

COUNCIL ON EDUCATIONAL SERVICES FOR EXCEPTIONAL CHILDREN

March 20, 2014
Meeting Minutes

Members - Present

Chad	Barefoot (via Blake Perry)
Melvin	Diggs
Melanie	Hester
Susan	Humbert
Nicole	Jimerson
Mary	LaCorte
Carla	McNeill
Rob	McOuat
Teresa	Mebane
Daphne	Peacock
Martin	Pharr
Lisa	Phillips
Jill	Scercy
Vicki	Simmons
Rickey	Smith
Judy	Williams

Visitors

Georgia	Gamcsik
Leanna	George
Sheri	Harris
Portia	Maynor
Cheryl	Posner-Cahill
Gerri	Smith

Members - Absent

Katherine	Allison
Stephen	Brechbiel
Pearl	Burris-Floyd
Mark	Ezell
Tammy	Holland
Cathy	Kea
Patricia	Naylor

Staff

Tish	Bynum
Carol Ann	Hudgens
William	Hussey
Mary	Jarrett
Leigh	Mobley
Ira	Wolfe

New Member Orientation

Jill Scercy, Chairperson, reviewed the Bylaws and purpose of the Council with new members. Orientation materials included NC Policies, current membership contact list, and special education acronyms.

Welcome, Review Agenda, Review December Meeting Minutes

Jill Scercy, Chairperson, opened the meeting by welcoming members and guests. Participants provided self introductions and their role on the Council. Jill announced a small time change for the agenda.

Member vacancies were discussed as well as the process of submitting recommendations to the State Board of Education (SBE). A suggestion was added that more parent representation should be added to the Council.

Jill announced that Ira Wolfe will retire May 1. The Council acknowledged her contributions over the years to the Council.

Agency Updates

Bill Hussey, Director of the Exceptional Children Division, updated the Council on the following:

An IEP Review Committee comprised of a variety of stakeholders, including Council and parent representation, will meet on March 27. The purpose is to take an overall look at the IEP in order to meet federal compliance laws, simplify the IEP for comprehension for lay persons, as well as professionals, and the mechanics (paperwork) of the IEP. DEC 5 Prior Written Notice is a key issue to review. Because of compliance issues and striving to do everything right, people may be missing the real purpose of individual education plans for each child to be successful. This meeting will also generate conversation on how to truly differentiate instruction within the IEP and translating IEP components into the regular education classroom. Training on how to teach the defined differentiated instruction will be a final product of this committee.

The first annual Stakeholder Summit will be April 10 in Greensboro. The Summit will consist of stakeholders from across the state and various other elements of special education. The purpose is to develop a stakeholder vision and mission statement and develop formal and informal communication plan to discuss, resolve and attempt to prevent major problems before they occur. In between the annual Summit, there will be ongoing smaller group meetings feeding into the annual Summit.

Specific Learning Disability (SLD) – the definition will change to reflect the moving away from the 15-point discrepancy. Subcommittees are starting now and hopefully there will be public comment on the changes in January with stakeholder groups providing feedback. The change is targeted to go to the SBE in May for discussion and June for action. Responsiveness to Instruction (RtI) / Multi-tiered System of Support (MTSS) will have an impact. The changes will center on a five-year plan for K-8. High school roll-out will occur afterward.

Occupational Course of Study (OCS) – The OCS work group is reviewing supports to provide LEA when recommending students for the Occupational Course of Study. This is important since the elimination of NCEXTEND2 and the requirement that students in OCS take the regular End-of-Course assessments with the same standards for Math1, English 1 and English 2.

Read to Achieve – is not technically a special education issue but ends up encompassing special education students. Currently the stance is EC students (except Extend1 students) must participate the same as the general population. EC students must be included in the accountability model and expectations.

Directors Advisory Committee wants to include as many special education students as possible in all assessment and activities without being retained. There is no social-emotional assessment. There is also the larger philosophical question of retention in general.

Each District is creating alternate assessment to determine student proficiency. The measure of accountability changed from a 4 to 5 level system. In a 5 level system, 11% of students that were previously a 2 will now become a 3. This equates to 39% of students not passing.

Summer Reading Camp costs do include students with disabilities. Summer Reading Camp teachers are highly qualified. Each District will determine the hiring/selection process. Most Districts would probably select teachers that have performed well in moving their students forward.

Summer Reading Camp is not Extended School Year (ESY). LEAs also make their own decision regarding providing summer school – which is totally different than Summer Reading Camp and Extended School Year.

It is requested that EC students have access to all parts of the program-Summer Reading Camp, transitional classes, etc. but not be retained. Qualifications of teachers and class size: HQ teachers, each district determines hiring/selection process; most districts would probably select teachers that have performed well in moving students forward.

EC Scholarships - children identified as EC in an LEA who are in a private school setting are now requesting re-evaluations. LEAs are required to do re-evaluations. There are funds to support the work of the school psychologist. The process to get the money from the Dept of Revenue to DPI to the LEA is unsure at this time.

Policies Changes / Public Comment

There are three proposed changes to *Policies*: amending the definition of Autism; changing the language related to the requirements for obtaining parents' consent to access their public insurance; and removing language related to the requirements of the modified achievement standard.

The Council discussed the proposed changes to provide a collective comment relative to amending the definition of Autism that there is still a need for examples of the diagnoses (*Policies/Guiding Practices*) to assist practitioners in the field and to consider expanding "Autism" to "Autism Spectrum Disorder" as the disability category to encompass all areas.

The Council also commented that a change in the language related to the requirements for obtaining parents' consent to access their public insurance include a statement that a Medicaid cap on the number of sessions does not preclude the IDEA requirement for FAPE.

Establish Committee Task

In preparation for inviting SBE members to a Council meeting, each committee's task was to create bullet points of purpose/focus and what the SBE should know relative to each committee. These same points will be included in the letter of invitation.

Committee Work

- a. Council members signed up to attend monthly SBE meetings with the exception of October, November and December.
- b. State Board Presentation
Jill will prepare a letter of invitation to SBE that describes the Council purpose and function.
- c. Public Comment on *Policies* – was summarized from Council and submitted to Ira Wolfe.

Miscellaneous

The Council inquired about the following:

Teacher evaluation tool – AIG, EC, ESL teachers– DPI is aware that AIG, EC, and ESL teachers do not fit into the current definition for the evaluation tool. Conversations are starting on how to differentiate for these teachers.

OCS data tracking – OCS data is very difficult to obtain. There is consideration to survey LEAs for data. There is an RFP for statewide EC data system. One change forthcoming is to obtain OCS data.

A lot of families have graduates without a diploma because of not meeting work hours. There is not a specific timeframe associated with completing the work hours. There is a lack of accountability present in LEAs for overseeing work hours.