

**State Special Education Advisory Committee
(SSEAC)**

**Holiday Inn Richmond Airport
Richmond, Virginia**

Thursday June 21, 2012

SSEAC Members					
	Present	Absent		Present	Absent
Eva Aikins	x		Sandra Hermann	x	
Judy Averill	x		Lori Jackson	x	
Darren Minarik	x		Bernadette Jones		x
Michael Carrasco	x		Jackie Fagan	x	
Adam Amick	x		Jusolyn Bradshaw	x	
Christina Draper		x	Jennifer O'Berry-Ham		x
Christy Evanko	x		Scott Kizner	x	
Fran Goforth	x		Cynthia Bauer	x	
Melodie Henderson	x				
Kathryn Hayfield	x				

Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) Staff			
Doug Cox	Pat Haymes	Suzanne Creasey	Cathy Pomfrey
John Eisenberg	Johnelle Torbert	Samantha Hollins	

Guests			
Beth Haw	Patty Roberts	Melanie Grindstaff	PEATC Suzanne Bowers
Tammie Rollins-Hines	Rayna Amoreno	Alan Gernhardt, Freedom of Information Advisory Council	Maria Everett, Freedom of Information Advisory Council
Kendal Lee			

Call to Order

Mrs. Jackie Fagan, Chair, called the meeting to order at 8:40 a.m. The committee members introduced themselves. Mr. Eisenberg reminded everyone that only Board of Education (BOE) appointed members are allowed to speak and vote.

Business Session

- ***Approval of Minutes***

The committee was directed to look over the prior meeting minutes. Mrs. Judy Averill noted that she was present on Friday, March 23 and asked that the minutes be amended to reflect such. **Mr. Darren Minarik made a motion to approve the minutes as amended. Mr. Michael Carrasco seconded the motion. The minutes were approved as amended;** Mrs. Sandy Hermann abstained.

- ***Public Comment***

Mr. Carrasco asked how the public comment issues were resolved (citing the chronic medical issue). Dr. Suzanne Creasey informed the group that letters were sent to each person with contact information who made public comment. The letters indicated that their public comment will be used along with others to develop the annual report. The response also provides information with any policy or regulations that pertain to the issue addressed in the public comment. With regard to the bullying issue, the response indicated that there are no regulations but some protections are provided related to disability harassment in IDEA. If the issue doesn't fall under disability harassment, the issue needs to be addressed at the local level. With regard to the chronic medical issue, the student in question didn't have an IEP, so s/he is not covered by IDEA. Mr. John Eisenberg added that the first review of attendance regulations are going to the Board of Education in July and the letter of response also referenced that.

- ***Review of meeting agenda***

There were a few changes to the agenda that was originally sent, but the provided copy was corrected. Ms. Samantha Vanterpool is no longer with the Attorney General's office and will therefore not attend. The DOE will work with the Attorney General's office to get a new attendee. **Ms. Kathryn Hayfield made a motion to approve the new agenda, Mr. Michael Carrasco and Ms. Fran Goforth seconded the motion. The agenda was approved.**

- ***Bylaws Update***

*Ms. Pat Haymes, Complaints Specialist
Office of Dispute Resolution & Administrative Services*

Ms. Pat Haymes reminded the group that in September 2011, it voted to change the following:

1. Members' terms begin from appointment, even if a member is appointed in the middle of someone else's term. This takes away the concept of an unexpired term.
2. A meeting is considered to be all days of a session. The impact is that if someone attends one but does not attend both days of a session, they are not counted as attending the meeting.

Dr. Scott Kizner commented that the second amendment seems to encourage members not to attend if they cannot attend the entire two day meeting. Ms. Haymes reminded the group that the amendment passed in September, but it can be revisited. She clarified for the group that those who miss three meetings in a row are not necessarily asked to resign, but are just asked to explain the absences. No motion was made to approve the bylaws. Mrs. Jackie Fagan directed the Executive Committee to review the bylaws and report at the next committee meeting.

Assistant Superintendent Report

*Mr. H. Douglas Cox, Assistant Superintendent
Division of Special Education and Student Services*

This was a joint report between Mr. John Eisenberg and Mr. H. Douglas Cox since Mr. Cox is retiring and Mr. Eisenberg has been promoted to the position of Assistant Superintendent. Mr. Cox noted that he is extremely pleased with Mr. Eisenberg's appointment to the job.

1. The committee was directed to the final legislative agenda, which had more Special Education bills than usual. (handout)
 - HB218/SB399 was introduced to ensure that IEP teams for students who are deaf or hard of hearing consider separate schools for the deaf/hard of hearing as well as the child's communication mode or language (which is already required). Additionally, this bill required the consideration of the availability of peer groups and adult role models who might have hearing losses. This bill was continued to 2013 (meaning it does not need to be reintroduced) and will probably start in the education and health committees. Members of the SSEAC may inform their constituency groups to interact with lawmakers with regard to this bill.
 - HB325 was passed and requires the training of personnel (paraprofessionals) who work with children with Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD). The law becomes effective in 2014. The law requires the Board of Education to identify competencies. The DOE has been working with VCU ACE (Autism Center for Excellence) to develop an interactive online training system for paraprofessionals. Classes will have no more than 50 per instructor, and sessions have filled up quickly. VCU is currently working on increasing the capacity. Mrs. Sandy Hermann asked about the use of autism as a secondary or tertiary disability. Mr. Eisenberg replied that the schools would rely on the state regulations that require an educational identification rather than a medical diagnosis.
 - Mrs. Hermann stated that she is concerned because sometimes there is resistance to putting a secondary or tertiary diagnosis, and perhaps students who do have characteristics of ASD would not benefit from this law because their primary diagnosis is different. She asked for statistics on multiple diagnoses.
 - Ms. Melodie Henderson asked if the program had a cost for the paraprofessionals and what is done if the class is full. Mr. Eisenberg stated that the bill has

flexibility that says that the locality may use VCU (which is free), but does not have to. The local school board may also develop a program that addresses the competencies. Therefore, the cost would be up to the division. He noted that there was no money set aside in the bill. He also noted that VCU will increase its capacity, but a lot will be determined once the Board of Education approves the competencies.

