

**STATE SPECIAL EDUCATION ADVISORY COUNCIL**  
**National Conference Center at the Holiday Inn**  
**399 Monmouth Street**  
**East Windsor, NJ 08520**

**MINUTES**

**Thursday, November 20, 2008**

**Members in attendance:** Dr. Sharon Maricle, Dr. Howard Lerner, Philip Gartlan, William Sellar, Scott Elliott, Katherine Roberson, Blanche Stetler, Carolyn Hayer, Kathleen Mullery, Michael Nevin, Angela Durso, Dr. Tracy Amerman

**Members not in attendance:** Debra Fernandez

**Resource Representatives in attendance:** Robert Paige, Debbie Stewart, Pauline Liscciotta (substituted for Elizabeth Collins)

**Resource Representatives not in attendance:** Gordon Reibman

**Guests and members of the public:** Sol Heckelman, Karen Antone, Lauren Agorutus

### **I. ACCEPTANCE OF OCTOBER MINUTES**

The meeting was officially called to order at 9:45 a.m. by Chairperson Sharon Maricle. The October minutes were approved and seconded. **All in favor.**

### **II. PRESENTATION: Preschool Expansion in New Jersey's Schools**

Dr. Vincent J. Costanza, from the New Jersey Department of Education, Division of Early Childhood Education began his presentation with a history of Preschool in New Jersey with an overview of the components of the Abbott Program past and present. He then discussed child, classroom and district assessment tools; their components and usage. Dr. Costanza shared with the Council how we as a State are doing with Preschool programming with respect to enrollment, teacher qualifications, and classroom quality.

The second portion of his presentation focused on the New Jersey Preschool Expansion initiative through the School Funding Reform Act of 2008. The Preschool Expansion Initiative is intended to provide services to all at-risk 3- and 4-year olds in universal and targeted preschools. Expansion will be fully implemented over six years with 30,000 more children, bringing enrollment to 70,000 preschoolers.

Dr. Costanza discussed the general program features, staffing requirements, unique features, the delivery system, and costs of the expansion. Additionally, Dr. Costanza discussed how preschool students with disabilities will be included in the initiative; Dr. Wohle distributed to the SSEAC members a memo clarifying the Preschool Expansion requirements as applied to preschool students with disabilities.

Lastly, Dr. Constanza provided an overview of the technical assistance mechanisms that NJDOE provides to districts regarding planning and implementing the new requirements

### **III. DIRECTOR'S UPDATE**

#### **Speech-language Specialist Certification:**

On November 19, 2008, the New Jersey State Board of Education voted to adopt the amendments to the regulations pertaining to teacher licensure and standards proposed at N.J.A.C. 6A:9, Professional Licensure and Standards. With regard to N.J.A.C. 6A:9-13.6(d), effective January 5, 2009, individuals holding a valid New Jersey speech correctionist endorsement may serve in a position requiring speech-language specialist certification until August 31, 2015, by which date they shall have obtained the speech language specialist endorsement or completed a Department-approved retraining program.

The deadline of August 31, 2015 provides ample time for speech correctionists to complete either a master's program for the standard speech-language specialist endorsement or the speech upgrade requirements in order to obtain the speech-language specialist equivalent certificate. The requirement regarding completion of seven years of work as a speech correctionist in a New Jersey school setting was removed in the adopted code amendment.

Dr. Wohle and other NJOSEP staff plan to schedule a meeting with the New Jersey Speech-Language-Hearing Association (NJSHA) and members of the higher education community to identify strategies for addressing the shortage of speech-language specialists.

#### **Local District Public Reports on State Performance Plan Indicators for 2006-2007:**

The NJOSEP posted the local district special education data profiles on its website on November 13, 2008 and notified the United States Department of Education of the posting at:

<http://www.nj.gov/education/specialed/sppi0607/> and <http://www.nj.gov/education/specialed/> .

