

Council on Education Services for Exceptional Children
January 13, 2016
Conference Call

After much technical difficulty, the scheduled webinar changed to a conference call.

Chairperson Nicole Jimerson began by taking a roll call of members. There was also attendance by members of the public.

Roll:

Tim Montgomery

Heather Grant

Barefoot – no

Riddle-no

Teresa Mebane

Laura Hall

Dale Carpenter

Vicki Simmons

Lisa Phillips

Susan Humbert

Mary LaCorte

Greg Singleton

Gina Smith

Katie Holler – joined later

Jennifer Grady

Jennifer Degen

Rick Smith

Bill Hussey

Staff:

Martez Hill

Katie Cornetto

Laura Crumpler

Carol Ann Hudgens

Heather Ouzts

Tish Bynum

Nicole opened the meeting by stating the purpose is to discuss and vote on the final draft statement regarding proposed policy changes that was presented by the Council's Executive Committee to the State Board of Education. In order to start the process, first a motion needs to be made to accept the statement as written; then the meeting will be open to discussion and voting. A motion was made and seconded.

The floor is open to discussion and any person that would like to share information may do so.

Mary LaCorte- I have a few concerns and recalls that the initial invitation indicated there would not be any discussion and wants to verify now discussion is available. [Nicole – yes.] In the document's first

paragraph, this is a process to determine eligibility and document does not say that. Second paragraph's last sentence needs some wordsmithing....because the fact that MTSS requires examination of instruction, curriculum and environment. It's actually a result of that examination that helps determine or identify the reason students are struggling. [Gina agrees.] Going down to potentially legal implications; first line, if someone else did not know differently, it sounds like that there are recent changes to federal SLD definition; second sentence by altering the federal definition and the state's child find obligations, the proposed policy changes, etc. It almost sounds like the proposed policy change is making some alteration to federal definition and child find obligation. I feel from a strong educational and advocacy point of view, if you want someone to learn something, if they don't already know it, and we can't assume the SBE members know, the full definition as written in IDEA is very powerful in helping someone understand why this is so important. So I thought Council may consider putting in full definition. On second page under secondary settings, the third sentence is unclear – something is missing. I appreciate the Executive Committee's time and effort taken in crafting this document, even though it may not quite be ready for prime time.

Gina – I have some of the same concerns as Mary – first page leading to assumptions that something has been changed and agrees that the full definition does really speak to the why and purpose of MTSS. I believe on the stakeholder group there were special education attorneys and district level personnel that have reviewed the proposed *Policies* change and believe it's redundant and duplication of work to SBE that a round table discussion take place. Another concern is the detail of the recommendation exceeds the role of the advisory board and don't feel like the recommendations reflect a broad view of the conversations of Council and do not represent the entire view of the Council.

Katie Holler – joined late and has a short time to participate.

Nicole – trying to capture some of this – recommendations beyond the role of the Council?

Gina - There are things we discussed in small group such as support for DPI and implementation of MTSS and broader recommendations that would allow the State Board to know that DPI was going to need some support and ensure they have enough people. I believe DPI provides the guidance and the steps and the way we do it is more on the LEA.

Nicole – I'm not sure how to respond. I am trying to capture Gina's comments.

Katie Holler – I believe the statement captures part of the concerns of parents and self-advocates. It does not necessarily mean that they can speak with same authority as entities experienced in delivery of services, but it is my understanding the statement is meant to reflect the feelings of the people that sit on the Council and I think it is important to voice those concerns. It does not mean that's what the Board is going to go with 110%, but it is important that we verbalize these things and look at all of our experiences and give all of our experiences weight and the voice it deserves.

Nicole – we've heard from Mary, Gina and Katie. Is there another Council member that would like to voice his/her concerns or recommendations as far as the statement is concerned?

Laura - Is there objection in general, in the second paragraph, to putting in the whole law – is there a problem with that?

Nicole - I don't necessarily see that as a problem and what we can do isis Katie available?

Vicki Simmons – I think the initial concern was the length of the document and the committee was trying to keep the document to two pages - that’s why the citation was listed.

Katie Cornetto – Nicole, you asked if I could speak and I’m happy to do so – I think the question is whether to put the entire definition in the document; I think it is best to actually have an appendix with the entire definition instead of having it embedded into the actual document.

Dale C – I think the main question is what’s in bold in the document that the Council supports is in bold on the document on the first page. I understand wordsmith concerns and certain parts of the doc but I’m going to be supportive of what’s in bold. When we come to a vote, I’m going to be supportive of what’s in bold and say yes to that. As far as wordsmithing the doc, it could last until sometime next year. Before leaving the conference call today, if we could get to a vote and then figure out how to handle the amendments and appendix, but I just want to say I’d be in support of what’s in bold in the document.

Tim M - I think this is a good time to ask for a vote on the original motion as stated and see where we stand after that vote and before decisions are made relative to changes. I’d like to call a vote on the statement as written.