- Ms. Henderson said she is concerned about consistency. Mr. Eisenberg stated that the DOE will release guidance documents and best practices. Ms. Henderson asked if the certification was one-time or if it needed to be renewed. Mr. Eisenberg replied that it is a one-time certification, but because the competencies are not yet approved, there is a chance that those taking the class this summer will have to take another class.
 - Mr. Kizner expressed concern about this with regard to the aide turnover rate.
 - Mr. Michael Carrasco asked what the DOE wanted from the SSEAC on this issue. Mrs. Hermann suggests that the SSEAC review the competencies and put forth an opinion, if only to support the DOE. Mr. Eisenberg said that he would send the proposed competencies prior to the next meeting.
 - Mrs. Christy Evanko asked if the proposed DSM V changes will affect Virginia's educational diagnosis of children with ASD. Mr. Eisenberg said that would be addressed in the presentation later that day.
- HB382 passed and allows assistive technology devices to be purchased by students after they graduate. Guidelines are being developed that should go into effect in July. Mr. Eisenberg asked if Mr. Adam Amick would consider serving on a committee. Mr. Amick replied that he would, time permitting. There was clarification that with this law; the school system does not have to sell the device to the student (or parent, or agency), but may do so using the guidelines to determine fair market value.
 - HB1107/SB56 and HB1156 requires local school boards to have policy for administration of auto-injectable epinephrine (Epi pens), which a school nurse or teacher can administer. A bill to require schools to have two in stock was tabled. The passed law goes into effect July 1. Mr. Kizner asked if guidelines have been delivered to superintendents. Ms. Haymes replied that those guidelines are in process.
 - SB241 provides tax credits for scholarships for students with disabilities (as well as an expansion of credits for low income students).
 - HB1061/SB489 brings the elimination of the modified standard diploma effective for the 9th grade class of 2014. The Board of Education needs to approve emergency regulations and only has a year from when the bill was approved. At the May BOE meeting, the board approved the first review of accrediting regulations. There are five possible approaches to making credit accommodations (only for kids with IEPs). Note

that credit accommodations are accommodations that affect their credit, as opposed to testing accommodations that affect how students take the test:

1. Change in the cut scores (there were a lot of kids with disabilities who were very close)
2. Locally awarded credit options – if student is close to cut score, then there are other options for how they would be awarded credit in lieu
3. Alternative courses (might have more applied emphasis)
4. Approval of additional tests
5. Other verifiers such as workplace readiness assessment and other work options for credit

The DOE is torn between wanting to provide options, but still maintain high standards so that the options do not become another modified standard diploma.

There still may be students in the gap who would have received a modified standard diploma but will not meet the new requirements. There are also plans to look at the Special Education diploma and perhaps raise the requirements (above just meeting IEP). Over the next couple of months, the DOE will hammer out details. The DOE believes that this process will be beneficial for students with disabilities and will give them better post secondary options.

- Mrs. Hermann asked if the requirement was for those who entered 9th grade in 2014 regardless of when they graduate, or will it only be in place for those that will graduate in four years. The reply was that the number of years in high school is not a factor, just when the child enters 9th grade.
 - Mrs. Hermann asked if a teacher can give verified credit if a child fails the SOL but the teacher feels that they know the material. Mr. Eisenberg replied that there will not be that chance for a teacher to override an SOL score or for verified credit – students must meet the state criteria, however there may be a chance for locally awarded credit (currently only for science and social studies with potential in reading, language arts, and math) as stated above.
2. Mr. Eisenberg reported that Virginia has applied for a waiver under No Child Left Behind and is still waiting for approval, which should come very soon. Mr. Eisenberg recommends the SSEAC invite someone to present on the details of the accountability system. Relating to students with disabilities, at this time, all of the targets (for the groups representing disability, race, low income, etc) are the same for every state. This year if Virginia does not get a waiver, 96% would have had to pass. With the waiver, flexibility requirements allow for super groups or gap groups. Three areas – 1. Students with disabilities 2. English Language Learners 3. Low socio-economic status – under the waiver are clustered into a super group of children who have typically not done well on traditional assessments. Mrs. Hermann asked where the information was posted. Mr. Cox replied that it would be in the BOE minutes and it is available at the following link on the Virginia Department of Education web-site.

First Review of Revisions to Virginia's Application for U.S. Department of Education Flexibility from Certain Requirements of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA) – Updated June 1, 2012
http://www.doe.virginia.gov/boe/meetings/2012/05_may/agenda_items/item_r.pdf

Agenda Revision

Mr. Eisenberg suggested moving two items because of time constraints – the white paper and budget discussions – to the September meeting. He will e-mail the committee the draft of the white paper, but will not add them to the minutes. He cautions the committee to please treat this document as a draft and not a final product. There will be a presentation at the next meeting.

Break

Presentations

- ***Overview of Annual Virginia Trends from the Due Process, Mediation, and Complaints System in Virginia***

Ms. Pat Haymes, Office of Dispute Resolution

Ms. Patricia Haymes provided the Committee with an update on trends in the due process, mediation and state complaint systems. While the number of requests for mediation and the number of state complaints have remained steady over the past five years, the number of requests for due process hearings has decreased. The data included a breakdown of the number due process requests, mediation requests and state complaint filed by Superintendent's region. In addition, the data addressed the number of complaint issues in various areas of the Virginia Special Education Regulations, and the outcomes in each area.

Ms. Haymes shared where to find the dispute report:

http://www.doe.virginia.gov/special_ed/resolving_disputes/index.shtml . She also shared a handout that includes a regional breakdown.

