

State Advisory Committee (SAC) For Children with Disabilities

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

November 2, 2022, 4:30 pm – 7:00 pm

Meeting Minutes

In Attendance: In Person and Virtual

Rep. Cordelli, Carin Daddino-Rogers, Dale Boyle, Esther Kennedy, Greg Magoon, Holly Carman, Jennifer Blagriff, Jennifer Jordan, Jennifer Pike, Joanne Grobecker, Joe Costanzo, Kara Buxton, Karen Rosenberg, Karen Stokes, Kari Grimes, Katherine Shea, Kathleen Talbot, Lance Paquette, Melissa McKeon, Moira Ryan, Rebecca Fredette, Tracy Walbridge

Absent:

Rep. Mullen, Senator Kahn, Alicia Houston, Alyson Eberhardt, Christina Dotson, Christopher O'Reilly, Erica Peaslee, Janet Reed, Leah Lucier-Pike, Lewis Bellows, Marissa Chan, Michelle Lewis, William Caruso

Guests:

Lisa Moody-NHED, Krisha Dubreuil-NHED, Megan Carman-Student, Ashley Wells

Welcome and Roll Call:

Roll call was taken and it was determined that there was a quorum. Jennifer discussed the meeting norms and reviewed correspondence received.

Melissa McKeon volunteered to take the Informal outline of the meeting minutes.

Public Comment:

There was no public comment.

Subcommittee Updates:

Due Process Subcommittee: Moira Ryan, Chair said she gave 18 recommendations last month and is moving forward with the next steps.

Reading Subcommittee: Alyson Eberhardt, Chair not present and no updates

Parent Engagement: Tracy Walbridge, Chair said there was no update and is working on scheduling a standing date monthly to meet. tracywalbridge@gmail.com

By-Law Committee: Janet Reed, Chair was not present to give updates. Information received by Jennifer from John at TAESE will be shared with the committee members.

A survey from John regarding the Retreat will also be shared with the group.

Karen Stokes, as a new member, asked about the process to join current subcommittees. Anyone can reach out to the Chairs of the subcommittees to join. When the subcommittees schedule a meeting, they need to send the information to Jennifer so it can be emailed to the full State Advisory Committee.

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A motion was made by Esther and seconded by Dale to accept the September minutes with the correction made to the spelling of Holly Carman's name.

There was a discussion regarding the amount of information in the September Retreat minutes. Some felt that there was too little information for an all-day meeting while others felt that it was hard to capture all the information when people split into groups and information was hung on the walls unless you took pictures, etc. Another felt it was reflective of what was done at the retreat.

It was stated that the reason for minutes is to have a recording of official action that the committee takes. It is not to record conversations or presentations. Any of the materials that are distributed can be made available on the website. They are to validate there is a quorum and the official actions taken by the committee.

Others felt there were too many items grouped together losing the effect of what the priorities were, which left it open for interpretation. It is important to reflect the data and what was discussed, what those decisions are and what the final decisions are being based on.

Motion made by Esther Kennedy and seconded by Dale Boyle to approve the September minutes as amended.

Motion #1: To approve the September meeting minutes with the correction made to Holly Carman's name.

Roll Call Vote: 10 approved; 4 opposed; 4 abstentions – motion carried

A motion was made by Esther and seconded by Dale to accept the October meeting minutes.

It was said that under new business to bring up the recording of the meeting. Also, if there are changes that need to be made have them changed in the minutes before a motion is made to accept the meeting minutes.

Amendment: Motion was made to approve the October minutes with the amendment to correct Holly Carman's name.

Motion #2: To approve the October minutes with the amendment to correct Holly Carman's name.

Roll Call Vote: 7 approved; 1 opposed; 11 abstentions – motion carried

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Unfinished Business:

Discuss the issue of the NH SAC quorum amendment that is set to sunset on December 7, 2022.

Jennifer gave the background information on the change that was made to the By-Laws in May 2022 to allow a smaller number needed for a quorum. There was discussion regarding the pros and cons of this change and the impact of this change.

Esther made the motion continue with a quorum 20% of membership in person and 51% total in-person and on-line to sunset on December 7, 2023. This was seconded by Dale.

Karen S brought up the issue if having a quorum at the beginning of the meeting, then people leave and there no longer is a quorum.

Holly stated that as long as the US Department of Health and Human Services continues to have extensions to the Public Health Emergency, I think that is what dictates the ability to join by zoom and this needs to be taken into consideration.

Tracy piggybacked on Karen's statement saying that even though the minutes were approved that when the SAC meeting was started, we ended with 9 people (eight parents and one state employee). The concern is the fact that people are leaving early, how is that being documented and the support to help keep the quorum.

