

Agenda for the State Advisory Committee (SAC) For Children with Disabilities

Advising the NH Department of Education per RSA 186-C:3-b

April 3, 2019 – 4:30pm to 7:00pm – NH Department of Education, Room 15

<p>4:30 – Welcome, Introductions, Approval of Minutes, Public Comment</p> <p>4:40 – Guest Speaker – Diana Fenton, Attorney, NH DOE: Educator Code of Conduct</p> <p>5:15 – Legislative Update – elected officials or Bonnie Dunham</p> <p>5:30 – Brief update on 2016 Equity in IDEA regulations</p> <p>5:45 – Bureau Update – Santina Thibedeau</p> <p>6:00 – SAC’s Top 3 Priorities – Moving Forward</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Need to increase student achievement and reduce the achievement gap, particularly in the areas of math & reading2. General educators not prepared sufficiently to teach/support children with disabilities3. School refusal / truancy <p>6:45 – Nominations, Old Business, New Business, Announcements</p> <p>7:00 – Adjourn – <i>next meeting May 1, 2019</i></p>	<p><u>Meeting Norms</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">♦ Avoid acronyms♦ No sidebar conversations♦ All members feel comfortable to ask questions♦ Respect group time♦ Be mindful of others’ communication needs♦ Be present & focused, be respectful of others♦ Allow for processing time before asking members to make decisions♦ Be welcoming of all public participation♦ Focus group efforts on SAC responsibilities
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The State Advisory Committee's responsibilities include the following (excerpts from RSA 186-C:3-b):

- **Purpose:** to advise the commissioner of education on issues relating to special education, and to promote communication and cooperation among individuals involved with students with disabilities. In addition, the committee shall review the federal financial participation and the level of state funding to determine their impact on the programs and delivery of services to children/students with disabilities.
- Advise the New Hampshire Department of Education regarding unmet needs within the state related to the education of children/students with disabilities.
- Comment publicly on the state plan and rules and regulations proposed for issuance by the state regarding the education of children with disabilities.
- Assist the state in developing and reporting such information and evaluations as may assist the US Secretary of Education in the performance of responsibilities under Section 618 of the Individuals with Disabilities Act.
- Advise the Department of Education in developing corrective action plans to address findings identified in federal monitoring reports.
- Advise the Department of Education in developing and implementing policies relating to the coordination of services for children/students with disabilities.
- Provide an annual report to the Governor and the State Legislature on the status of education of children with disabilities in New Hampshire.

Additionally, in accordance with §300.514 of IDEA, findings and decisions of due process hearings are to be transmitted to the SAC, after any personally identifiable information has been deleted. [Note: Due process findings and decisions may be found at: http://www.education.nh.gov/legislation/special_ed_due_process.htm]

Part B SPP Indicators

1. **Graduation.** % of youth with IEPs graduating with regular diploma.
2. **Dropout.** % of youth with IEPs dropping out.
3. **Statewide Assessment.** (A) % of districts meeting AYP targets, (B) Participation rate, (C) Proficiency rate.
4. **Suspension/Expulsion.** (A) % of districts with significant discrepancy, (B) % of districts with significant discrepancy by race/ethnicity.
5. **LRE Placement.** % of children ages 6-21 with IEPs served (A) Inside regular class 80% or more of day, (B) Inside regular class less than 40% of day, (C) In separate schools, residential facilities, or homebound/hospital placements.
6. **Early Childhood Settings.** % of children ages 3-5 with IEPs (A) Receiving majority of special education and related services in regular early childhood program, (B) Attending separate special education class, separate school, or residential facility.
7. **Preschool Skills.** % of preschool children ages 3-5 with IEPs with improved (A) Positive social-emotional skills and relationships, (B) Acquisition and use of knowledge and skills, (C) Use of appropriate behaviors to meet their needs.
8. **Parent Involvement.** % of parents who report that the school facilitated parent involvement.
9. **Disproportionate Representation in Special Education.** % of districts with disproportionate representation of racial/ethnic groups due to inappropriate identification.
10. **Disproportionate Representation in Specific Disability Categories.** % of districts with disproportionate representation of racial /ethnic groups in specific disability categories due to inappropriate identification.
11. **Child Find.** % of children evaluated within 60 days or state timeframe.
12. **Part C to B Transition.** % of children found Part B eligible with IEP implemented by 3rd birthday.
13. **Secondary Transition with IEP Goals.** % of youth ages 16+ with measurable, annual IEP goals & appropriate transition assessment, services, and courses.
14. **Secondary Transition.** % of youth with IEPs, no longer in school, (A) Enrolled in higher education, (B) Competitively employed, (C) Enrolled in some other postsecondary education, training program, or other employment, within 1 year of leaving school.
15. **Hearing Requests Resolved.** % of hearing requests resolved through resolution session settlement agreements.
16. **Mediation Agreements.** % of mediations held resulting in mediation agreements.
17. **State Systemic Improvement Plan.** SPP/APR includes comprehensive, ambitious, achievable, multi-year SSIP, with Phase I analysis, Phase II plan, Phase III implementation and evaluation, with stakeholder involvement in all phases, for improving results for children with disabilities.

