

State Special Education Advisory Committee (SSEAC)

Meeting Minutes

July 18-19, 2013

Thursday, July 18, 2013

In attendance:

Present: Ms. Eva Aikins, Ms. Lori Jackson Black, Ms. Cynthia Bower, Mr. Jack Brandt, Ms. Christie Evanko, Ms. Fran Goforth, Ms. Kathryn Hayfield, Ms. Sandy Hermann, Dr. Scott Kizner, Ms. Erica Midboe, Mr. Darren Minarik, Ms. Frederique Vincent

Absent: Mr. Adam Amick, Ms. Paula Baker, Ms. Juselyn Bradshaw, Ms. Jackie Fagan, Mr. Brendan Folmar, Ms. Alison MacArthur, Ms. Jacqui Wilson

Ex-officio Member Present: Ms. Suzanne Bowers (PEATC)

Ex-officio Member Absent: Ms. Heidi Lawyer (VBPD)

Virginia Department of Education Representatives Present: Mr. John Eisenberg, Dr. Suzanne Creasey, Ms. Samantha Hollins, Mr. Hank Millward

Call to Order

Ms. Lori Jackson Black, Vice Chair, called the meeting to order at 9 a.m. Three new members, Mr. Jack Brandt, Ms. Frederique Vincent, and Ms. Erica Midboe, were introduced and then the rest of the committee introduced themselves.

Business Session

Approval of Agenda

The committee was directed to look over the agenda. **Ms. Christy Evanko made a motion to approve the agenda and Ms. Sandy Hermann seconded. There was no discussion and the motion passed unanimously.**

Approval of Minutes

The committee was asked to review the minutes for approval. Ms. Eva Aikins made a motion to approve the minutes and Mr. Darren Minarik seconded. The motion passed unanimously. There was a comment from a group member who liked the new layout of the attendance in the minutes. A suggestion was made to add the information regarding what area each member represents to the constituency report section.

Report on Follow-up to Public Comment from Previous Meeting

Two public comments were made at the prior meeting, both from universities regarding teacher licensure and regulations. The universities were sent letters thanking them for their comments and indicating that the SSEAC will be monitoring these regulations. It was noted that there will be a presentation regarding teacher licensure at this meeting.

New Officers and the Nominating Committee

New officers must be elected at the September meeting. The Chair appointed a nominating committee to meet over lunch to develop a slate of nominees. The Nominating Committee included Ms. Christy Evanko, Ms. Eva Aikins, Mr. Darren Minarik, and Ms. Lori Jackson Black.

Annual Report Submission

The current Executive Committee (Ms. Jackie Fagan, Ms. Lori Jackson Black, Ms. Christy Evanko, and Ms. Sandy Hermann) will meet on the Wednesday evening prior to the September meeting to develop a draft annual report to be presented to the full committee at the next meeting. It is required that the SSEAC provide a report to the Board of Education in October, and it is expected that a major focus at the next meeting will be the development of commendations and recommendations for inclusion in the report. If other members are interested in joining the small group, please contact Dr. Suzanne Creasey. This meeting will be open to the public.

Meeting Dates Proposed for 2014

Dates for 2014 SSEAC meetings were proposed by Mr. John Eisenberg. The proposed dates are April 3-4, July 17-18, September 18-19, and either November 20-21 or December 11-12. The discussion of the group leaned toward the December option. **Ms. Sandy Hermann made a motion to approve the following meeting dates: April 3-4, July 17-18, September 18-19, and December 11-12. Ms. Erica Midboe seconded. The motion passed unanimously.**

Assistant Superintendent's Report and Presentations

Procedures of the Board of Education

Presenter: Ms. Melissa Luchau, Director
Board Relations

Ms. Luchau provided a handout that summarized the procedures of the Board of Education. Guided by the handout, she shared information on the procedures. She highlighted common misconceptions that the board passes laws, runs local schools, funds schools, and hires superintendents – all of which are managed by other bodies. She also mentioned that public comment is instrumental in helping the board shape policies and that all feedback to the board is taken into consideration. She urged members to go to the Department of Education (DOE) Web site (<http://www.doe.virginia.gov/>) for more information.

