

State Advisory Committee (SAC) For Children with Disabilities

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

October 5, 2022, 4:30 pm – 7:00 pm

Meeting Minutes

In Attendance: In Person and Virtually

Rep. Mullen, Carin Daddino-Rogers, Christina Dotson, Dale Boyle, Greg Magoon, Holly Carman, Janet Reed, Jennifer Blagriff (Chair), Jennifer Jordan, Joanne Grobecker (1st Vice-Chair), Karen Stokes, Kari Grimes, Katherine Shea, Kathleen Talbot, Marissa Chan, Melissa McKeon (2nd Vice-Chair), Michelle Lewis, Moira Ryan, Tracy Walbridge, William Caruso

Absent:

Rep. Cordelli, Senator Kahn, Alicia Houston, Alyson Eberhardt, Becky Owen, Christopher O'Reilly, Erica Peaslee, Esther Kennedy, Jennifer Pike, Joe Costanzo, Kara Buxton, Karen Rosenberg, Lance Paquette, Leah Lucier-Pike, Lewis Bellows, Rebecca Fredette

Guest:

Krishna DuBreuil, Lisa Moody, and Mary Ellen Hamilton

Welcome and Introductions:

Jennifer Blagriff did a call to order at 4:30 and roll call was taken.

There was a brief discussion regarding if there was a quorum or not and the change that was made in May to have 20% in person and a total of 51% both in person and virtual with this to sunset in December. Jennifer said that she would add this to the November agenda for further discussion.

It was stated that there is not usually a December or June meeting, and this was passed in June 2017. The December and June meetings scheduled will be leadership meetings and people are welcome to attend. This can be talked about and see if we would like to vote to have an official December and June meeting. It will be added to the November agenda, but for right now it will be leadership meetings and optional for members to attend.

Members introduced themselves and their role on the committee.

Public Comment and/or Brief Updates:

No public comment

By-Law Subcommittee: None since the retreat.

Parent Engagement: Tracy Walbridge updated the group saying they met in June, July, and August. There was a lot of discussion on what the parent involvement/parent engagement looks like and what community outreach actually means. Maureen Callahan came and spoke to the sub-committee, and we are planning to have Charting Your Life Course come in. This is a person-centered tool for an individual living with a disability or anybody really in community education and all areas of your life.

Reading Subcommittee: Jennifer Blagriff said that the subcommittee needs to get started back up and said that a lot of things they had talked about for recommendations to the

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Reading Subcommittee continued:

commissioner is actually already happening with the initiative. So, we need to come up with new things, possibly recommendations for specific screeners to be used, but the group needs to dive into that more. Alyson Eberhardt the lead of that.

Due Process Subcommittee: Moira stated they did meet but lost a lot of people and picked up a few more. Kevin was going to reach out to the DOE regarding the website but has not been done since he left. There is also a list of 18 recommendations as follows:

1. Mediation has to follow the rules of process
2. The Due Process book is not accurate and needs to be revised
3. NH DOE staff mediators should not influence parent decisions.
There were some survey complaints about that.
4. No more training done of hearing officers by district attorneys.
5. Website difficult to locate information.
6. SAC review of Due Process
7. Decisions redacted.
8. State complaints – find trends
9. Review by independent evaluator
10. No NDA required for mediation
11. No School lawyer if the parent doesn't have one
12. Need standard operating procedures to redact personally identifiable information and allow info to be processed and public in accordance with the state law.
13. Due process complaints get written in state law but don't incorporate federal law.
14. NHSEIS system does not allow IEP disagreements to be logged in the system, which means the NH DOE does not look at them or see them because they are just not entered in. It will not allow them to enter them in.
15. OCR complaints against the state should be reviewed by SAC.
16. Lack of standardization of Procedural Safeguards=school cannot be the dispute contact.
17. Investigators write state complaints in state law only
18. Parent hearing officer guide needs to be updated and show that the school needs to have the burden of proof. Lack of access to help is a main barrier. Add questions to parent survey for State Performance Plan questions asking if resources or knowledge is a barrier to getting enforcement of IDEA.

