

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

**The Holiday Inn I-64 West End Crossroads
2000 Staples Mill Road
Richmond, VA 23230**

Thursday, October 23, 2008

| SSEAC Members | | | | | |
|----------------------|----------------|---------------|----------------------|----------------|---------------|
| | Present | Absent | | Present | Absent |
| Judy Averill | x | | Robin Glass | | x |
| Mike Behrmann | x | | Fran Goforth | x | |
| Larry Blevins | | x | Melodie Henderson | x | |
| Suzanne Bowers | x | | Mona Holmes | x | |
| Bob Chappell | x | | Jacqueline Nelson | x | |
| Mary Ann Discenza | | | Jennifer O'Berry-Ham | x | |
| Christina Draper | x | | Peter Squire | x | |
| Sharon Duncan | x | | Tamara Temoney | x | |
| Anne Fischer | x | | Carletta Wilson | x | |

| Department of Education Staff | | | |
|--------------------------------------|---------------|---------------------|---------------|
| Doug Cox | Pat Burgess | Gloria Dalton | Pat Abrams |
| Cathy Pomfrey | Paul Raskopf | Judy Douglas | Susan Trulove |
| Judy Hudgins | Melissa Smith | Irene Walker-Bolton | |

| Guests | | | |
|---|---------------------------------------|-------------------------------|--|
| Kathy Maybee (PEATC) | Samantha Vanterpool (OAG) | Melanie Sterling (VCU-PPD) | Howard Ormond (Principal, NKMS) |
| Patricia Ojeda (PEATC) | Anita Swan (RIC public schools) | Pat Woolard (ODU T/TAC) | Carolyn Lamb (PWCPS) |
| Cherie Takemoto (PEATC) | Kelly Jones (PRC Hanover) | Steve Tonelson (ODU T/TAC) | William Bixby (Principal, Bull Run MS, PWPS) |
| Charlene Lee (PRC Chesterfield) | Suzanne Stuart (PRC WJCPS) | Kim Yanek (ODU T/TAC) | |
| Connie Wilcoxson (PRC Prince George) | Linda Ciancio-Braun (PRC Hopewell) | | |

Call to Order

Ms. Anne Fischer called the meeting to order and asked members to introduce themselves.

Business Session

Minutes

Members reviewed the minutes. The minutes were approved as written.

Membership Terms

Ms. Fischer reviewed the membership terms. She noted that members are presently being appointed once or twice a year by the Board of Education (BOE). Currently the only vacancy on the committee is that of Region 7 parent representative.

Subcommittee Assignments

Ms. Fischer reviewed subcommittee assignments. She asked for any concerns regarding member assignments. Members of the disbanded Data and Reports subcommittee were moved to the new Response to Intervention (RtI) subcommittee. New members replaced their predecessor on the subcommittee of which they were a member. Dr. Bob Chappell was placed on the RtI subcommittee. Ms. Jacqueline Nelson was moved to the Personnel subcommittee.

Operations

Ms. Cathy Pomfrey reviewed the procedures for travel reimbursement noting changes in state travel rates and requirements for completing forms.

Future Meetings

Ms. Fischer announced that SSEAC meetings would be held in the Richmond area for the foreseeable future. There was some discussion regarding options for improving public accessibility. Ms. Suzanne Bowers made a motion to approve the plan to move the next two meetings to Richmond and have further discussion at the April 2009 meeting regarding the calendar for the next two years. The motion was seconded and approved.

2009 Meetings

February 4-6 – Doubletree Hotel Richmond Airport
April 22-24 – Richmond
July 22-24 – Richmond

Public Forum

The Executive committee discussed and agreed to have a public forum at every other meeting. Members were reminded that they should all be present at the forum.

Break

Presentations

Behavior Support & Effective School-wide Discipline (ESD) State Activities

Dr. Pat Abrams presented Ms. Irene Walker-Bolton who introduced members of her team: Howard Ormond, principal at New Kent Middle School; Bill Bixby, principal at Bull Run Middle School in Prince William; Caroline Lamb, behavior specialist in Prince William; and from the ODU T/TAC – Pat Woolard, Kimberly Yanek, and Dr. Steve Tonelson.