- Mrs. Sandy Hermann mentioned that the school board in her district had asked the attorneys why their numbers were so high, and the attorneys had replied that multiple complaints had been filed by and on behalf of a single person, and the duplicates are not pulled out of the report. She also pointed out that there may be monetary incentives for advocates that is affecting their behavior and would be a reason behind the single person filing multiple complaints.
- Mr. Michael Carrasco appreciated that Mrs. Haymes had said that size was a factor in the largest number of complaints coming from Regions 2 and 4, but thought that it could also be that the school divisions were not doing everything that they needed to do. Mrs. Haymes agreed that could be an issue and stated that they look for patterns in subject matter of issue and then direct corrective action accordingly. Corrective action escalates if the issue is not

resolved.

- Dr. Scott Kizner stated that he thought that parents do not always understand the complaint process, so some areas may have fewer parents that make complaints because of the geographical makeup of that region and the propensity to understand the system.
- Mrs. Hermann asked how it is reported if there are multiple people making the same complaint. Mrs. Haymes replied that it doesn't happen very often, but they are reported individually.
- Mr. Adam Amick asked how mediation works. Mrs. Haymes told the group that they contract with several mediators who are independent contractors rather than DOE employees and that there is no cost for the parent. Mediators do not make decisions, they facilitate discussions. The process is voluntary and both the parent and school division have to agree. The school can also initiate mediation.
- Dr. Kizner asked how a school division would file a complaint. Mrs. Haymes indicated that a school division cannot file a complaint against a parent but may use the due process hearing system.
- Mr. Carrasco asked if the office monitored court proceedings. Mrs. Haymes replied that they only monitored it if it went through due process, but there is no general process for monitoring litigation.

Recognitions:

The SSEAC provided a Certificate of Recognition to Ms. Maria Everett and Mr. Alan Gernhardt for their time and dedication by presenting at regional meetings. They presented FOIA requirements related meetings and local SEACs. Ms. Everett and Mr. Gernhardt were appreciative of the recognition and indicated that they are available to provide presentations locally if desired. Information related to FOIA and their contact information is available at <http://foiacouncil.dls.virginia.gov/>

It was announced that Mrs. Jackie Fagan's son suddenly passed away during the morning which resulted in her leaving. A moment of silence was held to remember her and the loss of her son.

Ms. Lori Jackson resumed the meeting as acting Chair.

Public Comment

- Ms. Beth Haw asked that members of the SSEAC receive the responses that the public get. She suggested that the SSEAC take a position on bullying to make a recommendation to the BOE – the reason she presented to the committee in the first place. She appreciates the comment from DOE, but would like a recommendation from the members of the SSEAC. She mentioned that the numbers of children who are bullied are skewed because there is no requirement for a teacher to report it. She does not feel that the numbers reflect the problem.

- SSEAC member Ms. Christy Evanko read the following: “I recently spoke with two parents of children diagnosed with ASD. Both children are young, elementary-aged and both had started in the public school system, but now attend a private ABA school in Chesterfield County. Both parents really want their children to be in public school with their peers, but they felt that the children weren't getting the support that they needed. These parents strongly feel that if their children are educated now in the manner they are receiving at the private school, they will be able to be fully integrated into the public school in the future. Unfortunately, both children are privately placed, and even though the children are succeeding, the parents cannot afford to keep sending them to the private school. But the parents are afraid that if the children don't get the necessary jump start now, the costs to educate and house them in the future will be many times greater. These parents wish the schools were able to offer intensive supports to young children as they are receiving in the private school, or at least recognize the value and help them with the tuition for the private school.”

Budget Information

*Mr. John Eisenberg, Incoming Assistant Superintendent
Division of Special Education and Student Services*

An agreement was not reached in Congress, so budget cuts were affected automatically (except for mandated services). Federal funds are allocated in two chunks: in July, school divisions are given one quarter of the allocation and in October they are given the other three quarters, projected to carry them through to the next July. The department is currently expecting budget cuts of up to 10%. The interpretation has not been sent from the US government yet and it may come in October or it may come in July of next year. Only Congress can change this. There is a bill in congress that may reallocate the cuts that would have affected the Military. If that bill passes, then the DOE could take on more cuts. The cuts equate to about \$28M federally, and \$4M, statewide. The DOE intends to provide information so that members can advocate to Congress in an educated manner. Mr. Eisenberg stated he will send a PowerPoint presentation that contains a “what if?” scenario.

- Mr. Adam Amick asked if the cuts might limit the number of people who get resources. Mr. Eisenberg replied that they would make sure that federal requirements are covered first, and then look at things that are successful, but nice to do; there are many ways to reduce. Mr. Amick lamented that these cuts might affect the *I'm Determined* project.
- Mr. Doug Cox remarked that the only exempt programs are Medicare, Medicaid, and Social Security, and some are trying to move Defense into that exemption.
- Mrs. Sandy Hermann noted that the SSEAC should be allowed to comment at the DOE because SSEACs are mandated in the states.
- It was noted that the budget cuts take effect unless Congress acts by January 2. The November election will have an influence.
- Mr. Carrasco remarked that the Governor recently signed an order to review state mandates. Mr. Eisenberg said that this may have an effect and that some things have already been put into action, such as the cutting of some local and state boards. The DOE is now trying not to mandate anything that is not federally required, such as local advisory committees. The

DOE and Dr. Wright will put out guidance when they receive something from the federal government.

- Mrs. Hermann asked about the State mandated items that are not federally mandated. Mr. Cox replied that the legislature would have to make a law to override the state statutes that are currently on the books.

Congratulations to Ms. Fran Goforth, this year's recipient of the James T. Micklem Award of Excellence for Outstanding Administrator.

Lunch

The Committee reconvened at 1:03 p.m.