NH State Advisory Committee on the Education of Children with Disabilities

Guidelines for Public Comment

The SAC appreciates the input the general public provides by commenting on the committee's priorities and/or other issues they wish to bring to the committee's attention. Public comment will be included on the agenda for each SAC meeting, generally at the beginning of the meeting.

The SAC has established the following guidelines for public comment:

- Be factual and objective; please do not mention a student and/or school staff by name.
- Limit comments to no more than five minutes.
- Be aware that neither the SAC nor the NH Department of Education staff will be prepared to respond to public comment at the meeting. Your input will be considered and, at their discretion if the issues raised are related to the SAC's statutory role/responsibilities, SAC may take further action at a later meeting.
- The SAC appreciates hearing about positive experiences, "success stories", and best practices, as well as concerns with the status of the education of children with disabilities, new or emerging needs, or situations that may warrant further consideration.
- Please note that the SAC is not able to intervene in situations having to do with individual students, but to the extent these issues may have broad implications for children with disabilities and, the SAC appreciates the public's assistance in making the SAC aware of the issue(s).

Persons or organizations requesting to make public comments or a presentation that exceeds the five minute limit for public comment are directed to make a written request to the SAC Chair at least 14 days in advance of the SAC meeting at which they wish to comment/present. The request should include a brief description of the topic on which the individual or organization plans to present, and the amount of time being requested. The SAC Chair has the authority to determine whether the request is related to a topic/issue that is consistent with the duties and responsibilities of SAC. At his/her discretion, the Chair may provide additional time of up to 10 minutes to the individual or organization for public comment. The Chair will notify the individual or organization that made the request of his/her decision about whether to allow extended public comment time for the individual or organization.

Please note: In addition to providing public comment at a SAC meeting, interested persons may also provide input to the SAC, by telephone at (603) 271-3741, email at SAC_Chair@doe.nh.gov, or letter to:

State Advisory Committee on the Education of Children with Disabilities
NH Department of Education
101 Pleasant Street
Concord, NH 03301

MOVING FORWARD WITH SAC'S TOP 3 PRIORITIES

Summary of Recommendations from Small Groups that Met During the March 2019 SAC Meeting

For each priority, SAC members can decide to:

- A. Obtain additional information from a guest speaker (within the NH DOE or outside of the DOE),
- B. Request information from the NH DOE on any initiatives/activities that are being conducted to address the concern,
- C. Make a recommendation to the Commissioner related to the priority area, or
- D. Determine / take another approach (within SAC's role) for addressing the priority.

PRIORITY #1: NEED TO INCREASE STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT AND REDUCE THE ACHIEVEMENT GAP, PARTICULARLY IN THE AREAS OF MATH & READING.

So far: SAC had the NH DOE's Reading Specialist as a guest speaker at our February meeting; Santina also discussed the DOE's Dyslexia Guide and possible related professional development

Group 1 Subcommittee Recommendations (reported by Bebe Casey):

- Continue funding for Reading Specialist in the DOE. Update: Bebe received an email from Heather Gage letting her know that the funding for Natasha's position was included in the NH DOE's requested budget and included in the Governor's budget. Bebe is working with Karen Ebel (on her own) to keep it in the legislature's version.
- Would like to hear from a district that has been working on improving achievement gaps in either Reading or Math. How are they doing it? What are their results? Bebe reported that work the Rochester School District has done work on this (Heidi Zollman, Curriculum Director); Bebe is willing to ask if Heidi Z would present to SAC.
- Ask the Commissioner what initiatives the state might be involved in now to work on this achievement gap.

