

**State Special Education Advisory Committee
(SSEAC)
Comfort Inn Conference Center
Richmond, VA 23230
January 10-12, 2007**

DRAFT MINUTES

Wednesday, January 10, 2007

Executive Subcommittee Meeting

Thursday, January 11, 2007

Members	Present	Absent	Members	Present	Absent
Mike Behrmann	X		Susanne Conroy		X
Mary Ann Discenza		X	Emily Dreyfus	X	
Sharon Duncan		X	Stacie Ellis	X	
Anne Fischer	X		Carol Hamilton	X	
Melodie Henderson	X		David Martin		X
Cindy Mills	X		Jacqueline Nelson	X	
Rick Richardson	X		Peter Squire	X	
Tamara Temoney	X		Carletta Wilson	X	
Michael Wong	X				

Department of Education Staff

Pat Abrams, Pat Burgess, Cindy Cave, Doug Cox, Suzanne Creasey, Gloria Dalton, Judy Douglas, Judy Hudgins, Marie Ireland, Cathy Pomfrey, Paul Raskopf, Melissa Smith

Guests

Heather Brunner, Barbara Cornicello, Heidi Lawyer, Nilesh Trivedi, Brenda Hall

Call to Order

Ms. Anne Fischer, Chair, called the meeting to order.

Agenda

Minor adjustments were made to the agenda.

Business Session

Minutes

Copies of the minutes from the October 2006 meeting were distributed. Ms. Emily Dreyfus moved that the minutes be amended to include (1) page 2, under Bylaws Revision, VDOE should be changed to BOE; (2) on page 5, additional information should be added to the Assistant Superintendent's Report that Mr. Doug Cox, in talking about the data elements, agreed that VDOE will provide data analysis of LRE trends and status; and discussed the benefit of integrating data with the school report card. Ms. Stacie Ellis seconded the motion. The motion was approved.

Dr. Mike Behrmann moved that the minutes be approved as amended. Dr. Rick Richardson seconded the motion and the amended minutes were approved.

Bylaws Revision

It was noted that the revision date for the Bylaws should be adjusted. Also, the motion made by Carmen Sanchez and approved at the October meeting, that Section 4 of Article VII should read, in part, the "Members shall be appointed by the BOE", be reflected in the October minutes.

Operational Procedures

No changes were made.

Public Comment Follow-up

Ms. Judy Hudgins stated that there had been three official public comments at the October 2006 meeting. She informed members that the VDOE had responded to each of the three public comments.

Dr. Pat Abrams distributed a folder, addressing the SSEAC's request for information related to recent public comments. She reviewed the contents which included information on: (1) Virginia Quality Assurance Screening for Educational Interpreters, (2) Conductive Education as Alternative Physical Therapy, and (3) Twice Exceptional Children. She told members that VDOE is currently in the process of updating the 1996 *Virginia Plan for the Gifted* with the Virginia Advisory Committee for the Education of the Gifted. Discussion followed regarding issues arising from the comments. If members are interested, it was suggested that Dr. Barbara McGonagill, VDOE Specialist for Gifted Education/Governor's Schools, might be asked to come and speak with the committee.

Other Business Items

Members discussed possible procedures for filling the two committee vacancies resulting from the resignations of Carmen Sanchez and Trevor Greene. The two vacancies include that of a parent representing Superintendents Region 4 and a member with a disability from no particular geographic region. Ms. Emily Dreyfus also mentioned that the terms of several members are due to end before the end of the year. She suggested that the committee look at the membership issue again at the July meeting. Members requested copies of an updated application for membership as soon as one is available.

The Subcommittee Matrix was distributed and there was a brief discussion regarding vacancies. It was noted that a new chair is needed for the Data & Reports subcommittee.

Mr. Peter Squire told members he had been in contact with the Virginia Board of People with Disabilities (VBPD) regarding developing a database of contact information. He asked that the State Special Education Advisory Committee support the Virginia Board of People with Disabilities effort to develop and maintain a database of contact information for individuals interested in special education.

Dr. Mike Behrmann provided a brief update on T/TAC Online and a study that Amie Fulcher has been doing. They've looked at different issues such as volume of traffic at each site and have completed a newsletter.

Assistant Superintendent's Report

Mr. Doug Cox told members about a number of staff changes in the Division of Special Education and Student Services.