Ms. Kim Yanek from the ODU T/TAC provided an overview. The program began in 2005 with 60 schools increasing to 102 schools in 2008 in school divisions across all 8 regions. The ESD program includes school-wide systems change to build capacity to maintain an integrated approach to student success. The activities are based on positive behavior or support research. The T/TACS serve as facilitators to assist and provide professional development during several years.

Dr. Steve Tonelson, ODU faculty, described how the project is being evaluated to determine the impact on student results.

Mr. Bill Bixby and Ms. Carolyn Lamb provided information on the implementation of ESD in Prince William County public schools, specifically; Mr. Bixby provided examples from Bull Run Middle School. Mr. Ormond, Principal at New Kent Middle School, provided more examples that illustrate how the positive behavior support principles are implemented in different schools.

Break

Public Comment

- » Charlene Lee, educational family consultant PRC in Chesterfield provided an update on activities
- » Patricia Ojeda, Latino Outreach Informational Specialist at PEATC provided an update on activities
- » Cherie Takomoto, Executive Director of PEATC thanked the SSEAC for support of PEATC

Parent Involvement Project Update

Ms. Judy Hudgins (VDOE staff) and Ms. Melanie Sterling (Partnership for People with Disabilities, VCU) gave a presentation on the status of the Center for Family Involvement, a collaborative initiative developed to promote family involvement and collaboration between school division personnel and parents. The Center has conducted the parent survey that informs the data for indicator #8 of the State Performance Plan (SPP) and Annual Performance Report (APR) for three years. Reports that interpret the results of the parent surveys were prepared for each school division, providing suggestions for improvement activities. They have also initiated a number of activities that were included in the SPP. Training has been developed and is available for local special education advisory committees. The network of local Parent Resource Centers has been strengthened by training and staff development provided by the Center, in collaboration with the VDOE. The Center also provides support to the Parent Involvement Priority Project Team, a group that includes representatives from each T/TAC, the SSEAC, local SEACs, Parent Resource Centers, PEATC, local directors of special education and staff from the VDOE and the Partnership. The management team of professionals and parents continues to work toward providing links and developing informational and supportive networks for parents statewide to facilitate the flow of information, training and technical assistance.

Lunch

Meeting of Ad Hoc Sub Committees

Members of the Personnel, Responsive to Intervention and Constituency Involvement subcommittees met.

Certificate of Appreciation

It was announced that this would be the last meeting for Ms. Sharon Duncan as she was concluding her first term. She has requested that she not be reappointed for a second term. Mr. Doug Cox presented a certificate of appreciation to Ms. Duncan and commended her for her work on the committee.

Ad Hoc Subcommittees Reports

Personnel Committee

The personnel committee reported on several areas impacting on personnel preparation in Virginia:

- » State budget cuts have significantly impacted state funded (often with federal Part B and C funds) personnel preparation programs in Virginia. Cuts were approximately 25%, reducing funding from \$3.9 million to \$2.65 million. Cuts impacted statewide consortia in SLP, SD, and VI programs as well as regional programs. Some programs had the impact

reduced somewhat by using Part C funding in Early Childhood to re-focus efforts to those populations.

- » Federal grants have been obtained by several IHEs in the state to supplement state funding and Virginia was very successful in obtaining planning grants to produce highly qualified new special education teachers, with Virginia IHEs getting four of nine nationally funded projects.
- » Dr. Pat Burgess reported on the status of state approved programs. One college has decided not to apply and will drop their program, but two new universities are submitting programs, bringing to 30 state approved special education programs in Virginia should they all be approved.
- » Currently, nine programs have been approved, and about half of the others are in process with expectation that all will be submitted before the December 31 deadline.
- » The Aspiring Leaders special education leadership program has now met three times around the state. All 30 slots were filled from 90 applications. The program is considered to be very successful at this time.
- » The Virginia Education Association has been in discussion on ways to improve the training of general education teachers on legal issues and instructional strategies for special needs students. They are investigating licensure requirements and other state sponsored incentives to obtain such training.
- » Dr. Burgess has asked non-IHE members of the Personnel Committee to act as reviewers for state requests for proposals from IHEs in special education. These grants will be awarded by the end of the year.