Group 2 Subcommittee Recommendations (reported by Kim Carter):

- Look for and highlight bright spots. Asked if other states have successful programs; and if there districts that are more successful.
- Provide assistance to help districts access and expend grant funds effectively, especially small districts.

Group 3 Subcommittee Recommendations (reported by Bonnie Dunham):

- Endorse NH DOE's efforts with early screening of children for characteristics indicating possible dyslexia
- Collect data on the impact that early screening has had on reading performance scores
- Expand the early screening program beyond reading, to also look at potential issues with mathematic
- Identify reasons for the achievement gap by gathering data and drilling down to determine how much is a true gap in knowledge and skills and what other factors may account for the gap If a reason is test anxiety (e.g. if the gap disproportionately impacts certain disability categories, such as children with emotional disabilities, could the reason be due to test anxiety rather than a lack of knowledge/skills).

PRIORITY #2: GENERAL EDUCATORS NOT PREPARED SUFFICIENTLY TO TEACH/SUPPORT CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES

So far: Santina presented an overview of the NH DOE's efforts with UDL; based on a request received by SAC, Santina presented information on the issue of personnel shortages & the impact on children with disabilities, including whether the shortages are leading to children being placed in more restrictive settings.

Group 1 Subcommittee Recommendations (reported by Bebe Casey):

- As Santina noted, there is a high turnover of teachers within the first 5 years. We discussed that many of the state universities are dropping LD programs and aren't preparing our teachers to be in the classroom. Should NH start a mentorship/apprenticeship type program in the state similar to the new Special education director

mentorship program, as that seems to be successful? This might help with the retention rates. Are there any school districts doing that now?

- Reach out to the teacher credentialing bureau to learn more about loan forgiveness programs that are offered around the state. Are they still being offered? We know that's a federal government program, but by promoting awareness we might be able to generate more interest in teaching. [Raised a concern that these programs may be removed from the Federal Dept. of Ed budget, though]

Group 2 Subcommittee Recommendations (reported by Kim Carter):

- Provide incentives to teachers to get additional training/preparation
- Recommend NHDOE have conversation(s) with IHE network to consider adjustments to curriculum to improve teacher preparation

Group 3 Subcommittee Recommendations (reported by Bonnie Dunham):

- Ramp up teacher prep programs, including by having the DOE incentivizing programs that require more of a focus on preparing teachers to teach all children in inclusive settings (by including more special education training in the teacher prep programs for general educators).
- Encourage the use of collaborative (team) teaching where general education teachers are not prepared to include children with disabilities in general education classrooms.
- Using a reactive approach, provide short-term high quality training to support any general educator who is getting a child with a disability in their classroom next year (focused on the specific disability of the child). This could include mentoring.
- NH DOE could develop (or identify established) tool kits of best practices in inclusive classrooms and make the tool kits available to the field.
- Develop more coaching/mentoring programs.
- Disseminate broadly information on web-based and live training opportunities being offered by the NH DOE, LEAs and other agencies on this issue so that it can be accessed both for pre-service and in-service training.
- Provide in-service training during the school day to make it readily accessible for general educators.

PRIORITY #3: SCHOOL REFUSAL / TRUANCY

So far: SAC members discussed this issue in January and shared examples of current situations, consequences and available resources. Karen suggested having a staff member from RENEW speak to SAC; Maureen S. shared that G Zelin has presented on this topic at NHASEA conferences and has a handout that he has been willing to share.

Group 1 Subcommittee Recommendations (reported by Bebe Casey):

- Need more information
- Member of our group from Exeter talked about a program that Exeter is using called YEES. They (school district) contract with a third party. This program sends someone to the home if a child is feeling too anxious about going to school. They offer services to the families as well as to the child.

Group 2 Subcommittee Recommendations (reported by Kim Carter):

- Need additional information and data:
 - RENEW speaker
 - Share G Zelin's materials
- Get more information on foster care

Group 3 Subcommittee Recommendations (reported by Bonnie Dunham):

- Have one or more guest speakers ($\frac{1}{2}$ to $\frac{3}{4}$ hour each) to inform SAC of the issue and possible responses