- Ms. Gloria Dalton - parent ombudsman; she formerly worked in Federal Program Monitoring
- Dr. Suzanne Creasey – specialist in the Office of Dispute Resolution and Administrative Services; has returned to VDOE after spending a number of years as the Director of Special Education in York County Schools
- Ms. Patricia Rascoe - monitoring specialist - State-Operated Programs, Office of Federal Program Monitoring
- Ms. Merilee Fox - specialist for State Operated Programs in the Office of Student Services
- Ms. Bonnie English - Special Education Monitoring specialist, Office of Federal Program Monitoring
- Ms. Susan Trulove - Response to Intervention specialist
- Ms. Gwen Smith – former specialist for School Health Services retired
- Dr. Bondy Shay Gibson – left to become the Director of Special Education in York County Schools.

Mr. Cox supplied a brief update on consolidation issues with the Virginia Schools for the Deaf and the Blind. Work has begun and agreements have been signed with the Department of General Services (DGS) who will be the lead agency. They are also working with Dr. John McLaughlin and others on possible options for program administration.

Mr. Cox provided information about several bills, but was not able to predict the outcome as this was the first day for the General Assembly. Senator Stosch has introduced Senate Bill No. 759 that would establish the “Students with Disabilities Tuition Assistance Grant Program,” to provide tuition assistance for attendance at an eligible private school, of the parent's choice for students with disabilities for whom an individualized educational program (IEP) has been written. Another, Senate Bill No. 757, states that a “Schools for Students with Disabilities Fund” will be established. Any money remaining in the Fund at the end of each fiscal year shall not revert to the general fund but shall remain in the Fund. Money in the Fund shall be used solely for the purpose of providing grants to licensed schools for students with disabilities. Senate bill No. 847 proposed by Senator Lambert relates to the special education due process procedure

which shall require that all testimony be given under oath or affirmation administered by the hearing officer.

Public Comment

Heidi Lawyer – provided recommendations on the provision of information regarding long term care and support services to children with disabilities.

Nilesh Trivedi – a parent of a five year old child with severe Autism, commended services provided after moving to King William County.

Barbara Cornicello – updated members on the status of Latino Outreach by PEATC in Virginia.

Emily Dreyfus – provided public comment related to the need to increase the graduation rate for students with disabilities, and requested that the SSEAC seek graduation data from VDOE and discuss barriers to the modified standard diploma.

Brenda Hall – as the parent of a 15 year old with Autism, described problems she had faced through the years and her lack of knowledge regarding services available and how to access these services.

Lunch

Ms. Anne Fischer asked new arrivals to introduce themselves. Mr. Cox informed members that Senate Bill No. 759 had not been reported out to the Committee on Finance.

Mr. Paul Raskopf distributed copies of an “Overview to State Performance Plan Development.” He stated that VDOE has developed its State Performance Plan (SPP) with input from stakeholders and with the expectation that the SPP will be disseminated to the public. Mr. Raskopf provided a brief history on the development of the SPP. He described data and resources and reviewed some of the indicators, and what will be involved in meeting the timelines and requirements imposed by the U. S. Department of Education.

Meetings of Ad Hoc Subcommittees

- 1) Autism
- 2) Personnel
- 3) Data and Reports
- 4) Constituency Involvement

Ad Hoc Subcommittees Reports and Discussion

Report for Data and Reports

Ms. Emily Dreyfus reported that the subcommittee discussed the State Performance Plan (SPP), and made suggestions about formatting, linking and integrating information about students with disabilities into the School Report Cards section of the VDOE website. She reported that VDOE staff is not planning to integrate the data, because of the expected ease of accessing information in a stand-alone model. She encouraged All SSEAC members to attend the workgroup meeting about the Annual Performance Report (APR), which addresses the SPP indicators. The subcommittee reviewed the motion passed by the SSEAC at the October meeting and discussed

the need to share easy-to-access information, including Indicators 15-20, with the public. OSEP requested that states complete presentations of information for the public this spring.

LRE data will probably not be analyzed in-depth for the April meeting, due to the scheduling restrictions for other projects, but an overview will be presented. VDOE will provide comparative information at the July SSEAC meeting.

Graduation data will be presented in the SPP, and details about graduation/completion for students with disabilities will be shared at the April meeting. David Martin was nominated as new subcommittee chair.

Report for Constituency Involvement

Mr. Peter Squire commented on several items discussed by the committee:

1. Flyer
 - a. Template
 - i. Judy Hudgins and Cathy Pomfrey are going to format the flyer with updated information once agenda has been finalized
 - ii. Judy Hudgins will send out the information to organizations and individual SSEAC members
 - b. Each individual SSEAC member is expected to send out the flyer and let Judy Hudgins and Chair of the Constituency Committee know who it was sent to.
 - c. Organizations
 - i. Virginia Board for People with Disabilities
 - ii. Virginia Info
 - iii. PEATC
 - iv. Early Childhood
 - v. Local Advisory Committee Chairmen
 - vi. Independent Living Centers
 - vii. School divisions in the area where SSEAC meets – (speak with Charles Pyle)

Mr. Peter Squire moved that the State Special Education Advisory Committee support the Virginia Board for People with Disabilities' effort to develop and maintain a database of contact information for individuals interested in special education. The State Special Education Advisory Committee will assist in this effort by sharing the sign-up/participant lists collected at its public comment and forum opportunities with Virginia Board for People with Disabilities for addition to the database. The motion passed.