Response to Intervention (RtI)

Ms. Susan Trulove, RtI specialist, VDOE, provided an overview of RtI. She shared copies of Virginia's RtI guidance document along with a list of the fifteen pilot schools and a schedule of upcoming RtI pilot training sessions across the state. The committee discussed possible ways the SSEAC could help promote RtI.

Constituency Involvement

Members discussed possible options for future meeting arrangements. They discussed using Web conferencing and looked at what other options might be available. There was discussion on how budget cuts would affect such arrangements. They also discussed updating contact information and the use of Listservs. Mr. Peter Squire noted that he had signed up for the ConnectNetwork.

Policy & Regulations Subcommittee

The committee decided there is nothing requiring action immediately. Ms. Suzanne Bowers, on behalf of the subcommittee, made a motion requesting approval from the full SSEAC that should there be another 30-day public comment period and if needed, the Policy and Regulations committee would meet together to prepare a statement reflective of the SSEAC's initial statement regarding the proposed Virginia special education regulations and submit it for public comment. Mr. Peter Squire seconded the motion and the motion was carried.

Annual Report

Draft copies of the 2007-2008 Annual Report were distributed to members. Members reviewed the draft and suggested changes. The question was raised whether the report should be submitted in person or mailed to the Board of Education. Ms. Suzanne Bowers moved that the 2007-2008 Annual Report be mailed to BOE members. Mr. Peter Squire seconded the motion which was approved.

Review of Special Education Annual Performance Report

Mr. Paul Raskopf, Director of the office of Financial and Data Services, announced that Mr. Doug Cox had received the NASDSE Heritage Award at the recent annual NASDSE meeting. The award was given by NASDSE to Mr. Cox for his significant service and contributions to NASDSE and to the field of special education.

Mr. Paul Raskopf presented a draft copy of the State Level Special Education Data Profile to the Committee. Mr. Raskopf discussed several of the data sets in the Profile with the Committee. Presentation of the State Profile will be an annual agenda item.

Friday, October 24, 2008

| SSEAC Members | | | | | |
|----------------------|----------------|---------------|----------------------|----------------|---------------|
| | Present | Absent | Members | Present | Absent |
| Judy Averill | x | | Robin Glass | | x |
| Mike Behrmann | x | | Fran Goforth | x | |
| Larry Blevins | | x | Melodie Henderson | x | |
| Suzanne Bowers | | x | Mona Holmes | x | |
| Bob Chappell | x | | Jacqueline Nelson | x | |
| Mary Ann Discenza | | x | Jennifer O’Berry Ham | x | |
| Christina Draper | x | | Peter Squire | | x |
| Sharon Duncan | | x | Tamara Temoney | | x |
| Anne Fischer | x | | Carletta Wilson | | x |

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|--------------------------------------|---------------|--------------|--------------|
| Doug Cox | Melissa Smith | Judy Hudgins | Judy Douglas |
| Pat Abrams | Cathy Pomfrey | | |

| Guests | | | |
|----------------------|---------------------------|--|--|
| Kathy Maybee (PEATC) | Samantha Vanterpool (OAG) | | |

Call to Order

Ms. Anne Fisher called the meeting to order and welcomed members.

Reports

Assistant Superintendent

Mr. Doug Cox updated members on several issues including:

- » Progress on the consolidation of the two state schools
- » Dr. Judy Douglas was asked to provide a brief update on the progress of the proposed special education regulations which are in the process of moving through final executive review. She told members that the BOE did encompass several recommendations made by the SSEAC.
- » “I’m Determined” project which improves self determination skills (self advocacy,

problem solving, leadership skills) in youth with disabilities and develops resources for elementary through high school educators.