Update – Applications received since April 2013 for Federal Funding from State Operated Programs (SOPs) for the 2013-2014 school year

Presenter: Ms. Tracie Coleman, Manager
Special Education Budget and Finance

Ms. Coleman distributed a handout highlighting the six organizations that were not discussed at the last meeting. Four of those have since submitted applications, but two have not and will not, due to closings. The regulations indicate that these must be reviewed with the SSEAC. It was noted that there is information regarding the closing of the training centers on

the Web site for the Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services (<http://www.dbhds.virginia.gov/>). The closings of those centers are directed by the General Assembly and not the Department of Education.

Assistant Superintendent's Report

Presenter: Mr. John Eisenberg, Assistant Superintendent
Special Education and Student Services

This summer, the Youth Academy held its seventh annual summit through the "I'm Determined" Project. The focus was on anti-bullying. Last year, Mr. Eisenberg challenged the youth to develop a proposal for an anti-bullying campaign. They did so, and Mr. Jack Brandt, who also now serves on this committee, is the project manager. Mr. Eisenberg showed the group a video developed for the campaign. The video is still in draft form, and will be edited to be shorter and offer a call to action. The plan is to make the video the opener for Disability Awareness Month. In addition, the I'm Determined youth will be developing lessons and activities across Elementary, Middle, and High school age groups, which will be packaged and given to every school division. 2013-2014 will be a planning year. In 2014-2015, the project will be tested and, finally, rolled out in 2015-2016. **Ms. Sandy Hermann made a motion asking Dr. Wright to strongly recommend that each school division open Disability Awareness Month with the video, as the department plans to do. Ms. Christy Evanko seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.** It was also noted that there are many speakers around the state who are available to speak to students. Local SEACs should contact the Department of Education if they are interested.

Mr. Eisenberg next presented the good news that the Charter School in Richmond was approved on July 15. The school will be placed at George Wythe High School. Students will be integrated in school life, including prom, lunch, athletic events, etc. The curriculum will be designed to prepare the students to work after graduation. Typically these students are staying in school until they are 22. This new program will be designed to stay within the Department of Education guidelines, but provide students with the skills they need to succeed after school, and graduate students after four or five years. Students will begin as freshman and will study academics for the first two years, with a focus on how to apply those academics to their lives. They will most likely receive the Special Education or Individualized Education Program (IEP) diploma upon graduation and will still have to participate in the state assessment program, such as the Virginia Alternate Assessment Program (VAAP), following the aligned standard of skills. Students will also receive instruction in communication and behavior and will not graduate without a mode of communication. The plan is that they will graduate into employment. The City of Richmond will receive a grant to run the school for five years. If the pilot is successful, it may be rolled out to other schools. After the first five years, Richmond will be required to take on the costs of running the school. The school will open in September 2013. Members asked if Richmond and Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU), who will be partnering with the city of Richmond school system, will share materials and information. Mr. Eisenberg was unsure. The name of the school will be Richmond Career Education Academy (RCEA).

The state met the requirements of the Annual Performance Outcomes for the second year in a row. Virginia is in compliance with IDEA and the outcome data are looking good. A letter comparing Virginia's outcome data to the rest of the country was distributed to members. The Achievement and Outcome subcommittees will be exploring this information further.

A member asked Mr. Eisenberg to discuss the new Private School Regulations, especially in regard to restraint and seclusion. Many wanted to put restraint and seclusion on the prohibited list. These practices are not allowed to be used unless a student is in danger of harming him/herself or others. There are eight criteria a student must meet, and prone restraints and aversives are prohibited. School personnel must be specifically trained to provide restraint and the parent must be notified. Restraint and seclusion cannot be part of a student's regular behavior plan. The new regulations are more explicit on this topic than they have been in the past.