Report for Autism

Ms. Stacie Ellis reported that HJR 96 Autism Committee is crafting a summary statement of recommendations which will be reported to the Department of Mental Health, Mental Retardation and Substance Abuse Services "DMHMRSAS." They would also like to report these recommendations to the VACSB and ARC this spring. These recommendations focus on training, credentials/certification, increasing supports, and the need for a central agency to cover the autism spectrum disorder.

From July to December of 2006, preliminary data shows that, the VDOE paid efforts (which include the DOE sponsored Priority Project as well as T/TAC activities) have reached more than 2700 people at 200 events.

Communities of Practice for Autism program starting. National consultant will come in and train service providers (i.e., pre-school and special education teachers, early intervention specialists) on the use of natural settings for a teaching environment.

Report for Personnel

Dr. Mike Behrmann said the personnel committee discussed several issues:

- Dr. Thomas Elliott has retired as Assistant Superintendent and a search is currently posted for his replacement.
- The comment period for licensure revision is completed and the SLP Assistant license was uniformly opposed across the state. Other issues in special education seemed to be generally accepted (changing LD/ED/MR to students with special needs accessing the general curriculum and SD to students in the adapted aligned was suggested to be in line with the VAAP). The committee made a motion to amend the Gifted and Talented language to include children with learning, emotional, and attention disabilities.
- There was discussion of the statewide efforts in Vision Impairment and Speech and Language with reports updating progress on those projects.
- There was a report on results of our recommendations from the SSEAC October meeting related to autism. A recommendation went to teacher licensure in November to establish a program (to be named later) that would set standards for training programs in Autism (9-15 credits) in higher education. Issues included in the discussion included reciprocity, paraprofessional credentialing, practica, test alternatives, etc.
- The committee recommended that Barbara McGonagill be invited for the next SSEAC meeting to address either the full committee or the personnel committee on training programs and requirements to address dual exceptionality.

Constituency Reports

Name	Report	Comments
Mike Behrmann		Looking for better methods of communicating what has been discussed at SSEAC meetings.
Susanne Conroy	Absent	
Mary Ann Discenza	Absent	
Emily Dreyfus		SEAC campaign to remedy ADA Non-compliance, the potential for disproportionality concerns to cause delays and/or incorrect decisions, teacher sign-on bonuses in NC.
Sharon Duncan	Absent	
Stacie Ellis		Providing assistance to those new to the area – available services
Anne Fisher		
Carol Hamilton		
Melodie Henderson		Information doesn't always reach special education teachers in a timely fashion, if at all.
David Martin	Absent	
Cindy Mills		<p style="text-align: center;">Issues for Private Schools</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Hiring and keeping qualified and licensed teachers (most schools 12 months and pay less than public schools). 2. Teachers with conditional licenses need a lot of supervision and training since they are “new” in special education settings. 3. Small number of teachers that need to cover all of grade levels and most academic subjects. 4. SOL Test planning for year 5. Need to identify what SOLs each student needs, request them from all the LEAs in state, all with a changing student population (at least at the setting where I work) and train teachers to compile portfolios and administer all different tests as they are received from all LEAs (with different testing windows.)
Jacqueline Nelson		
Rick Richardson		
Peter Squire		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. House Joint Resolution No. 619 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Offered January 10, 2007 ▪ Pre-filed January 5, 2007 ▪ Commending Timothy Michael Moore. 2. Youth Leadership Forum - Identification of Youth to Help Organize the Youth Leadership Program - new YLF assistant 3. National Youth Leadership Forum - 2007 National Youth Transit Talk <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Come discuss how to improve access to public transit at the 2007 National Youth Transit Talk. The Talk will be held July 27-28, 2007; in Washington, DC. Young leaders with disabilities will have a chance to network with national leaders and public officials,

Name	Report	Comments
		<p>and other active young leaders from across the country. Who Can Attend?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ - Forty young leaders with disabilities ▪ - Ages 16 to 28 ▪ - Youth who have an interest in improving access to public transit ▪ - Covered Costs will be Airfare, hotel lodgings and meals ▪ http://www.cilberkeley.org/youthtalk/index.html ▪ ▪ Requests must be received by March 1, 2007 ▪ Young Leaders will be chosen and notified by April 15, 2007 <p>4. The Keynote of the College Quest</p> <p>5. National Youth Leadership Network – Teleconference Call on Education</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The Educational System and Youth with Disabilities: ▪ The Good, The Bad, and The Ugly!!!
Tamara Temoney		
Carletta Wilson		Looking for ways to make physical contact with local advisory committees in Region 1.
Mike Wong		

Ms. Anne Fischer asked Ms. Stacie Ellis, chair and other members of the nominating committee to meet and recommend an at large member to replace Ms. Carmen Sanchez as a member of the Executive Committee.