Jennifer B said that one of the recommendations from John Copenhaver was to try to limit our number of subcommittees. We definitely need subcommittees on the priorities so those are focused on and recommendations can come forward and the annual report will have the recommendations in it. We can have a conversation if we need to narrow them down and maybe incorporate some into one of the priorities that we choose.

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Unfinished Business

Meeting Minutes:

Regarding the recording of the SAC meetings, it was understood that the SAC members knew that they are for note taking purposes only for the DOE. There was never a policy developed and voting did not take place on this. It was shared that a Right to Know request was made for the recordings of the SAC Retreat meeting and it will need to be made public until the official written meeting minutes become available.

Jennifer B stated that it was her understanding that the meeting does not have to be recorded but if it is being recorded than it needs to be made available until the actual meeting minutes come out. She assumes that means the actual meeting minutes come out and are signed, voted on and all of that.

Michelle L stated 91:A2a written minutes must be available to the public 5 business days after the meeting whether approved or not.

Some members want to keep the recordings and make them accessible and available to everyone.

1st Motion made by Joanne G seconded by Karen Stokes

Starting the November meeting, a member of SAC who is present will take the meeting minutes and if no one volunteers, the vice-chair will take the meeting minutes and distribute them to SAC five days following the meeting in place of and the DOE's recorded minutes.

A roll call vote was held:

3 approved; 1 abstention; 14 opposed. Motion is denied.

2nd Motion made by Christina Dotson seconded by Joanne Grobecker

A NH SAC committee member takes minutes in an outline form to be posted publicly within 5 days and then these are expanded upon by NHDOE administrative support.

A roll call vote was held:

11 approved; 5 abstentions; 1 opposed. Motion is passes.

Annual Report

Jennifer B reported that the annual report is still being worked on and it is just really a historical document as we can't make any recommendations to the Commissioner because we never had a quorum to vote on any recommendations.

This year it will be incredibly important to get the priorities started so we can actually make recommendations to the Commissioner and vote on those and the good stuff we are supposed to do as a committee.

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She explained why the priority vote was pushed off until November because at the retreat people were just being told that it was being recorded and would be made public and wanted people to have the option to leave if they felt they wanted to.

SAC Retreat

Jennifer gave some key points and takeaways from the retreat. Also stated that she asked TAESE for a survey on the presentation.

John Copenhaver stated the importance of following the agenda and timeline for the public if they came in for public comment, etc. A discussion was had on timekeeping and how to stay on schedule.

Also, NH SAC is advising on behalf of all children and youth with disabilities for IDEA eligible and the key word is all. It is the responsibility to advise not advocate for an individual position.

It was mentioned that the retreat was not good for new members and perhaps leadership could meet with them ahead of time and have a training. Also, people need to know the retreat date ahead of time to ask for time off. It was also said that new members did not get the By-Laws and they are not on the website and there is not an updated membership list. Perhaps, we could have an orientation for new members.

Next year, looking for it to be more interactive, and breakout groups, to get to know each other. Also, more information about the actual committee and meetings, etc.

Priorities:

There are five priorities, but Jennifer would like to focus on three.

There was discussion of leaving the priorities at five and discuss this in November and then reduce them for the people who were not at the SAC Retreat or this meeting to have input. Or perhaps reducing the subcommittees and keep more priorities.

Continued Discussions:

- Add quorum discussion to the November agenda – end in December or continue? Send out the wording to the group as well as the State Law for this.
- Discuss if members would like to have a December and June meeting.
- Have the DOE data calendar sent to the SAC committee.
- Ask Becky about her listening tour and see if SAC can piggy-back on this. Possibility of having the SAC meetings in different locations in the state.
- SPP/SPR information sent out this summer. Send out every month with the agenda.
- Indicators broken up so that we can discuss at the meetings.
- Krisha Dubreuil - Indicator 17 to be discussed at the November meeting.
- When the subcommittees are meeting and will they be during the same time during the SAC meeting.

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Motion to Adjourn meeting.

Roll call vote was held

15 approved; 0 abstentions; 0 opposed. Motion is passes.