Mr. Eisenberg also had a big announcement. A new center (similar to VCU Autism Center of Excellence) is being established to focus on transition to employment and post-secondary training. It will be called the Youth Transition Center and will be more comprehensive than the Training and Technical Assistance Centers (TTACs). The center will not just focus on severe disabilities but will serve all students with disabilities, especially those in underserved populations such as African-American and Hispanic students.

Report on Indicator #14: Virginia's Postschool Outcomes

Presenter: Ms. Liz Getzel, Director of Postsecondary Education Initiatives
VCU-RRTC

Ms. Getzel provided information on Indicator #14 which addresses the postschool outcomes for students with disabilities. A list of survey questions was shared and discussed. The survey is given to students with disabilities who have left school within a year, and asks what they are doing related to employment at the time, and this data is used for Indicator 14. If the person indicates they s/he is having trouble finding employment or attending post-secondary school, then the division contact will help him/her with that.

The group adjourned at 12 noon for lunch, and reconvened at 1:02 p.m.

Public Comment

Dr. Marla Crawford spoke regarding fraud and waste in exceptional education. She informed the SSEAC about instances of schools billing insurance companies, such as Medicaid, even when the child has been suspended and is not receiving services.

Ms. Ginny Bobby handed out a letter and read it to the group. The letter discussed grievances surrounding accessing services and the treatment of parents in Norfolk City Schools.

Presentations Continued

Proposed Licensure Regulations

Presenter: Dr. Mark Allen, Director, Office of Licensure and School Leadership

Dr. Allen reviewed the proposed changes in the regulations for teacher licensure. He highlighted where these are in the process, and that the process can take as long as a couple of years or more before adoption. He specifically addressed changes related to required licensure requirements related to those who teach or provide services to students with

disabilities. To ensure that SSEAC members can provide comment, Dr. Creasey will inform SSEAC members when the public comment period opens for these regulations.

Constituency Reports

Name	Report
Ms. Eva Aikins <i>Parent Representative, Region 6</i>	Region 6 continues to be concerned with budget cuts. In Danville, 3 elementary schools and 1 middle school are being closed. Parents have been assured that services will be provided at new schools for all children and for all disabilities. Autism among elementary students seems to be increasing. Vickie Jenkins, a Danville special education teacher of many years, was awarded the Jane Friend Award for 2013 by the Danville SEAC.
Mr. Adam Amick <i>People with Disabilities</i>	Absent, No Report
Ms. Paula Baker <i>Parent Representative, Region 8</i>	Absent, No Report
Ms. Cynthia Bauer <i>Foster Care (Department of Social Services)</i>	No Report
Ms. Jusolyn Bradshaw <i>Juvenile Justice</i>	Absent, No Report
Mr. Jack Brandt <i>People with Disabilities</i>	No Report
Ms. Christy Evanko <i>Parent Representative, Region 1</i>	Most Region 1 local SEACs are in hiatus right now. Hanover County recently submitted its annual report to the School Board and the recommendations were focused on inclusion, early identification, parent awareness/education, transition, and transportation. These topics were determined based on public comment and member discussions. Christy Evanko plans to reach out to the local SEACs in Region 1 in September to reintroduce herself and connect with newly-appointed chairs. The consensus across the region seems to be that LSEACs are having difficulty getting parent involvement.
Ms. Jackie Fagan <i>Parent Representative, Region 7</i>	Absent, No Report
Mr. Brendan Folmar <i>Private Education</i>	Absent, No Report
Ms. Fran Goforth <i>Local Directors of Special Education</i>	VDOE created an E-Learning link with modules as a professional development tool for local education agencies (LEAs). The first module was on “related services”. Future modules will be developed based on input from the field. The U.S. Department of Education (USED) recognized Virginia as meeting the requirements of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). After evaluating the commonwealth’s progress toward meeting the goals of its annual State Performance Plan, USED determined that Virginia is meeting