During the initial embargo period, NJOSEP received approximately 50 telephone inquires from local school district representatives regarding the public reports. The majority of the calls pertained to Indicator 11-Child Find and Indicator 12-Early Childhood Transition. Based on the local district inquiries and documentation, it was determined that, inadvertently, the correct data files were not used to profile these indicators. NJOSEP extended the embargo period and reissued the profiles.

#### **New Jersey Core Curriculum Content Standards:**

The New Jersey Core Curriculum Content Standards are being revised. There will be an opportunity for public input regarding the revised standards. *21<sup>st</sup> Century Career and Life Skills* and *Comprehensive Health and Physical Education*, are two potential content areas relevant to issues of disability awareness. Dr. Wohle will notify SSEAC members when the CCCS are available for public review, with a specific focus on identifying links to social skill instruction and disability awareness. The NJDOE will also be posting classroom applications for implementing the standards.

#### **State Determination of Local District Compliance with Special Education Mandates:**

NJOSEP will issue determinations regarding local district compliance with special education requirements. Specifically, NJOSEP will consider the following factors in making its determinations of local districts:

- Whether the local district corrected noncompliance identified through monitoring activities or other general supervisory activities in a timely manner, including, but not limited to the following special education requirements:
  - Discipline policies, procedures, practices;
  - Disproportionate representation of racial and ethnic groups in special education and related services that is the result of inappropriate identification;
  - Disproportionate representation of racial and ethnic groups in special education in specific disability categories that is the result of inappropriate identification;
  - Children with parental consent who evaluate, who were evaluated within the State's established timeline;
  - Children referred by Part C prior to age three who were found eligible for Part B, and who have an IEP developed and implemented by their third birthdays;
  - Youth aged 16 and above with an IEP that includes coordinated, measurable, annual goals and transition services that will reasonably enable the student to meet the post-secondary goals;
- Whether the NJOSEP needed to provide ongoing oversight as part of its general supervision, to facilitate progress of the local district in correcting noncompliance
- Whether the local district was identified for "Significant Disproportionality" of specific racial/ethnic groups with regard to eligibility, placement, and/or disciplinary determinations, as indicated in its IDEA '09 grant notice

- Whether the local district was identified for the 2007-2008 self-assessment process based on the percentage of students with disabilities educated in separate public and/or private special education settings
- Whether the local district's data submissions were received by NJOSEP in a timely manner.

#### **Individualized Education Program (IEP) Goals and Objectives:**

Based on several requests for clarification, NJOSEP will issue guidance regarding goals and objectives in the IEP of students with disabilities being educated in a general education classroom. Dr. Wohle indicated that the NJOSEP has no policy or regulation that restricts, limits or precludes the writing of a measurable annual goal for students with disabilities being educated in a general education classroom. When developing a student's IEP, the IEP team first considers the general education curriculum for each subject area and the student's individual needs to ensure access to the general education curriculum in that subject. Additionally, the IEP team must consider the student's other educational needs. These considerations are made on an individual basis and may lead to a determination that annual goals and objectives should be included in the IEP of a student with a disability being educated in a general education class. In this regard the Learning Resource Center is conducting statewide training for directors of special education on "An Array of Supports" for students with disabilities being educated in general education settings. The training addresses the issue of goals and objectives for students with disabilities being educated in the general education setting. Dr. Wohle will share the clarification with the SSEAC.

#### **Meeting Announcement**

There will be a Stakeholder meeting on December 11, 2008 at the Learning Resource Center, Central in Dayton.

#### **IV. COUNCIL DISCUSSION**

The SSEAC Committee would like to see a monthly program on High School Redesign.

#### **V. MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC**

A parent addressed the Council seeking clarification about the APA and whether students in self-contained and resource rooms must take the APA. Dr. Wohle clarified that the determination of whether a student with a disability should take the APA is an IEP determination based on specific criteria and is not specific to a student's placement. It was further recommended that the parent contact the County Office of Education.

#### **VI. ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned at 12:20 p.m. Committees decided to meet and work during lunch. The next Council meeting is scheduled on December 18, 2008 at the Holiday Inn/National Conference Center in East Windsor.

#### **VII. LUNCH**