Nicole – At this time we will take a vote – accept final draft of the statement as written by the executive committee submitted to the SBE as written:

Member	Yes	No
Montgomery	X	
Grant		
Barefoot		
Riddell		
Mebane	X	
Hall	X	
Carpenter	X	
Simmons	X	
Phillips	x	
Humbert	X	
LaCorte		X
Singleton	X	
G Smith		X
Holler	X	
Grady	X	
Degen	X	
R Smith	X	
McNeill		
Pharr		
Hussey	Abstain	

Nicole- The “yeas” have it and the motion is carried. At this point I want to look to Katie C to follow-up this process. Can you tell us, please, as far as the wordsmithing and including the appendix, please tell us how to proceed?

Katie - My recommendation is to include an appendix with entire definition and reference it in the document and to the extent that nothing materially changes the doc, submit it to the SBE with the appendix. I heard basically support for the motion to take the draft document presented or submitted to SBE in January to the February SBE meeting. Sounds like you'll be asked to present to the SBE on behalf of the Council and be available to answer questions from SBE members themselves.

Mary LaCorte clarified with Katie C. that the vote was to accept the document as written even with some concerns of inaccuracies. Katie C. confirmed that the document was accepted as written. If there are individual remarks that Council members, or the public, want to make directly to SBE members, everyone is free to write to SBE about the proposed policy or the document being submitted.

Dale – I voted on doc as written and I think I voted that way to move it along. Would the group be willing to correct, introduce motion to correct errors of fact, that don't over rule what's there/

Nicole believes that's what Katie C. said a minute ago, as long as content is not change so much. Nicole said she did not receive Mary's submitted concerns. Mary can't confirm or deny receipt of concerns from her home computer. Mary thanked Dale for the consideration and she thinks what Katie C. said was it was fine to submit the document with the appendix with the full definition. Some statements are inaccurate and lead to inaccurate conclusions and it's always best to be as clear as possible.

Nicole requested Mary to submit them, but Mary realizes the decision has been made and that's part of being a group.

Gina - I applaud Mary for the well-stated comment and this speaks to process for the future. This document has been emotionally charged and lends itself to a lot of different views and as we go forward as a Council we probably need to refine our process and may need to support the Executive Committee more in order to get items in front of the Council for a final time before submitting to SBE. Gina would take that responsibility very seriously so we don't end up in a situation where some members feel that what is going forward is not necessarily accurate and making sure we have the best possible and professional representation of all voices based on fact.

Nicole - I believe the process has been mapped out clearly in the past couple of meetings and think that what threw this off was the item was placed on the agenda long before we actually were told it would be so as we were expecting it to show up at the SBE in Feb or March, it actually went before the SBE on Jan. 6. So at that point, that's when the Executive Committee had to step in and ensure that our voices were heard and I commend them and they were there prepared and hands on when they didn't have to be because I believe we found out about this when everyone was on holiday break for Christmas. So I applaud the Executive Committee and their work, but you are right, the process in itself could be possibly refined and even more so the communication between several parties. We'll address this in another area, but the communication needs to be there. The communication needs to be as forthcoming as possible and delivered in such a manner that the Council can trust and feel appropriately informed of what's actually going on. The Council as a body did vote and approve the Sept. meeting minutes. The Sept. meeting minutes did outline the content of recommendations that the Council wanted to see in the document. The Executive Committee relied on information in the minutes to help

guide the writing of the document. There are several issues we need to address and we will, but we did not have the time we thought.

Gina - A lesson learned in this for all of us is that we do not have control over the SBE and so if we want to have future opportunities like this, which I believe is one of the goals of the Council, to be more involved and represent families and students more closely, the Council will have to be more thoughtful.

Nicole – Communication is one of the things that we are really working on and I feel confident and comfortable where we are in this process in establishing our own relationship and line of communication directly with SBE members so Council will be informed and have the ability to reach out and get the information needed. I believe if the communication were there maybe things would have been different. Even so, the Board representatives have been fantastic in supporting us and wanting to hear what we have to say. There are areas of improvement but I think we're getting there and definitely on the right track.

Any more comments? Vicki questioned Mary's comment regarding inaccuracies and stated the document was proofread many, many times and she would be horrified if there were any inaccuracies and to please help us. Mary thanked Vicki and acknowledged the Executive Committee's time and effort into the document. For Mary, it was the lack of opportunity for discussion prior to submission and believes the process can be more refined and the Council will continue to work on communication and work on processes. Mary is always willing to help.

Susan Humbert – shared with Mary that Nicole was really good about getting back to people and obviously your email did not come through because if you had sent information and Nicole received it, Nicole always responds with an acknowledgement or thank you or we'll put this into consideration. Susan suggest if something is sent to Nicole with no response that you double check.

Nicole- Any more comments/questions or concerns? If not, is there a motion to adjourn. Motion to adjourn (Vicki) and seconded (male).