Name	Report
	the requirements and purposes of IDEA in five key areas. The Virginia Council for Administrators of Special Education (VCASE) Executive Committee is in Washington, D.C., representing Virginia's special education administrators at the Federal policy session in Washington, D.C. in July. One of the big topics is credit accommodations for the standard diploma for students with disabilities. The Fall VCASE meeting will be held in Short Pump, VA on October 7th and 8th.
Ms. Kathryn Hayfield <i>State Agency - Department of Aging and Rehabilitative Services</i>	Virginia's Vocational Rehabilitation Program has an Order of Selection (OOS) Policy that prioritizes who will be served when there are insufficient dollars available to serve all people. The Department of Aging and Rehabilitative Services (DARS) has been serving individuals only in Category 1 - Most Significantly Disabled (MSD) for the last few years, actually opening and closing this category for services as necessary. As a result of an appropriation of additional state general funds by the 2013 General Assembly, on July 1, 2013, the agency brought 1,400+ people off the waiting list and fully opened the MSD category. Unlike in the last few years, we hope to also serve people on the waiting list who are in Category 2 (1,380 people as of 6/30/13). DARS has been involved with 11 Project SEARCH sites for the 2012-2013 school year, serving 77 students. As of July 1, 57 students have already been placed in employment. For example, St. Mary's hospital in Henrico County hired all seven Project Search students into jobs at the hospital. In Tazewell, all six students have obtained employment either in the hospital or in jobs in the community. DARS will support students in two additional Project Search sites in the upcoming school year (Hanover and SECEP in South Hampton Roads).
Ms. Sandy Hermann <i>Parent Representative, Region 2</i>	Chesapeake SEAC has collaborated with the administration and identified new SEAC members. Parliamentary procedure training will be provided this summer for their new and current members. Within the last quarter, the Chesapeake SEAC presented recommendations to their School Board identifying areas for improvement for students with disabilities. The Norfolk SEAC is looking for new ways of notifying parents of their upcoming SEAC meetings. In the past, they have sent out postcards but will be prohibited in the future due to budgetary cuts. They are also trying to determine how proposed charter schools will impact children with disabilities. Due to the proposal by the Superintendent to open 10 new charter schools, the SEAC wants to ensure that students with disabilities are fully included. Due to the addition of new school board members, on June 4, 2013, the Virginia Beach SEAC provided a report and recommendations to the School Board advising them of the role of the SEAC, subcommittee areas of focus and current

Name	Report
	achievement, and troubling issues with possible solutions for improvement. To view the meeting, it is available at http://www.vbschools.com/schoolboard/archives/index.asp?f_y ear=2013
Ms. Lori Jackson Black <i>Parent Representative, Region 3</i>	A group of parents have become active in attending school meetings including local school board meetings. They are worried that students with and without disabilities are too reliant on technology and that students who have limited access to the internet are at a disadvantage to those students who have internet at home. A grant was provided to a group called Coalition 4 Kids in partnership with the local school division to provide after school homework help that includes access to computers. This pilot program is starting in the fall. The local SEAC will be meeting to discuss the use of technology and accessibility issues for students with special needs.
Dr. Scott Kizner <i>Local Education Officials</i>	No Report
Ms. Alison MacArthur <i>Teachers</i>	Absent – No Report
Ms. Erica Midboe <i>Transition and Vocational Services</i>	No Report
Mr. Darren Minarik <i>Higher Education</i>	There are no major items to report for the university constituency report. In 2012, the Council for Exceptional Children (CEC) revised its initial and advanced standards for the preparation of special educators. The revision of these standards along with the new licensure requirements mean that special education teacher preparation programs will be evaluating and updating courses and programs of study for degrees.
Ms. Frederique Vincent <i>Parent Representative, Region 3</i>	No Report
Ms. Jacqui Wilson <i>Parent Representative, Region 3</i>	Absent – No Report
Ms. Suzanne Bowers <i>Ex-officio member, PEATC</i>	Some of the trends that we've identified from calls this quarter include IEPs, eligibility, ESY and its components (i.e., transportation), and attorney/advocate referrals. Through the PTI grant, we provided individual assistance to 1,752 families in the last quarter. <u>Technology results in include:</u> *Web site – 29,984 unique visitors from April through June 2013. *Facebook – We have 1,226 friends. *Twitter – We now have 147 followers on Twitter. The Twitter feed is directly linked to Facebook, so each time a Facebook status/post is updated it appears on Twitter as well.