- » RTI is doing well with a very diverse set of pilot sites up and running
- » The data profile report provided by Mr. Paul Raskopf is something that will be very useful to school divisions, noting that they have to be familiar with their data before any improvements can be made. Now that there is more available data, plans are to set up a model that will be useful to other school divisions. John Eisenberg has been asked to head that project.
- » Every state agency was required to submit several budget plans to the Governor including a 15% plan. In order to meet objectives, the department had to go to the 15% plan which meant some department wide staff layoffs.
- » Regarding Part B, members were told that some groups are already preparing for the next reauthorization of IDEA.

| Constituency Reports | |
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| Name | Report |
| Judy Averill | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Virginia's annual transition forum will be held in Norfolk, Virginia on March 16-18, 2009. This forum will include the second annual youth summit and annual parent summit. » College 4 U is a free college event for high school students with disabilities, parents, guardians and professionals. Mark your calendar, December 6, 2008, 8:30-1:30 at VCU Richmond student commons. » Effective November 15, 2008, the Department of Rehabilitative Services will be closing Category I. This means that all categories of consumers will be closed until future notice. Counselors will continue to take referrals, complete applications, and determine eligibility even knowing that from November 15 forward, and until further notice, every eligible consumer will be on the waiting list. Those people on the waiting list when the agency reopens category 1, will be the first to be contacted and served. |
| Mike Behrmann | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » The Higher Education Act has recently been re-authorized and along with continuing several special education personnel preparation areas of emphasis, there was a major change which enables students with Intellectual Disabilities to attend universities, community colleges and other approved post secondary training program in programs that are designed for them and provide opportunities for those students with intellectual disabilities to be included in these educational communities. Students will be eligible for work study funding which will provide more opportunities to find employment opportunities and experiences on and off campus (employers pay only about 25% of the hourly pay and work study pays the rest) because of the reduced costs. The students and |

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| | <p>their families will also be eligible for student loans using the same financial criteria for federally supported loans as all other students and families. Since many families did not start planning for post secondary costs for many of these children early on, this should help them access this opportunity for their children with intellectual disabilities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » The TTAC budgets were recently impacted by budget cuts and one of the areas affected was the initiative for College Quest which has become a program in each of the eight superintendent's regions. The TTACs and VADOE want to continue the programs and are doing two things: a) develop partnerships with LEAs and IHEs to offer the programs more cost effectively (i.e. do not require TTAC to cover all costs), and b) offer the programs every other year, with regions planning programs so that if one region does not have the program that year, an adjacent region will. Additionally, the College Quest website will continue to be maintained to provide online resources. <p>The following constituency information is taken from the Personnel Subcommittee Report:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » State Budget Cuts have significantly impacted state funded (often with federal Part B and C funds) personnel preparation programs in Virginia. Cuts were approximately 25%, reducing funding from \$3.9 million to \$2.65 million. Cuts impacted statewide consortia in SLP, SD, and VI programs well as regional programs. Some programs had the impact reduced somewhat by using Part C funding in Early Childhood to re-focus efforts to those populations. » Federal grants have been obtained by several IHEs in the state to supplement state funding and Virginia was very successful in obtaining planning grants to produce highly qualified new special education teachers, with VA IHEs getting 4 of 9 nationally funded projects. » Pat Burgess reported on the status of state approved programs. One college has decided not to apply and drop their program, but two new universities are submitting programs, bringing to 30 state approved special education programs in VA should they all be approved. » Currently, nine programs have been approved, and about half of the others are in process with expectation that all will be submitted before the Dec. 31 deadline. » The Aspiring Leaders special education leadership program has now met 3 times around the state. All 30 slots were filled from 90 applications. The program is considered to be very successful at this time. » The Virginia Education Association has been in discussion on ways to improve the training of general education teachers on legal issues and instructional strategies for special needs students. They are investigating licensure requirements and other state sponsored incentives to obtain such training. » Pat Burgess has asked non-IHE members of the Personnel Committee to act as reviewers for state requests for proposals from IHEs in special education. These grants will be awarded by the end of the year. |
| Larry Blevins | ABSENT |
| Suzanne Bowers | » Region 4 parents continue to closely track the Proposed Virginia Special |

