

Special Education Advisory Panel
April 15, 2005
Minutes

Members Present

Jeaneal Alexander	Kent Kolaga	Richard Staley
Tamara Arthaud	Cathy Meyer	Theresa Valdes
Melodie Friedebach	Deana O'Brien	Stephen Viola
Dennis Gragg	Lynda Roberts	Ray Wicks
Trish Grassa	Joe Sartorius	Shirley Woods
Eileen Huth	Mary Kay Savage	Joan Zavitsky
Patricia Jackson	Barbara Scheidegger	

Members Not Present

Dan Colgan	Amy James	Patti Simcosky
Nan Davis	Rebecca Largent	Pam Walls
Michael Hanrahan	Eric Remelius	

DESE Staff Present

Debby Parsons	Karen Allan	Angie Nickell
Mary Corey	Dale Ridder	

Call to Order/Introductions/Approval of Minutes – Joe Sartorius called the meeting to order at 9:05 a.m. Joe indicated that Rebecca Largent was added to the rules and regulations subcommittee and Amy James was added to the monitoring subcommittee. Cathy Meyer made a motion to approve the minutes as written. Joan Zavitsky seconded the motion. Motion passed.

Formal Recommendations - Kent Kolaga handed out a copy of formal recommendation #10 for the panel to review. The Division will include, as part of their response to this formal recommendation, a suggestion to change the word “deficient” to “out of compliance” and that the language from the two goals be added.

Comments from the Public - No public comments.

DESE Update

Budget/Legislative Update - Melodie Friedebach indicated that the school foundation formula has been a big topic at the state capitol for the past couple weeks.

Senate Bill 481 is sponsored by Senator Shields and if passed will update the definition of severely handicapped and create the three times fund (disability and placement neutral). If it passes, there will be one more year of reimbursement based on the Lewis decision and then the three times fund will begin in FY 07.

House Bill 276 is currently in the Senate. It contains the state statute changes based on the Reauthorized IDEA to keep the state in compliance with federal law.

Senate Bill 500 is the First Steps legislation. It appears the funding was restored and that the two major changes include parents paying a co-pay (sliding fee scale) and insurance companies being billed. It would also put the program into state statute.

OSEP Update – Joe Sartorius indicated that he, Melodie Friedebach, and Pam Williams attended the OSEP conference in March. OSEP is reviewing Missouri’s Annual Performance Report (APR). OSEP will send their response to DESE and DESE will need to reply to the areas of deficiency identified by OSEP. The Advisory Panel is to assist in this process and to advise DESE on how to meet these requirements.

Joe Sartorius talked with Mike Sharp, the new director at NCRRC, and Mike indicated that they would be willing to send someone to attend the June Panel meeting to assist the Panel in determining the areas of unmet needs. Due to NCRRC's attendance at the June meeting, the date was changed to June 23 (1:00-4:00) and June 24 (9:00-4:00).

Melodie indicated that DESE must have all regulation changes from the Reauthorized IDEA in place by June 30, 2006. Currently DESE must sign and send in assurances that the state will be in compliance. DESE has made some statutory changes that will go into effect on August 28, 2005 (draft regulations will be available in May). DESE is waiting for the final regulations from OSEP before making additional statutory changes.

Debby Parsons, Kate Numerick, and Mary Kay Savage just returned from a conference on Part B and Part C in Atlanta, Georgia. Debby indicated that it took the OSEP conference a step farther. There is a checklist that indicates what states must have in place before they are able to sign the Assurance Statement. The law goes into effect July 1, 2005.

Mary Kay indicated that she was pleased with the presentation and appreciated the planning time that was built in for people to work together and plan. OSEP has created technical assistance briefs (one-pagers) to assist states.

Melodie indicated that Westat has a five year contract with OSEP to evaluate states' monitoring and review processes. It is a major study and not sure who will be chosen to participate.

APR Status – Mary Corey indicated that the APR has been submitted to OSEP. Each subcommittee chair (if present) was given a copy of the APR. If anyone else wants a copy, contact Mary. Mary indicated that she met with the evaluation subcommittee and briefly reviewed the APR. The evaluation subcommittee identified the other subcommittees (Programs and Evaluations) that need to review various portions of the report. The state performance plan (replacing the APR) must now be a six year plan (targets and improvements) and is due December 2005. It is very similar to APR but some of the terminology has changed. Each indicator will require DESE to define how it will be measured, the baseline data, establish measurable and rigorous targets, and improvement activities, timelines, and resources. Mary suggested that the subcommittees thoroughly review the performance (keep in mind that DESE has to develop targets and improvement strategies for the next six years).