Name	Report
	<u>Outreach Highlights include:</u> We just submitted our quarterly report on the Virginia Latino grant outcomes to the Virginia Department of Education for April 2013-June 2013. Highlights of the report include: • 647 intakes completed with parents and professionals • 7 resource fairs with a total of 5,723 people reached • 64 parents and professionals participated on seven PEATC Spanish workshops which included “The Journey to Adulthood: Puberty and Sexuality” , “ABCs of Behavior”, “Friendship Building Strategies”, and “How to Talk So School Will Listen (and Listen So School Will Talk)”. • Be sure to like our new Facebook page for Spanish speaking families!
Ms. Heidi Lawyer <i>Ex-officio member, Virginia Board for People with Disabilities</i>	On June 5, the Virginia Board for People with Disabilities awarded seven grants and contracts totaling over \$850,000. While these do not directly relate to special education and several are in support of the Commonwealth’s Settlement Agreement with the Department of Justice, there are two of particular interest to this group. A grant was awarded to VCU RRTC to convert the Hatcher Sheltered workshop administered by The Arc of Southside (Danville) to a community, integrated employment program focused on competitive employment outcomes. A grant was awarded to the Partnership for People with Disabilities to teach people with developmental and other disabilities about healthy relationships and how to better protect themselves from assault, abuse, neglect and violence. On July 29, the 2013 Youth Leadership Forum begins. We remain very appreciative of the Department of Education for their annual contribution to help support this leadership training and their commitment to these youth. The Board is also a sponsor of the upcoming Arc State Convention in Richmond, a great event for self-advocates, families and professionals. We are continuing to seek public comment to help inform our 2014 Assessment of the Disability Services System. We have a comment form on line or you can email info@vbpd.virginia.gov. In September we will administer our annual consumer satisfaction survey which enables constituents to provide feedback on how we are doing.

Subcommittee Meetings

The subcommittees met for about an hour to begin activities that will be completed at the Friday meeting.

Report from Nominating Committee

The nominating committee recommended the following people as nominees to serve in offices and on the executive committee for the next two years. SSEAC members will vote at

the September meeting. In addition, nominations will be taken from the floor at the September meeting. The following have agreed to their nominations:

Chair: Ms. Lori Jackson Black

Vice Chair: Mr. Darren Minarik

Secretary: Ms. Christy Evanko

At Large: Mr. Adam Amick, Ms. Sandy Hermann, Ms. Erica Midboe

Ms. Fran Goforth made a motion to adjourn and Mr. Darren Minarik seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous and the meeting adjourned at 4:19 p.m.

Friday, July 19, 2013

In attendance:

Present: Ms. Eva Aikins, Ms. Lori Jackson Black, Ms. Cynthia Bower, Ms. Christie Evanko, Ms. Fran Goforth, Ms. Kathryn Hayfield, Ms. Sandy Hermann, Dr. Scott Kizner, Ms. Erica Midboe, Mr. Darren Minarik, Ms. Frederique Vincent

Absent: Mr. Adam Amick, Ms. Paula Baker, Mr. Jack Brandt, Ms. Juselyn Bradshaw, Ms. Jackie Fagan, Mr. Brendan Folmar, Mr. Alison MacArthur, Ms. Jacqui Wilson

Ex-officio Member Present: Ms. Heidi Lawyer (VBPD)

Ex-officio Member Absent: Ms. Suzanne Bowers (PEATC)

Virginia Department of Education Representatives Present: Mr. John Eisenberg, Dr. Suzanne Creasey, Ms. Samantha Hollins, Ms. Hank Millward, Ms. Vivian Stith-Williams

Call to Order

Ms. Lori Jackson Black, Vice Chair, called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. Members were directed to work in subgroups. The Student Achievement and Student Outcome subcommittees worked together based on data relevant to both groups. Groups were directed to reconvene as a whole group by 10:55 a.m.