Presentations - continued

- ***Autism Paraprofessional Modules from the Autism Center of Excellence at VCU***
Mrs. Samantha Hollins, Education Specialist, Office of Instructional Support and Related Services
Dr. Dawn Hendricks, Director of Training, VCU ACE

VDOE shared updates related to the draft changes of the DSM-V and the legislative mandate from the 2011-2012 General Assembly session related to Paraprofessional Training for staff working with students with ASD (House Bill 325). The Board of Education hopes to approve Training Standards this fall to be used by local school divisions in approving programs able to train paraprofessionals serving students with ASD. The Virginia Commonwealth University Autism Center for Excellence (VCU ACE) shared opportunities for training and technical assistance in partnership with the regional VDOE Training and Technical Assistance Centers (TTAC) specifically around serving students with ASD. Current offerings (free of charge) include topical webcasts, online courses and specific courses, resources and information related to the training of paraprofessionals (PARApro initiative). Additional information can be found on the VDOE (www.doe.virginia.gov/special_ed/disabilities/autism) and VCU ACE (www.vcuautismcenter.org) websites.

Brochures were available for the members.

- Mrs. Christy Evanko asked how the potential DSM V changes will affect the educational diagnosis of Autism. Mr. John Eisenberg said that they will not change the state regulations just to match the DSM regulations. Mrs. Hollins said that they will need to make sure to communicate with everyone so that there are no misconceptions. VCU ACE is planning to do a Web cast to update on the DSM V changes when they potentially come through in May, 2013.
- Ms. Melodie Henderson asked about the cost of the non-credit courses. Dr. Hendricks stated that the courses are free to Virginia residents.

- Ms. Lori Jackson asked if those who have already taken the courses would have to retake them when the competencies are established. Mr. Eisenberg suspects the courses will count due to the flexibility in the law.
- Mr. Michael Carrasco asked how often VCU ACE received feedback from the 12 school districts where they are imbedded. Dr. Hendricks replied that they just went through a formal evaluation. The technical associates are in the school systems for three years. At the end of the third year, there will be another evaluation. She indicated that COLA – Communities of Learning in Autism – is addressing divisions on a regional basis.

The State goals are:

1. Communication enhancement for students
2. Administrators – what they need to know
3. Evidence Based Practice
4. Transition – from Early Ed to when the child leaves the system including many transitions (even yearly) in between.

VCU ACE is using the reach of the COLA's to share information on state goals to take back to school divisions.

- Mr. Michael Carrasco asked if the Autism training for law enforcement that is put forth from the Criminal Justice Services voluntarily can be in collaboration with VCU ACE. Mrs. Hollins replied that it would not be possible at this time. Mr. Eisenberg remarked that even though the resources are free to users/school divisions, there has been a sizable DOE investment: one of the largest single budget items for the DOE. The program has resulted, however, in the reduction of complaints and the improvement of students' outcomes.
- Mrs. Hermann asked if children who are medically diagnosed with ASD but do not have the educational diagnosis – often because they have other diagnoses that take precedence, will benefit from this. She stated that it would be nice if the DOE put out guidance to the effect of – even if you working with a child who is not diagnosed with ASD, you can still use these resources. Mrs. Hollins remarked that there has been collaboration with the DOE to get information to the Superintendents, but COLA has been beneficial for communicating it as well.

Mrs. Hollins directed the committee to several Web sites that may be helpful:

- www.doe.virginia.gov/special_ed/disabilities/autism/index.shtml
- www.vcuautismcenter.org
- www.vcuautismcenter.org/parapro
- www.vcuautismcenter.org/resources

Members are encouraged to contact Samantha.hollins@doe.virginia.gov with questions.

Announcements:

1. Mr. Doug Cox thanked Mrs. Melodie Henderson, on behalf of the SSEAC, for her time and dedication as the teacher representative on the SSEAC. She has been a faithful and engaged member who understands the effect on Special Education teachers. She will be missed.
2. The group wished Mr. Adam Amick a happy 21st Birthday. Through his transition from student to adult to leader, he has added perspective that that has changed the dynamic of the SSEAC and special education.
3. Mr. John Eisenburg presented Mr. H. Douglas Cox a framed Certificate of Appreciation for his 17 years of leadership in special education and the SSEAC. Mr. Eisenburg indicated that over the past 17 years, Mr. Cox has been the constant in terms of leadership of the SSEAC as well as providing the leadership that has moved Virginia forward. In his 17 years, he has touched the lives of between two to three million students with disabilities. Mr. Cox gave a touching speech about how he enjoyed and cared about the job, felt honored to represent children with disabilities, and knows that Mr. Eisenberg is the right man to take over. He feels that the transition is easier knowing that he is leaving the state in good hands.

Mr. Cox also shared that the new SSEAC representative to fill in for Mr. Eisenberg's previous position with the SSEAC is Dr. Suzanne Creasey. Dr. Creasey has a wealth of experience, and it will serve well the SSEAC. Dr. Creasey is now the person to whom all communications should be sent.

Constituency Reports

Name	Report
Adam Amick	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Thank you for the birthday card and thank you to Mr. Cox and Mr. Eisenberg for their support.• Presented a video of the I'm Determined Youth Summit at JMU. It was a thank you video made by the youth leader thanking the TTAC staff and all the adults who helped.• I am looking to mentor the older youth who will then mentor the younger youth and as pass the torch along as everyone gets older.• The Youth Leadership Forum planning meeting was last weekend for the July forum.• In the future, I will have to pull back due to a new job and responsibilities. But if it weren't for the people in this room, Mr. Eisenberg, Mr. Cox, Mr. Minarik, we wouldn't be where we are today.
Eva Aikins	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• In April, Region 6 had its regional meeting in Roanoke and I want to thank Dr. Creasey. Because the region is so large, travel was difficult, but there were lots of positive comments. I suggest including other members of the SSEAC (non parent) in the regional meetings so that they can see the feedback.• Some of the suggestions included continuing the regional meetings every year or every other year; the continuance of support documents from the DOE; acknowledgement of TTAC as a strong resource; providing speakers with educational materials; appreciation

