

# STATE SPECIAL EDUCATION ADVISORY COUNCIL

**Riverbank Charter School of Excellence  
4300 Hornberger Street  
Roebing, New Jersey**

## **Meeting Minutes**

**Thursday, November 17, 2016**

**Members in attendance:** Myriam Alizo, Paul Barbato, Susan Colacello, Mary Ann Comparetto, Beth Kelley, Deborah Lynam, Magaly Milton, Leslie Rubinstein, Amy Smith, Fred Tchang,

**Members not in attendance:** Barbara Gantwerk, Melanie McGackin, Chris Shamburg, Dorothy Van Horn

**Resource Representatives in attendance:** Donna Holzschuh, Eva Scott

**Resource Representatives not in attendance:** Dawn Mergen, Kelley Michalowski, Cheri Thompson

**Guests and members of the public:** Lauren Bennett, Lorelei Drew-Nevola, Debora Esposito, Sol Heckelman

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

The meeting was called to order by chair Deborah Lynam at 9:43 a.m.

The October minutes were reviewed. After being properly moved and seconded, they were approved unanimously.

### **II. DIRECTORS UPDATE**

John Worthington reported on the Stakeholder meeting held on October 26, 2016.

John Worthington shared with the Council that the Directors Manual is progressing and that 11 of the 12 components of the Model IEP has been completed.

John Worthington reported to the Council that he, Lorelei Drew-Nevola and Kathy Ehling would be attending a Cross-State Learning Collaborative (CSLC) meeting from November 30th to December 2<sup>nd</sup> in Texas.

John Worthington reported on a presentation he made at the NJAPSA/PSA Directors Meeting. There were many questions about the future of “Highly Qualified Teachers” in New Jersey as a result of ESSA.

John Worthington updated the Council on the last meeting of the Dyslexia Handbook work group. Because he was not in attendance, Deborah Lynam briefed the Council on the group's activities.

John Worthington shared that he will be attending a Directors Conference for the Northeast states.

John Worthington announced the Office of Special Education Programs will be hosting a Dispute Resolution Stakeholder Summit sometime in the spring of 2017.

John Worthington discussed with the Council the Supreme Court decision to hear a case out of the tenth circuit concerning FAPE. <https://www.disabilitycoop.com/2016/09/29/supreme-court-weigh-fape-mandate/22814/>

### **III. PRESENTATION**

Beth Kelley, Principal, Special Education Coordinator and State Special Education Advisory Council member gave an overview of the focus and daily activities of her school, the Riverbank Charter School of Excellence. She also discussed how special education services are provided within Charter Schools.

Dr. Katherine Czehut, Acting Director of the Office of Charter and Renaissance Schools at the New Jersey Department of Education provided a historical perspective on Charter Schools that included statewide statistical data. Additional information on Charter Schools in New Jersey can be found at: <http://www.nj.gov/education/chartsch/>

### **IV. COUNCIL DISCUSSION/ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Amy Smith asked for an update on the hiring process for the Ombudsman. She also inquired about the status of the Autism Specialist position. Lorelei Drew-Nevola, Manager of the Bureau of Program Development updated the Council about all current vacancies, as they are all within her bureau.

Amy Smith asked about the decision making process involved in issuing Guidance Memos. John provided information.

Magaly Milton led a Council discussion on testing (return policies, security, electronic tests, lack of feedback, rankings, etc.)

### **V. PUBLIC COMMENT**

Sol Heckelman spoke to the Council on restorative practices.

### **VI. ADJOURNMENT**

The public portion of the meeting was adjourned at 11:47 a.m.

The next meeting of the SSEAC is scheduled for Thursday, December 15, 2016 at the Holiday Inn and National Conference Center in East Windsor, New Jersey