Friday, January 12, 2007

Members	Present	Absent	Members	Present	Absent
Mike Behrmann	x		Susanne Conroy		x
Mary Ann Discenza		x	Emily Dreyfus	x	
Sharon Duncan		x	Stacie Ellis	x	
Anne Fischer	x		Carol Hamilton	x	
Melodie Henderson	x		David Martin		x
Cindy Mills	x		Jacqueline Nelson	x	
Rick Richardson	x		Peter Squire	x	
Tamara Temoney	x		Carletta Wilson		x
Michael Wong	x				

Department of Education Staff

Pat Abrams, Cindy Cave, Doug Cox, Suzanne Creasey, Judy Douglas, Judy Hudgins, Cathy Pomfrey, Melissa Smith,

Guests

Suzanne Wolfe, Heather Brunner, Barbara Cornicello

Informational Presentations

Response to Intervention Update

Dr. Cindy Cave, director of student services, provided information about the Response to Intervention (RtI) initiative, discussing this year's activities. An agency work group comprised of staff members from general education instruction, school improvement, special education, and student services, has been meeting regularly to develop a manual to be provided to the field for technical support. An external advisory group comprised of school division personnel and university representatives has also met to review the working outline for the draft guidelines. RTI is being presented through the guidelines as a collaborative team approach, and a systems-change process. The manual is being developed to include practical suggestions for school staff. It will form the basis for training later this year and for pilot implementation sites. After the final editing of the current draft, review by the work group, and review by the external advisory group, the draft will be provided to the State Special Education Advisory Committee (SSEAC). SSEAC members are interested in helping parents understand RtI.

Special Education Regulations Update

Dr. Judy Douglas and Melissa C.P. Smith from the Office of Dispute Resolution and Administrative Services provided an update regarding the process for revising the state special education regulations. Dr. Douglas reported that the NOIRA will be published in the Virginia Register of Regulations on January 22, 2007, and the public comment period for the NOIRA will be from January 22, 2007 through February 23, 2007.

Dr. Douglas also provided a technical assistance document outlining the process for providing public comment to the revision process. Mrs. Smith provided an update regarding the Stakeholders Group, which was convened in a facilitated meeting on December 14, 2006. Thirteen of 20 stakeholders were present, sharing information regarding what they liked and disliked regarding the current state regulations, and identifying what they considered to be the hot topics for the revision of the state regulations. Dr. Douglas and Mrs. Smith agreed to send the SSEAC members a summary of the December stakeholders meeting for review.

The second of the two stakeholders' group meetings is anticipated to be convened in fall 2007, following the 60-day public comment period. The Policy and Regulations Subcommittee will convene to draft public comment on behalf of the SSEAC for submission as part of the first formal public comment period.

Public Comment Follow-up

Issues from previous day's public comments were reviewed and discussed.

Dr. Mike Behrmann moved : Whereas the fact that the federal government is requiring that the Virginia Department of Education monitor the status of students with disabilities who have exited school and the fact that there are multi year waiting lists for many such services for children and adults with disabilities, the SSEAC recommends to the VBOE that they work with the state legislature to reduce waiting lists and also emphasize communication of availability of Medicaid waivers and availability of joining waiting lists to parents and guardians beginning at transition from preschool to elementary school and continuing through high school transition planning. The motion was seconded by Ms. Emily Dreyfus and approved.

Ms. Emily Dreyfus suggested the information presented by PEATC be reviewed by members and discussed at the April 2007 meeting.

Report of Nominating Committee

Ms. Jacqueline Nelson was approved as the newest member of the Executive Committee.

Ms. Emily Dreyfus asked about the surveys the department mailed to parents of students with disabilities. She asked if the SSEAC could see the final results. Judy Hudgins will share the results of the parent survey with the SSEAC after the report is completed.

Requests for Future Agenda Items

Federal monitoring – self assessment

RtI process

Analysis of parent survey

Graduation data – Paul – presentation full performance report

LRE overview

Waivers issues

CLC & IST & RTI

The meeting adjourned.