Name	Report
	<p>of the FOIA presentation; and creation of a directory or list of statewide speakers available to local SEACs.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Award in memory of Jane Friend this year went to the Danville Special Education Director, Andy Thacker. • Thank you to Mr. Cox and Mrs. Henderson.
Judy Averill	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thanked Mr. Cox for his years of service
Cynthia Bauer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Foster Care update: We have developed protocols for special education kids in foster care. Virginia is one of the top states that has been able to resolve issues more quickly than other states. • The Legal Center for Foster Care and Education is looking into how to combine Foster children guidelines with children with disabilities guidelines. • Distributed a brochure about that topic.
Jusolyn Bradshaw	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I am currently at the Department of Correctional Education, but will be with the Department of Juvenile Justice for the next meeting. A House Bill recently passed that moved Correctional Education under either Juvenile Justice or Corrections. The law goes into effect Monday and should not affect operations.
Michael Carrasco	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Region 4 held its regional meeting in March. There was a good turnout with a few items of feedback: many liked the regional meeting and would like it on a regular basis; they asked for better communication from the State SEAC (especially regarding annual goals) and to be more involved in find best practices among local SEAC's; they asked that the State SEAC provide training or observe the local meeting and provide feedback. • There was a question from Fauquier county regarding Medicaid – What should the role be of facilitating application for Medicaid waivers? • The Loudoun county SEAC suggests that the SSEAC track and share the top issues across the state. • Thank you to Mr. Doug Cox for your service. Congratulations to Christy Evanko who served on the group for drafting regulations for the Behavior Analyst license. I suggest that the SSEAC advise the Board of Medicine on this matter. • I would to suggest that we invite the Department of Criminal Justice to a future meeting to show us what they have to offer. • The School Resource Officers will be contacted to come to a future meeting.
Christina Draper	Absent
Christy Evanko	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I got the chance to go to another localities meeting – Henrico County, which I enjoyed, and I would like to attend other meetings. • I am in the process of contacting all of the localities to determine the changes in chairmanship and am having the same difficulties as before. • I would like to go forth with creating an online community as was suggested in our regional meeting and am waiting to hear from the DOE about protocol. • My locality, Hanover County, asked that I share a summary of their annual report. The report consisted on needs and of commendations. There are 8 needs that we have identified and put forth to the Hanover BOE. • Early identification and intervention at all ages and grade levels. (RtI) Also, determining how dyslexia fits in. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Improving the IEP experience through education

Name	Report
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2) Transportation out of zone and its impact on instruction time 3) Inclusion 4) Transition services education 5) Parent awareness and education of testing, diploma options, RtI, and other aspects of SpEd 6) Preschool summer school 7) Language-based disabilities (focus on reading) • The Hanover SEAC also commended the Hanover County Public schools for many of their efforts, listed the committee’s accomplishments, and discussed public comments received.
Jackie Fagan	Absent
Fran Goforth	None
Kathryn Hayfield	Absent
Melodie Henderson	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Area educators feel a need to have training provided in local divisions regarding true collaborative teaching and co-teaching methods to ensure more effective instruction for ALL students in those environments. VDOE is being asked to provide some ‘out of the box’ creative ideas and/or resources for division leaders to utilize for professional development opportunities. • Thank you for allowing me to be a voice on this council for the past six years. I have grown tremendously as a professional and as an advocate for all students especially for students with a disability. It has been my privilege and honor to have had this opportunity to serve with you for a cause that is a part of my being. This is not the last that you will see of me—just look for me in the perimeter from time to time. Many blessings to you all.
Sandra Hermann	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is great value in FOIA training. VA Beach is currently going through FOIA requests and learned a lot about how they can conduct visits. • Annual Plan and funding review: SEACs were not included and they should have been according to regulations. Once clarification was gained from Mr. Paul Raskopf, some did have an opportunity to be involved. • The SSEAC should look into the practice of taking kids out of school at age 22 and redefining them (see article handout). Schools are asking them to leave early and telling them they can come back, but many are not. • VA Beach SEAC proposed for Disability Awareness in October lots of activities associated with people-first language. • I request that a superintendent memo come out in summer supporting Disability Awareness to get Superintendents to move forward. • Regarding implementation of intermittent homebound services; there is some confusion on the IEP driven process for those who need it based on health. It seems to be contradictory to the needs of the child (see handout re: medical certification). New guidelines were revised in February, but it lacks clarity for children with IEPs. The difficulties arise when the condition is chronic as the guidelines seem to be written for short term illnesses. There are related services implications as well. • I have questions about SOL testing and would to provide written clarifications for those who fail. • Our Regional fair is upcoming in November

Name	Report
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are many questions about ESY; DOE has a great booklet, but many don't know it exists and are providing guidance that isn't correct. • Thank you to Mr. Cox and good luck. Thank you to Dr. Suzanne Creasey who did regional meetings; they have opened the door for collaboration. I have been asked to participate in a regional transition group in the counties of Mathews and Middlesex, and hope to partner with Gloucester soon. • We had a regional fair for families with special needs. Aiming for March 2013, Mathews County SEAC and PRC hope to partner with Gloucester and Middlesex counties. • Parents are worried about this year's SOLs and some really struggled; the test took 8 hours for some kids • There is a new sheriff who is willing to work on training for school officers (CPI). • We are looking at events for Disability Awareness month.
Lori Jackson	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thank you to Suzanne Creasey for facilitating our local SEAC regional meeting. It has opened the door for collaboration with other divisions in the middle peninsula. • I have been asked to participate in the creation of a regional transition council. As of right now Mathews and Middlesex are participating. This is in its infancy and we hope to partner with other divisions on the middle peninsula. • Mathews County SEAC is taking the lead on putting together a regional fair in March 2013 to promote local programs for individuals with special needs. They are going to try and partner with Middlesex and Gloucester Counties on this. • Parents have expressed concern with several issues
Bernadette Jones	Absent
Scott Kizner	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I have been asked what it is I do at the SSEAC. It seems that we listen to policies rather than give our advice. When asked the question, I could not articulate what we advise the State on. • I appreciated the info about VCU ACE, but I would also like to learn what divisions are doing beyond VCU. Valley school systems did a presentation on Best Practices. I think we need to go out more and see what communities are doing to best serve our constituents. • Also want to thank Mr. Cox for his service.
Darren Minarik	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I did not get any feedback from the other higher education folks, but I will mention that JMU hosted the Self Determination summit and Adam will talk about the youth. There were university personnel and TTAC personnel at the summit called Determinators who helped support the youth. We expect the summit to be at JMU in the future. • Scott brought up an interesting point and I had similar feelings because I have not received any feedback from other people in higher ed. I think it would be nice to see if we could go back with something to request. Perhaps ask universities how are content teachers being prepared, how prepared is your new cohort in collaboration with parapros, etc. This committee has the ability to communicate and generate to where we could advise the DOE; maybe we use the Friday meeting to generate concrete things we could bring back to our constituents to show we are doing more. • Finally, is VMAST dead in the water like I have heard? <i>[Mr. Eisenberg indicated that the committee will hear about that next time with reference to the waiver application.]</i>

