

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

MINUTES

Thursday, May 13, 2013

Members in attendance: Lauren Agoratus, Myriam Alizo, Dr. Tracy Amerman, Mary Ann Comparetto, Melanie McGacken, Bonni Rubin-Sugarman, Dr. Tekelah Sherrod, Dr. Dorothy Van Horn

Members not in attendance: Beth Kelley, Michael Nevin

Resource Representatives in attendance: Susan Avny, Suzanne Canuso, Alice Hunnicutt (for Karen Carroll), Tracy Nowlin

Guests and members of the public: Martha Brecher, Kathy Ehling, Sol Heckelman, Peg Kinsell, Donna Krenc, Amanda Leonard, Leslie Rubinstein, and six non-identified parents

I. ACCEPTANCE OF MAY MINUTES

The meeting was called to order at 10:05 a.m. by Chair, Dr. Tracy Amerman.

The minutes were reviewed. All in favor.

II. DIRECTORS UPDATE

Dr. Peggy McDonald announced that the New Jersey State Board of Education has placed the proposed changes to N.J.A.C. § 6A:14 on hold.

Dr. McDonald shared with the Council that the State Performance Plan (SPP) and the Annual Performance Report (APR) are currently in the "clarification" period and that the report is due back to the federal office by May 17, 2013. The determination letter from the federal office is expected in early June and determinations to the districts will be shared with New Jersey school districts in July. Dr. McDonald explained that the rubric for making the determinations has still not been decided upon by the federal office.

Dr. McDonald announced to the Council that one million dollars of grant money is being made available through the Regional Achievement Centers (RACs) via an NGO to improve Least Restrictive Environment (LRE) in focus and priority schools.

Dr. McDonald informed the Council that no notification had been received as of yet as to whether or not New Jersey was selected as a SWIFT grant recipient.

III. PRESENTATION

Kathy Ehling presented to the Council on New Jersey's Annual Performance Report (APR) and State Performance Plan (SPP). She shared with the Council what the reports cover as well as the process involved in the reporting of New Jersey's results. Mrs. Ehling showed the Council the integrated timetable and did an overview of each of the indicators. The current reports can be found on the Office of Special Education website at:

<http://www.state.nj.us/education/specialed/info/spp/apr/report7.pdf>
<http://www.state.nj.us/education/specialed/info/spp/spp.pdf>

IV. COUNCIL DISCUSSION

The Council reviewed the final draft of the letter of recommendations to N.J.A.C. § 6A:14 to be sent to the State Board of Education. With minor corrections, the Council voted and unanimously approved the letter.

The Council discussed the annual Parent Survey. Dr. Tekelah Sherrod asked if the Council could review the survey as a topic at a monthly SSEAC meeting. Dr. Bonni Rubin-Sugarman shared that she uses the survey results as a professional development activity with her staff.

V. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Martha Brecher inquired if links to presentations could be posted with the agenda on the website. She also asked a question about Transition Liaisons.

Five parents shared stories of dealing with their school districts on issues related to their child. Dr. McDonald asked if she could meet with them after the meeting to offer suggestions to address their concerns.

Peg Kinsell also asked about linking meeting materials to the website. She commented that she was disappointed in the final letter drafted by the Council. Ms. Kinsell inquired as to the rationale behind the State Board of Education's halting of discussion on N.J.A.C. § 6A:14. She also asked for clarification on proficiency outcomes for the end of course Biology test.

VI. LUNCH

VII. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 12:22 pm. The next meeting of the Council is scheduled for Thursday, June 13, 2013 at the Holiday Inn in East Windsor.