Mary also indicated that one of the other requirements with the reauthorized IDEA is that DESE report annually to the public on district performance based on these indicators. Kent indicated that he wanted the charge for his subcommittee to be put in writing. Joe suggested that each committee look at certain areas of the APR. The monitoring subcommittee will look at the General Supervision Section. Mary will email information as to the specific pages/sections that the subcommittees will need to review to the subcommittee chairs.

Regulation Changes – The proposed State Plan changes and the schedule for the public hearings is listed on the Division's website (late April through the first of May).

SIG Grant Update – Karen Allan, Assistant Director, Effective Practices Section handed out a new brochure developed by the section on professional development. As part of the new SIG grant, districts (32 in transition and approximately 30 in elementary achievement) have been identified by the Division as having the greatest potential for improvement in performance. Of those districts, ten have been asked to pilot a process called focused monitoring. The special education consultants are working with these districts to analyze data and determine the improvements they need to make. District improvement plans are due to DESE by June 1.

Break for Subcommittee Meetings (approximately 45 minutes)

Subcommittee Reports

Evaluation

- Status of Annual Report – Lynda Roberts indicated that the annual report is complete and will be printed and disseminated. Most dissemination will be through the web with some hard copies sent to select groups. Lynda indicated that she is getting ready to start on next year's annual report. It

was suggested that the subcommittee chairs electronically send their reports to Joe Sartorius two weeks prior to the June panel meeting (primary issues targeted in the reports). If additional action is taken at the June meeting, they can amend their reports and submit by June 30.

Rules and Regulations

- IDEA Changes (Legislative and State Plan) – Deana O’Brien indicated that their subcommittee is reviewing the new reauthorized IDEA and state statutes (comments must be to Pam Williams by May 20). Deana urged panel members to review and send comments/suggestions to Pam Williams and to attend a public hearing to hear the comments from those attending. Deana O’Brien would like for the Rules and Regulations subcommittee to review proposed bills before they get to the legislative process.

Monitoring

- Formal Recommendations - Kent Kolaga handed out a summary of the current formal recommendations.
- Questions for Child Complaint Survey – The Division will draft questions and send to the subcommittee for them to review and present to the panel prior to the June Panel meeting.
- Kent indicated that he received a letter as chairman of the monitoring committee from a parent. The parent stated that they had sent a letter to DESE and had not received a response. The subcommittee is concerned by the lack of response and is proposing formal recommendation #11. Melodie Friedebach indicated that DESE responds to lots of letters, emails, and phone calls from parents and feels that this is an isolated incident. Formal recommendation #11 was accepted by the Panel.

Programs

- Effective Practices of Staff Development – The subcommittee had been asked whether or not professional development activities were responsible for the improvement at schools in their performance standards. Subcommittee members participated in a conference call with Karen Allan, Assistant Director, Effective Practices Section, and Angie Nickel, Supervisor, Effective Practices Section, to discuss what the EP Section is working on. The subcommittee determined that it is not known for certain that the staff development efforts are responsible for the performance results. There is a system in place to try and determine how effective the training is but it is very detailed and complex (so many factors involved). The subcommittee will continue to review and will make recommendations.

Nominations

- Current Vacancies for Parents – Barbara Scheidegger indicated that a letter was sent to charter schools in March regarding the charter school vacancy. Barbara also indicated that the subcommittee is working on having some parents appointed by the June meeting. Dennis Gragg resigned from the Panel but he suggested a replacement. Eric Remelius will be resigning at the end of his term in June. Nan Davis will also no longer be serving on the Panel.

Public Comment

Cathy Meyer indicated that after the last Panel meeting, the subcommittee was charged with planning how to proceed with the public forums. Cathy talked with Melodie trying to determine how to go about setting up the public forums. Mary Corey, Director, Data Coordination, indicated that due to the performance report needing stakeholder involvement, some focus groups may be established (to determine unmet needs). Joe Sartorius directed Cathy to hold off on setting up public forums until a clear direction is determined. Joan Zavitsky felt that public forums should be planned for the fall. Mary Kay Savage offered to assist Cathy.

New Business - Eileen Huth suggested that there be an orientation for new panel members (presented by the past Panel chair).

Future meetings – June 23 (1:00-4:00)-June 24 (9:00-4:00); August 19 (9:00-4:00); November 3 (1:00-4:00)-November 4 (9:00-4:00); and February 17 (9:00-4:00).

Adjournment - Pat Jackson made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Richard Staley seconded the motion. Meeting adjourned at 3:00 p.m.

NOTE: Working lunch was at 11:45 a.m.