Name	Report
Jennifer O'Berry Ham	Absent
(PEATC) Suzanne Bowers	See end of this document

Mrs. Christy Evanko motioned to adjourn and Mr. Darren Minarik seconded. The meeting adjourned at 4:08 p.m.

Friday, June 22, 2012

SSEAC Members					
	Present	Absent		Present	Absent
Eva Aikins	x		Sandra Hermann	x	
Judy Averill		x	Lori Jackson	x	
Darren Minarik	x		Bernadette Jones		x
Michael Carrasco	x		Jackie Fagan		x
Adam Amick	x		Jusolyn Bradshaw	x	
Christina Draper		x	Jennifer O’Berry-Ham		x
Christy Evanko	x		Scott Kizner	x	
Fran Goforth	x		Cynthia Bauer	x	
Melodie Henderson	x				
Kathryn Hayfield	x				

Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) Staff			
Suzanne Creasey	John Eisenberg	Susan Trulove	
Cathy Pomfrey	Johnelle Torbert	Marie Ireland	

Guests			
Beth Haw			

Call to Order

Ms. Lori Jackson, in the absence of the chair, called the meeting to order.

Presentations continued

- ***Speech Therapy Guidelines and Telepractice Model***
Mrs. Marie Ireland, Education Specialist, Office of Special Education and Student Services

Marie Ireland provided an overview of VDOE supports and services in the area of Speech-language Pathology. The presentation included a review of SLP service data for Virginia, distribution of SLP Guidance documents, discussion of other supports for SLPs and new initiatives. An overview of telepractice and recent changes to Medicaid in Schools was also provided. The update on staffing indicates that there are fewer vacancies across Virginia schools. Members participated in a question and answer segment with topics discussed including dysphagia (swallowing), dialect, second language learning, assessment, and pre-school services.

- Mrs. Sandy Hermann asked what the participation is for localities in the twice annual meetings. Mrs. Ireland replied that about 100 or so attend out of 134 localities, but that they have a contact for every locality who receives emails.
- Mrs. Christy Evanko asked if the practitioners who are teleworking are able to keep the caseload requirement to 1:68. Mrs. Ireland replied that 1:68 is the guideline, and Mrs. Pat Haymes said that her department audits compliance on that requirement.
- Mr. Kizner asked Mrs. Ireland what her opinion was on how they service bilingual students. Mrs. Ireland replied that it is sometimes difficult to sort out language vs. disability. There is a difference between students who are in bilingual homes or where English is not primary language and students who are adopted from other countries. The service actually depends on the team; they are getting better at it and the office is trying to offer guidance.
- Mrs. Sandy Hermann noted that it would be nice to have an FAQ that addressed medical vs. educational diagnoses with regard to SLP. Mrs. Ireland replied that they are training teachers on how to explain to parents that they will take medical diagnoses into consideration, but the eligibility is the responsibility of the school rather than just saying no to the medical diagnoses.
- Ms. Lori Jackson stated that it is difficult to go back and forth with the insurance companies when the schools no longer provide services.
- Mr. Michael Carrasco asked what the data show about dialect and how often that is an issue. Mrs. Ireland directed the group to page 53 in the handout – Speech-Language Pathology Services in Schools: Guidelines for Best Practice. Mostly they look at language differences (double negatives, not using pronouns correctly, etc.) and not necessarily accent.
- Mrs. Hermann asked where the line is drawn in terms of services when a child will not eat. Mrs. Ireland remarked that it is called dysphagia and is covered with SLP services. SLPs have training on the subject. Research found that the more SLPs are familiar with dysphagia, the more likely it will get treated. Mrs. Hermann remarked that some divisions are saying that it is not their responsibility, that it is a medical issue. Mrs. Ireland replied that her office gives guidance on intervening with dysphagia and Mrs. Haymes indicated that school health and school nurse services are required; if it is necessary for the child to access an education then that related service should be available. Mrs. Hermann noted that she sees a lot of feeding tubes instead of interventions to teach eating because officials say it is not the school's responsibility. Mrs. Ireland remarked that when she has come upon that issue, she addresses it as a transition goal; a feeding tube is safe for time being, but then SLPs should work on it as a goal. Mrs. Ireland directed the group to page 64 with regard to Dysphagia and the checklist on page 124.
- Mrs. Fran Goforth asked about preschool and was directed to page 17 in the book, as well as page 113.
- Mrs. Ireland indicated that there are Spanish versions of the handout that are not yet online, but that the office can provide.
- Mrs. Hermann asked about a child's cognitive level and speech. Mrs. Ireland directed her to page 30 where there is a section on cognitive referencing and says that parents can use this document to help get services. The book handout is also on the Web site:

http://www.doe.virginia.gov/special_ed/disabilities/speech_language_impairment/index.shtml.

Mrs. Ireland also passed around copies of *Talking EBP* – a newsletter for SLPs.