Esther stated that there are rules that Governor & Council put forward for this and she is just following the rules. It was based on percentages, you had to have a sunset and all that stuff. I would be careful on having a lot of discussion on this because this is really what we can do, and we are fortunate enough. If we don't do this, we can't have anyone on zoom.

Karen R said that the ability to have a quorum established by zoom was something that happened when the Governor issued emergency orders around public meetings and he suspended 91A's requirement for in person quorum in the public health emergency. The Governor has since withdrawn that order, so we are now governed by 91A, our Right to Know law, and that does require that the quorum be established in person. It allows for people to participate remotely and even vote, as long as you meet your in-person quorum by the people who are in the room in person. All votes must be taken by a roll call vote if you have people participating remotely and the people that are participating remotely, the state law says that only when such attendance in person is not reasonably practical and that needs to be documented in the minutes. That is what 91A requires. If we have continuing concerns that we are not going to meet a quorum, then we need to think about

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what our in-person quorum requirements going to be in our by-laws because we can't count people that are participating remotely towards the meeting quorum requirements under the State law as it is right now.

Jen P stated that we need to look at the state that we are in, and we are very large geographically, and makes it hard, especially those with disabilities, to participate. I think this needs to be made available to people and families so they can participate.

Amended motion by Esther to continue with a quorum would be 20% of membership in person however to take official action there is 51% total in-person and on-line to sunset on December 7, 2023. This was seconded by Dale.

Motion #3 To amend the by-laws for the quorum to be 20% of membership in person however in order to take official action 51% of the membership on-line and in-person must be present and to sunset on December 7, 2023.

Roll Call Vote: 19 approved; 0 opposed; 1 abstained – motion carried.

NH Department of Education:

Krishna Dubreuil introduced herself and her role at the Department of Education

Indicator 17 PowerPoint Presentation - State Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP)

- The SSIP is part of the SPP/APR
- The SSIP is Indicator 17 for Part B IDEA
- The SSIP is a multi-year plan developed by states to improve results for student with disabilities and their families.
- State must select area of focus – State Identified Measurable Result (SiMR)

She is asking the SAC members for feedback.

Phase 1 is collecting the data, doing root cause analysis, and speaking to stakeholders.

Phase 2 is to create the plan and begin implementing the plan. Phase 3 is evaluating if the plan is effective and if the Bureau is seeing improvements. Stakeholder engagement is part of the process every step of the way.

State Identified Measurable Result (SiMR): Increase the reading proficiency of all 4th grade students with disabilities in participating schools as measured by NH's State Assessment System (SAS) by at least 10 percentage points by FFY 2026. The ten percentage points came from feedback that was provided from the stakeholder meetings last summer. Feedback was received from the Parent Information Center from families, as well as this being a priority area of the SAC for the last couple of years. This information was taken into

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consideration when establishing the SiMR. The State's National reading scores are above the national average but not moving in the right direction.

Moira asked if the Bright Futures Survey was part of the information and Krisha confirmed it was. She also asked why the Bureau is starting with reading if math proficiency is in the single digits. Krisha said the Bureau has been in the process since January or February and at the time reading was the focus. The data on math has just come out and the Bureau does recognize the data. This was based on decisions that were made over time. Moira asked if there can be more than one variable such as reading and math. Krisha said that can be taken into consideration as part of the feedback and bring it back to the group. She also mentioned that the SiMR must be specific, and the Bureau needs to make sure it is honing in on one student outcome. There is a group within the department that is working on this plan that includes a reading specialist at the department, representation from all offices within the Bureau and the Parent Information Center.

Krisha went over and explained relevant data. Moira asked if Krisha had any statistics with private schools or charter schools included as public schools? Krisha explained that the data is based on the district of liability for the students. If the student is in a charter or private school, the district of liability reports on that student. If they have zero, it means they did not have any students that to the assessment in fourth grade. Moira asked isn't it standard [procedure if the student doesn't participate to issue a grade of zero. Krisha explained it is not a grade of zero it is reported out that there is zero percentage of students that took the State assessment. Esther asked of the 35 districts that met the reading target, how many districts had data suppressed due to cell size. Krisha will get back to her on that question. Krisha also said that of the 81 districts, 19 were remove because the cell size was small and could provide personally identifiable information. The 19 districts are a mixture of the 42 and 35 districts on the chart. Esther asked where the 19 districts are included, those that met the target or those that did not. Karen asked for clarification on the target for indicator 3D, Gap in Proficiency Rates. Krisha recognized that the presentation needed one more slide to show the data of the districts that are in the low gap are also meeting the target. The Bureau will start looking at that data next.

This PowerPoint will be shared with the members.