The whole group reconvened at 11:00 a.m.

Subcommittee Reports

Policy and Regulation Subcommittee

The committee addressed the following issues from previous meetings and is satisfied with the response from the VDOE:

- Amendment to the Procedural Safeguards Document to address the use of insurance for special education services and changes to Web sites due to changes in Web addresses.
- Changes to the *Regulations Governing Special Education Programs for Children with Disabilities in Virginia* will include language to address:
 - Intervener Legislature (Deaf and Blind)
 - Medicaid Billing
- Private Schools Regulations

- Restraint and Seclusion was at issue, and the subcommittee is pleased with how this issue was resolved.
- Teacher Licensure
 - The Subcommittee is satisfied with the regulatory changes proposed based on the presentation provided at this meeting.

The following items are of interest to the subcommittee and it is requested that the SSEAC address them at future meetings.

- A-F School Grading –Virginia House Bill 1999 (2013 Acts of Assembly)
 - Growth Indicators
- Children with Disabilities who have Limited English Proficiency
 - Need for training on the identification of these children

Student Achievement and Student Outcomes Subcommittees

The Achievement and Outcomes Committees met jointly to review the Part B Annual Performance Report, specifically the indicators, scores, and the activities that align with them. The group discussed indicators 1, 2, 8, 9, 10, 13, and 14. For each indicator, the subcommittees spoke in reference to the activities that should continue, those that should be adjusted, and gave suggestions for some that should be added. A summary of the recommendations follows:

- Schools and IEP teams should discuss diploma options and the activities that lead to them as early as second grade or even Kindergarten, so that parents understand the implications of a child taking the VAAP instead of the SOL in third grade. While it is possible to move from VAAP to SOL, students are more successful if a plan is put in place as early as possible.
- The Special Education diploma needs to be more meaningful, and teachers and IEP teams should continue to receive training and guidance on writing goals that are appropriate and achievable.
- Trainings are great activities as long as those who attend are accountable for using what they have learned. It is difficult to know what components are successful without data to back it up.
- Transition should be looked at across the continuum. Successful transitions in kindergarten can be a predictor for successful transitions in the future.
- A shift in culture is necessary to counteract effects of racial and ethnic classification on special education identification. The group suggested activities to help with the shift.
- Another way to address students being identified as needing special education when all they really need is some extra help, is through the Tiered System of Supports including Response to Intervention, Effective Schoolwide Discipline, and Positive Behavior Supports. Through Response to Intervention, deficiencies are identified and addressed without having to activate special education services.
- It is important to identify best practices throughout the state and beyond to replicate them in other areas.
- Finally, it is necessary to define and increase parent involvement and collaboration with school officials so that everyone is working together for the enrichment of the students. There are resources for teachers and administrators that help teacher personnel to better interact with parents.

Public Comment Review

The Committee thanks the two people who made public comment at the meeting and the department will be sending response letters on behalf of the SSEAC to thank them and to let them know that the SSEAC will use their comments as it develops its annual report to the Board of Education. In particular, the SSEAC wants to ensure that those submitting public comment are heard and that the SSEAC seeks additional information to ensure that the comments are used as the committee works to identify priorities for the upcoming year.

Suggested Future Meeting Topics

September 2013:

- Annual Report
- School Grading System (HB 1999)
- School Improvement Process

December 2013:

- I'm Determined Youth presentation on anti-bullying
- Aspiring Leaders presentations

April 2014 and beyond:

- New Transition Center
- IEP/Special Education Diploma revisions
- Charter School Update
- Legislative Update
- Credit Accommodations

Ms. Erica Midboe made a motion to adjourn and Ms. Fran Goforth seconded. The vote was unanimous and the committee adjourned at 11:55 a.m.

Future meetings:

- September 19-20, 2013
- December 5-6, 2013
- April 3-4, 2014
- July 17-18, 2014
- September 18-19, 2014
- December 11-12, 2014