Constituency Reports

| Name | Report |
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| | <p>Education regulations process.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » I would like to request a presentation from a military representative regarding the issues that military families face regarding transitioning from state to state, special education issues, and any other issues that are ongoing with military families. » 14th Annual Circle of Support for families of children with Special Needs and the professionals who work with them. November 8, 2008 8:30am-3:30pm Hylton High School in Woodbridge, VA (flyers on the table) |
| Bob Chappell | Schools are not making AYP; looking at it; insight on budget cuts and how it affects school divisions; cut over \$400,000; we tightened 8 positions; we didn't on inclusion positions |
| Mary Ann Discenza | |
| Christina Draper | <p>Worked on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Mapping Arc's to see if there are any support groups for youth with disabilities » If they had any recreational activities for youth/young adults w/ disabilities » Eligible criteria for the programs » What day/times do the groups meet if any? » Is transportation provided for activities? » Is a certain age group targeted? » Working on finding out what services are provided by each center for Independent living » Is there anything targeted toward youth & young adult advocacy for persons with disabilities? » Will compile information from Arc's & CIL's to develop a database so that when parents or advocates with disabilities call for info about support groups, services, or recreational activities in their area, the partnership for people with disabilities can be a one stop center for that information |
| Sharon Duncan | |
| Anne Fischer | Talked about Smart beginnings; is no longer chair of local SEAC |
| Robin Glass | ABSENT |
| Fran Goforth | The Directors of Special Education are continuing to monitor the revisions to the proposed special education regulations and reviewing the data from the State Performance Plan. Additionally there is a great deal of interest in the new alternate test that is being developed. She also mentioned that Gloucester County was pleased with the regional scoring event for the VAAP that took place last spring and that scores were higher than in previous years. |
| Melodie Henderson | » The Virginia Education Association's (VEA) Special Education Committee met October 18, 2008. This meeting included in the discussion: State Regulations, Stepping Stones to Success, I'm Determined Project, Response to Intervention. I'd like to thank the VDOE Staff for providing resources for this meeting. |

| Constituency Reports | |
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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Teachers in various divisions voiced concerns that administrator's are strongly encouraging use of VGLA's over SOLs for use as assessments for special education students as a means to meet AYP. » The VEA would like to thank Doug Cox for agreeing to be interviewed by the Virginia Journal of Education staff on alternative assessments. This is forthcoming. » With great anticipation, I am planning to attend my first Self Determination Project Conference next week. |
| Mona Holmes | PRC in Charlottesville worked to do second Live and Learn Conference Saturday 28 th ; working on disability awareness |
| Jacqueline Nelson | |
| Jennifer O'Berry Ham | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Virginia Special Education Performance Reports measures whether a school division has met targeted goals. School divisions who have placed students in a private day school or residential facility with an educational component run the risk of falling short of the state's target for Indicator 5. These school divisions are making careful decisions to provide a FAPE for these students, and as such, we hope that data from the private day schools and educational programs would be used to provide information regarding the achievements of these students in the area of academic achievement, IEP goal completion, SOL test scores, transition and graduation. These achievements certainly benefit the school district's performance in a number of the indicators found on the Performance Report. The district should be recognized in a positive way for their partnering with private day schools to assist students in achieving. » The Private Schools Workgroup for Promulgation of Regulations Governing the Operation of Private Day Schools for Students with Disabilities and Educational Programs Offered in Group Homes and Residential Facilities in the Commonwealth is currently meeting with representation from the private sector as well as the LEA's. The workgroups are collaborating to rewrite the regulations governing Private Day Schools and Educational Components of Residential Facilities. » There continues to be a request from many of our facilities to review SOL testing windows. Our facilities administer the SOL tests based on the testing window for each of the school divisions for whom they serve. Consideration should be given to private schools creating their own testing window in conjunction with the state's testing window. Additionally, we would request consideration for the allowance of on-line testing for those schools that can technically support the testing. |
| Peter Squire | |
| Tamara Temoney | Virginia Department of Social Services is in the process of transforming our child welfare service delivery. We are making diligent efforts to decrease the use of congregate care placements and increase the use of relative care placements, foster homes and community based services. We have started working with 13 localities, known as the Council on Reform (CORE), to assist them with strategies to improve |

