **Suspensions and Expulsions**—suspension and expulsion vs. districts looking at root causes of behavior. Use of Functional Behavioral Assessments. Are school administrators using the local police department to deal with behaviors? Mr. McGaughey will chair; members— Ms. Olko, Mr. Douglas, and Ms. Cambria.
5. **Bullying and Students with Disabilities**—Examine current concerns and needs with regard to bullying and school climate. Coordinate with SAC Legislative Committee around legislation; examine national and state data; acceptance of race and diversity. Dr. Burke, chair; members— Ms. Hart, Ms. Swanson, Ms. Musto, Ms. Khan, and Ms. Cooper have shown interest in this committee.

Committees should think about essential questions, data they might need, and set dates as soon as possible so meetings can be posted.

Assignment to an SPP indicator means that you work with the CSDE consultant attached. Most have work groups already established. SAC members should look at the lens of unmet needs related to indicators.

F. Draft Calendar of SAC Activities and Advisory Areas: March-December 2011

Members will have regular opportunities to share updates from committees/groups. If members need more time for items, please let the SAC

Executive Committee know so they can build more time in the agenda.

I. SAC By-Laws and Operating Guidelines – Update

The Executive Committee is reviewing current legislative authorization for SAC appointments and the by-laws language concerning “members at large.” The SAC is interested in codifying SAC member participation from the CT Parent Advocacy Center, the Office of Protection and Advocacy and the Bureau of Rehabilitative Services.

J. Committee Reports

1. **Executive** – Regular meetings held to follow up on SAC recommendations.
2. **Legislative** – Ms. Sullivan updated the SAC on legislative proposals, the investigative work of the committee, and work with the SAC Executive Committee.
3. **Membership** – Ms. Bidwell and committee members are meeting to address vacancies.
4. **Other Committees: BESB**– Ms. Sullivan reported on legislative concerns. **Transition Task Force**– Ms. Musto shared that the National meeting is in May; she will update the SAC at a later date.
5. **State Performance Plan Stakeholder Groups: Parent Indicator**–Ms. Bidwell shared on the work regarding the Parent Indicator and the upcoming forum.

K. SAC Regular Meeting Dec. 14, 2011, 2:30-5:00PM, Rm 307A, State Office Building, Hartford

L. SAC Website – Mr. Rivera is working with SERC and the SAC Executive Committee to roll-out in May/June. Mr. Rivera shared information that will be posted.

V. Items Requiring Action (4:35pm)

A. Consideration of Minutes of March 16, 2011 SAC Regular Meeting

B. SAC 2010-11 Priority Areas

C. Ad-Hoc Committees and Appointments

Ms. Musto moved and Ms. Sullivan seconded to accept proposed names and proposed ad hoc committees and new amendments to the ad hoc committee membership.

>VOTE: 17 in favor

0 abstentions

None opposed

Motion Carried Unanimously.

D. Other Appointments: Executive Committee, Member-at-Large, Other

VI. Other Items – none.

VII. Public Participation. No one signed up to speak.

VIII. Adjournment at 5:06 pm.