Committee Membership

A request has been made from the Virginia Board with Disabilities to join as a non-voting, ex-officio member of the SSEAC. The representative would be Ms. Heidi Lawyer, a parent of a child with a disability. **Ms. Kathryn Hayfield made a motion to allow the board to join and Dr. Scott Kizner seconded.** Mrs. Sandy Hermann remarked that they do a tri-annual assessment of which education is a piece; their responsibility is to the Governor. It would be helpful to have input to them. Mrs. Hayfield added that another option would be for them to replace an agency rep. **The motion above passed unanimously.**

Ad Hoc Subcommittee's Meetings

Members of the Ad Hoc Subcommittees met.

Ad Hoc Subcommittee's Reports

Response to Intervention (Rti)

Ms. Lori Jackson reported for the committee.

RtI cohort training in April focused on effective communication. The audience for all RtI cohort division trainings is central office leadership and school principals from the 22 participating divisions. Each region is currently represented with the exception of region 2.

The last training for this school year will be July 12-13, 2012, in Virginia Beach. The topic of this training is process evaluation of RtI.

- Kevin Davis will be a presenter on day one. He is an expert on evaluation program evaluation and wrote the manual on the Virginia Tiered Systems of Supports (VTSS). He works at the Center for Persons with Disabilities at Utah State University.
- Melissa Chinn from the St. Croix, Minnesota Educational District will talk about process evaluation on day one and day two.
- Validity and accountability will be presented by Dr. Kenneth Hinson, Supervisor of Program Evaluation and Dr. Paul Parker, Testing Supervisor, from Prince William County Public Schools.
- Dr. Dale Mann, Managing Director, Interactive Inc. will provide an RtI evaluation update.

The RtI Statewide Institute will convene at the Hilton Short Pump Hotel in Glen Allen, Virginia, on September 25-26, 2012.

All divisions in the state will be invited.

- Topics for breakout sessions include:
 - Leadership
 - Effective school wide discipline and behavior
 - Tier Definitions
 - Progress Monitoring
 - Data coaching
 - Family and community partnerships

VTSS manual will be disseminated next month.

New information:

Work with existing cohorts will continue for the next school year with discussion on how to transition the current group, and when to begin a new cohort. Questions remain about when this will take place and the criteria for a new group. A report from Dale Mann about the current data and evaluation is planned for an upcoming SSEAC meeting.

Mrs. Melodie Henderson asked if the information about RtI training is on the Web site. The reply was that a superintendent's memo would be forthcoming.

Personnel Ad Hoc Subcommittee

Michael Carrasco reported for the committee.

The subcommittee discussed Mr. John Eisenberg's trip to DC where he presented before the OSEP director and staff. The presentation was well received and lasted about two hours including questions. The response was very positive and receptive to the distance learning consortium. In about a year there will be a grant opportunity for Virginia to help put together the national consortium.

The subcommittee made a motion: Recommend that the VCU ACE develop a fact sheet that includes links to resources for awareness purposes for school and non-school professionals on how to seek assistance with students identified with ASD. The intent behind the motion is that the committee is concerned that the only individuals who are visiting the Web site are the SpEd teachers or related individuals but not the Gen Ed teachers and other school personnel/staff/administration. Unless someone is a direct staff member, then he or she does not receive the information (e.g. cafeteria members, bus aides, even general education teachers), and they might not know how to handle a situation. This fact sheet would help bring awareness to all personnel. The motion carried unanimously. Mr. Eisenberg suggested that the chair (Mr. Carrasco) contact VCU ACE so that the request comes from the SSEAC and not the DOE. He will provide

Mr. Carrasco with contact information.

Discussion on the motion: Mrs. Sandy Hermann asked how we ensure that the information gets to the necessary school personnel. Mrs. Melodie Henderson replied that it needs to go through the typical channels (DOE, SpEd), but that she, Mrs. Henderson, will offer to disseminate the list through the VEA as well. It may not reach everyone but it will be better than the current situation. It will also be important to distribute the list to the SSEAC. Dr. Scott Kizner asked if the committee should not just encourage people to go to the VCU ACE Web site for the most current information. Mrs. Henderson replied that it is important to have that piece of paper as well to make sure that people get the information. Mrs. Hermann remarked that it will be important to include the superintendents and not just the SpEd directors so that the information gets to GenEd teachers and other administration. She asks if the list can reference children not only with diagnoses of ASD, but also those with Autism-like symptoms, since not all children with these behaviors have a diagnosis of ASD. Ms. Lori Jackson asked that the PRC's be included as well.

Mr. Carrasco asked the members of the SSEAC to brainstorm other topics to be considered by the Personnel Subcommittee. Ms. Jackson reminded the members to follow FOIA guidelines and send the recommendations only to Mr. Carrasco.

Also discussed – it is recommended that training for the new evaluation systems take into account if there is a student teacher for that year, so that the student teacher system is not undermined.

Constituency Involvement Ad Hoc Subcommittee

Ms. Sandy Hermann reported for the committee.

Dr. Suzanne Creasey presented to the Special Ed Council on June 19 a report on Regional Meetings of Local Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC) Chairs and Special Education Directors (copies were given to the full committee). She has submitted a request for budget to hold another set of regional meetings next year. We formally recommend that we continue to hold these regional meetings. Based on the feedback received, we will help Dr. Creasey set the agenda for the next meetings.

The subcommittee suggests that the SSEAC get copies of the responses to public comment and discuss the public comments and constituency reports in this subcommittee. This discussion should drive motions and recommendations as well as future agenda items. The subcommittee would also like to develop a format for constituency reports to make them more succinct and impactful.

Ms. Sandy Hermann moved that the regional SSEAC meetings be continued pending budget approval. No Discussion. The motion passed unanimously.

Ms. Sandy Hermann made a motion that the SSEAC members get copies of the responses to public comment. Mr. Michael Carrasco seconded the motion. The motion passed

unanimously with Mrs. Melodie Henderson, Mr. Scott Kizner, and Mrs. Fran Goforth abstaining.