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| | <p>permanency for children and families. This reform effort is in correlation with the For Keeps Initiative of the First Lady and recommendations of the Casey Consulting Group that is in Virginia to help VDSS with this transformation. This will also result in efforts to have the educational needs of these youth served in the least restrictive environment possible. For information about the current and ongoing work related to the Child Welfare Transformation please visit our website at http://vafamilyconnections.org</p> |
| Carletta Wilson | <p>RIC SEAC will host training session– focus IEP process;</p> |
| Kathy Maybee (PEATC) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » As Virginia’s parent training and information center, some of our responsibilities lie in training and educating parents and professionals who call us for assistance and providing support and resources to parents. We are here to empower parents of children and youth with disabilities in their role as parents, decision makers and advocates for their children and to promote partnerships among parents and professionals. » The trends PEATC is seeing this quarter are the continuation of the lack of appropriate reading interventions for students in middle school and high school. » We are also seeing an increase in the number of calls of students being bullied by peers and no “real action” being taken to help the student. » The newest trend is that we are beginning to receive calls from the parents stating that their child who was in an “autism class” last year (preschool and elementary) are not being moved to “Non-CAT” classes and/or other programs that do not offer the same level of services. (i.e. in Fairfax County there are preschool “Autism classes” that offer ABA and then there are “Non-CAT” classes with children with autism in them but there is no guarantee that the teacher knows about or understands how to teach a child with autism.”) » VDOE Initiatives - We are receiving positive comments on the Parents’ Guide to Special Education Dispute Resolution. At the OSEP Director’s conference, we observed several other states mobbing Doug Cox permission to use VDOE’s translated versions of procedural safeguards currently available in Spanish, Farsi, Arabic, Chinese, Urdu, Korean and Vietnamese. » Substitute SOL Test - We are beginning to hear more about the allowed use of workkeys as an available option for students with disabilities demonstrate literacy and numeracy competencies at the 8th grade level in order to be able to earn the modified standard diploma. Workkeys is a job skills assessment system measuring real world skills. It connects work skills, training, and skill testing for educators and makes it easier to meet the requirements of federal programs and legislation. We are glad for the flexibility for students who struggle with the traditional methods. Not many are taking advantage of the workkeys. Now workkeys is in all 50 states and is becoming the national standard for measuring and communicating basic work skills. It deals with the foundation skills required by all jobs: reading, mathematics, teamwork and others. More on this substitute SOL test can be found at http://www.doe.virginia.gov/VDOE/suptsmemos/2004/inf053.html and http://www.doe.virginia.gov/boe/resolutions/2004/2004-23.shtml |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none">» NEXT STEPS Transition Program for Families Youth and Professionals» We had 2200 people from 40 states and Canada view our webinars. The largest draw was from Virginia with roughly 90% of viewers being families, educators and providers.» Virginia Parent Information Resource Center As we have partnered with more schools and groups throughout Virginia it is clear that a number of schools are very interested in the information we have to share about ways to improve Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) for students with disabilities.» Bullying/Harassment We are also seeing an increase in the number of calls of students being bullied by peers and no “real action” being taken to help the student. PEATC was a sponsor of Bullying Prevention week (October 4-11). This may be an issue that the SSEAC may wish to explore in the future.» There is some confusion on which set of special education regulations are in effect. VDOE issued guidance very quickly after IDEA 2004 legislation was enacted. They also issued additional clarification after the federal government issued the regulations. Schools personnel and parents are not clear about which of the regulations apply. Might it be possible for VDOE to issue a consolidated guidance that crosswalks federal guidance with the existing Virginia regulations?» There has also been confusion about what happens next with the regulations revision process. Melissa Smith helped Suzanne Bowers come up with an easy-to-understand explanation posted on PEATC’s News and Headlines October 9th.» Lastly, we have an information specialist position opening in our main Northern Virginia Office. If you are interested or know someone who is interested, have them contact Suzanne Bowers. |

Review of Public Comment

It was decided that public comments were mostly informational and need no action.

Meeting Adjourned