

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

**Meeting Minutes**

**Thursday, March 19, 2015**

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

**Members not in attendance:** Beth Kelley, Peggy O'Reilly, Amy Smith

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

**Resource Representatives not in attendance:** Nancy Mimm, Robert Paige

**Guests and members of the public:** Lauren Bennett, Tatsiana DaGrosa, Bob Haugh, Sol Heckelman, Alnetta Hooper, Mary Ortner

**I. ACCEPTANCE OF FEBRUARY MINUTES**

The meeting was called to order at 9:42 a.m.

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

**II. DIRECTORS UPDATE**

Dr. McDonald updated the Council on the progress of the PARCC testing that is currently happening. There were several questions/comments about test accommodations by Council members.

Dr. McDonald discussed the current status of the *New Jersey Task Force on Improving Special Education for Public School Students* report.

Dr. McDonald shared with the Council the progress of the State Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP) that is due to the federal Office of Special Education on April 1, 2015.

### **III. PRESENTATION**

Rebecca Sieg, Assistant Director of Recruitment in the Office of Recruitment, Preparation and Recognition at the New Jersey Department of Education discussed with the Council the proposed changes to Administrative Code to enhance teacher preparation and certification. Her presentation focused on student teaching, novice teacher effectiveness, the alternate route to certification, data collection and teacher education programs.

Council members had several questions about student teaching hours, college and university education coursework, special education classroom experience, dyslexia courses, professional standards for teachers and licensure requirements.

### **IV. COUNCIL DISCUSSION**

Chair Van Horn shared with the Council information from the meeting with the Family Support Council.

Miriam provided Council members with information about the March 21, 2015 Inclusion Mini-Conference for Families. Dr. McDonald will be the keynote speaker.

Fred Tchang discussed potential collaboration between the State Special Education Advisory Council (SSEAC), Special Education Parent Advisory Groups (SEPAGs) and the Start Project from the State Parent Advocacy Network (SPAN).

### **V. PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Tatsiana DaGrosa shared with the Council her work with the SPAN Start Project and her interest in obtaining more information on teacher preparation/certification and requirements for substitute teaching.

Alnetta Hooper introduced herself as a parent and co-president of a SEPAG and as a first time Council attendee.

Sol Heckelman shared information about the upcoming School Psychologists conference. He gave an update on what is happening in the Trenton Public School District with staff rifting. He asked attendees to contact him if they heard about other school districts attempting to privatize services.

### **VI. ADJOURNMENT**

The public portion of the meeting was adjourned at 11:42 a.m.

The Transition and PARCC Committee's met over lunch.

The next meeting of the Council is scheduled for Thursday, April 16, 2015 at the Learning Resource Center-Central (LRC-C) in Trenton, New Jersey.