Discussion: Dr. Creasey asked if it would be okay if the responses were delivered electronically, but reminded the committee not to “*reply all*” to follow FOIA guidelines. It was agreed that electronic copies would be appropriate.

The group agreed to revisit a motion at the next meeting on the role of the Constituency Involvement subcommittee with regard to studying trends in the constituency reports and public comment.

Mr. John Eisenberg indicated that he will provide reports on the DOE response to motions in the future and that it will appear on the agenda.

Discussion about Committee Structures

Each year at this time, the SSEAC reviews the subcommittee structure.

Mrs. Sandy Hermann and Dr. Scott Kizner opined that it would be helpful to have a legislative subcommittee that would be proactive rather than reactive to policy changes and legislation. The current standing committee policy & regulation should meet more frequently to fulfill this suggestion. It may be necessary to replace the RtI subcommittee. Dr. Kizner also suggested that committee discussions take place on Thursday to give them more time and more attendance. More discussion surrounded the RtI subcommittee and whether or not it should continue.

Motion: Recommend the executive committee uses their discussion time to make a recommendation to the full committee. Mrs. Cynthia Bauer made the motion and Mr. Darren Minarik seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Future Meeting Schedule

September 27-28, 2012
December 6-7, 2012
April 11-12, 2013
July 18-19, 2013
September 19-20, 2013
December 5-6, 2013

Meeting Adjourned

Mrs. Christy Evanko made a motion to adjourn and Mrs. Melodie Henderson seconded. The meeting was adjourned at 11:52 a.m.

Meeting Attendance

MEETING DATE	2/10	4/10	7/10	10/10	2/11	4/11	7/11	9/11	12/11	3/12	6/12							
THURSDAY/FRIDAY	T	F	T	F	T	F	T	F	T	F	T	F	T	F	T	F	T	F
Eva Aikins					A	A			A	A			A	A				
Adam Amick													A	A				
Judy Averill			A	A					A	A					A			
Cynthia Bauer													A		A	A		
Jusolyn Bradshaw													A					
Michael Carrasco													A	A				
Christina Draper					A	A			A	A			A	A			A	A
Christy Evanko													A					
Fran Goforth																		
Kathryn Hayfield	A	A													A	A		
Melodie Henderson	A	A											A	A				
Sandra Hermann															A	A		
Scott Kizner																		
Mona Holmes			A	A									A	A	A	A		
Lori Jackson															A			
Bernadette Jones	A	A			A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A				
Jackie Fagan													A	A				A
Jennifer O'Berry-Ham			A	A													A	A
Darren Minarik													A					

MEETING CANCELLED - SNOW

Virginia State Special Education Advisory Committee June 21-22, 2012

**Suzanne Bowers, Executive Director
Parent Educational Advocacy Training Center (PEATC)**

PEATC is the federally funded parent training and information (PTI) center since 1978 established under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act serving families of children with disabilities birth to age 26 across the Commonwealth of Virginia.

PEATC materials and services are recognized nationally as practical, child-centered, and grounded in the firm belief that children with disabilities can reach their potential when parents and schools enjoy an equal and respectful partnership. Outreach efforts target the needs of Virginia's culturally-linguistically-geographically diverse communities and families.

PTI Highlights and Trends

Through the PTI grant, we provided individual assistance to 1,395 in May 2012. This exceeds our targeted number of intakes, which is largely due to the ending of the school year and final IEP meetings. Many of our calls in the past couple of months have been regarding the IEPs, Extended School Year (ESY), and summer camps. PEATC compiled a large list of summer camp programs that are available for children with Special needs.

PEATC continues to get calls about bullying in the schools. We appreciate the continued development of new resources regarding bullying prevention and are always searching for additional resources for our families.

Job Openings

Patricia Ojeda has left PEATC to pursue other employment. We are currently accepting resumes for the part-time bi-lingual Information Specialist position. Please contact bowers@peatc.org for more information.

Training

PEATC served on the planning committee for the Youth Summit that was held at James Madison University in June. Carolyn Beckett presented "Puberty and Sexuality: the Journey to Adulthood" during three sessions at the summit. The event was very well attended and feedback was positive.

PEATC continues to host the "Lunchtime Learning Series" webinars monthly. The last webinar "Including Special Needs Trusts in your Transition Planning" is archived and posted on our website, as are all of our webinars. PEATC is planning the next webinar on "Social Skills" with a tentative date of August 2012.

Technology

Website – 15,788 unique visitors from Dec., 2011 to Feb., 2012

Facebook – we have 945 fans

Twitter – We now have 107 followers. The Twitter feed is directly linked to Facebook, so each time a Facebook status/post is updated it appears on Twitter as well.

Outreach Highlights

The Outreach team has been hosting monthly IEP clinics in Spanish. Families who register have the opportunity to meet with a Special Education lawyer to review their IEP and discuss issues or have their questions answered. The next IEP clinic is in July. Please contact Berni@peatc.org for more information or to register.

PEATC has partnered with an organization that has scholarships available for low income families who cannot pay for ADHD and LD assessments. We have also worked with the GMU Psychology Department for free/sliding scale services for families in need.

Our most requested training for the Spanish speaking community continues to be “Understanding Special Education (USE)” which explains the steps of the special education maze to families. We hope to record a video that can be posted to the PEATC website on the special education process in both English and Spanish.

During the summer, the Outreach team will be organizing additional trainings for the fall throughout Virginia.

Other Exciting News

PEATC is in the process of completely re-designing our website. Please watch for the exciting changes and new resources!

PEATC is proud to announce that Mr. John Eisenberg will be giving the welcoming address at the Regional Conference for PTIs. The conference is held in a different state each year, this year being in Richmond, Virginia June 25-27.

PEATC would like to thank Mr. Doug Cox for all of his years of dedication and willingness to partner to build better futures for Virginia’s children.