

# STATE SPECIAL EDUCATION ADVISORY COUNCIL

**Holiday Inn and the National Conference Center  
399 Monmouth Street  
East Windsor, New Jersey**

## **Meeting Minutes**

**Thursday, June 4, 2015**

**Members in attendance:** Lauren Agoratus, Myriam Alizo, Mary Ann Comparetto, Deborah Lynam, Beth Kelley, Melanie McGackin, Magaly Milton, Leslie Rubinstein, Tekelah Sherrod, Fred Tchang, Dorothy Van Horn

**Members not in attendance:** Susan Colacello, Peggy O'Reilly, Amy Smith

**Resource Representatives in attendance:** Daniel Frye, Alan Kotzen, Tracy Nowlin, Robert Paige

**Resource Representatives not in attendance:** Nancy Mimm

**Guests and members of the public:** Mike Flon, Melanie Kiely, Lacey family, Maria Lorenz, Sandra Lynch and two students, Christina Moreira

## **I. ACCEPTANCE OF MAY MINUTES**

The meeting was called to order at 9:38 a.m.

The minutes were reviewed and approved. All were in favor.

## **II. DIRECTORS UPDATE**

Dr. McDonald shared with the Council that the report by the *New Jersey Task Force on Improving Special Education for Public School Students* is almost completed.

Dr. McDonald reported to the Council that changes to the Braille Code have been made and would be shared in the weekly Broadcast Memo next week. The announcement for the summer training sessions for teachers on IEP's will also be in that Broadcast Memo.

Dr. McDonald reported that the revision to the PRISE was in final review and that an oral version will be posted to the OSEP website.

Dr. McDonald updated the Council on the status of the changes to be made to the core standards in New Jersey. The State Board of Education will announce the panel members that will be reviewing the nine content areas at their July meeting. She stressed that it is “status quo” until the new core standards are adopted by the State Board of Education.

Dr. McDonald announced that two new members were appointed to the State Special Education Advisory Council by the State Board of Education at their June meeting. They are Amy Smith from Autism New Jersey and Barbara Gantwerk from the New Jersey Principals and Supervisors Association/Foundation for Educational Administration.

### **III. PRESENTATION**

Students from Delaware Valley Regional High School and Bridgewater-Raritan Regional High School shared their stories with the Council. All of the students had presented to their peers at this year’s Dare to Dream Conferences.

### **IV. COUNCIL DISCUSSION**

Chairperson, Dr. Dorothy Van Horn proposed that the Council draft a letter to the Commissioner of Education requesting that a member of the State Special Education Advisory Council be appointed to the New Jersey Core Standards Task Force. Deborah Lynam, Dan Frye, Magaly Milton and Lauren Agoratus volunteered to work on the letter and to have it completed by the end of June as the State Board meeting will be held on July 1, 2015.

### **V. PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Mike Flom had several questions; the first, concerning guidance on Dyslexia screening and the second, concerning complaint investigation data. Dr. McDonald answered his inquiries.

Christina Moreira read a statement to the Council concerning standardized testing.

Marie Lorenz, the president of a Special Education Parent Advisory Group (SEPAG), shared issues and expressed concerns about district administration and the SEPAG.

### **VI. ADJOURNMENT**

The public portion of the meeting was adjourned at 11:38 a.m.

The next meeting of the Council is scheduled for Thursday, September 17, 2015 at the Holiday Inn and the National Conference Center in East Windsor, New Jersey.