Krisha asked the members how and why they chose reading as a priority area. Jennifer said that they voted on it in September 2021 at the SAC Retreat. There was concern about the gap between regular and special education and how low the scores were. Esther added, in general people are concerned about students with disabilities and reading. She also shared that she has a hard time with basing our tests of the norm and value for students with disabilities on the norm and value assessment that is based on regular education students. Children have an IEP for a reason. She was hoping being on the Reading Committee that they could really look at successful reading programs and how to evaluate the reading for children with disabilities and how to look at the inclusive of a child and that particular child

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instead of one of many. Karen said that at the time the members voted on this, the Department may have had some resources available and a reading specialist on staff to be able to support development of evidenced-based research programs. Becky stated there is now another person on staff who has started dyslexia trainings that are free to all educators. Jennifer P shared her experiences and struggles with her child who has dyslexia. She feels that you cannot do anything else in any other academic arena until you are able to read at a basic fundamental level. Karen S wasn't on the board when reading became a priority, but she feels that reading is incorporated in any class that you take and needs to stay a priority to get our kids to get high school diplomas to get them to have a job and get a license. Joanne agreed with both Jennifers and Esther that reading is such a need in New Hampshire and that there is no standard assessment or screeners. She shared her screening experience of her daughter and agrees that reading impacts everything.

Holly asked for the data for those that were not part of SAC last year to be able to move the priority forward and to understand what was achieved, what the goals are, and what the benchmarks are. She also asked if the anticipated goals are aligning with what's happening in the SiMR. And the other departments as well, are we trying to do something in a vacuum. It was suggested that Holly review the previous minutes but there was not data collected as we weren't a voting body last year. Kari agrees with Esther that reading is one of the most important things a student needs to learn in school. She thinks looking at the State assessments would be very valuable and having a better school wide or a better system on how to collect data you would get more reliable and pinpointed data.

Krishna asked the members based on their perspective, what do they envision the work looking like at the State-level and at the local community level. Esther said she has a lot of families that refuse to take the State tests because of the culture. She encourages the Bureau to consider this when thinking about local control and a way to evaluate students in kindergarten, first, and second. Also consider the assessments that are already being used because those have already been approved by the communities. Krishna said a survey was sent out to all district administrators to gather that information. Jen P said that she would like to see districts held accountable for providing intensive intervention when it's deemed necessary. Jen B would like to see the State recommend or give some type of guidance to schools on what screeners should be used. She also would like to see guidance to schools on the type of instruction the students with learning disabilities in reading and writing should be getting as well as the days and times per week in a small group setting. She also would like there to be education for school administrators and school boards especially for the administrators who do not take LETRS. People in the chat also agreed with the need for training educators and community members as well as involving families in the whole process. There is a common question as to if something isn't working, are there requirements for schools to stick to a curriculum. Joanne agreed with others that a statewide screener would be hugely beneficial and echoed others saying that statewide guidance on reading interventions would be huge. Because there is no universal curriculum in New Hampshire, IEP services seem based on staffing and curriculum owned by the

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district and not need based. Karen agrees with Joanne and that IEP stands for Individualized Education Program and that federal law requires districts to provide FAPE based on the kid's individual needs.

Krishna shared the next steps for this process. There is a stakeholder meeting for families on November 9th from 6:00-7:00.

Priorities

The following are priorities that have been discussed.

1. Inclusive school culture/equity in education
2. Achievement gap/proficiency in reading
3. Personnel shortage/special education teachers and paras
4. Barriers/mental health/parent support/most vulnerable
5. Student centered high achievement goals towards a standard high school diploma and beyond

Esther made the motion to move forward with priorities two, three, and four. This motion was seconded by Dale.

Karen S said that priority five was the biggest during the retreat and would not vote for anything that does not include number five. Tracy asked if there was anyone else that would come in to talk about the priorities so everyone can take the information presented and then vote. She feels she does not have enough understanding of the priorities to vote. Holly expressed she does not know what she is voting on as she doesn't know what the goals are for achievement gap proficiency in reading, what the charter looks like or why the top three priorities have been repeated from previous committees. She does not know what the objectives and benchmarks are and what she is voting on as there is no scope to it. Esther explains that she believes there should only be three priorities because we get lost in too many of them. She also explained her rationale for choosing the three priorities in her motion but feels that if number three isn't addressed right away, none of this will make a difference. Esther also explained that once the priorities are set, members are split up into committees and they help to design the direction, benchmarks, and goals. Jen P feels that for number four there is quite a bit of confusion and a lot of opportunity for misinterpretation, and it can go in many different directions. She also feels that the staffing shortage is not something the SAC should be tackling. Becky explained that the purpose is to advise the Commissioner and look at what has been determined to be issues that we see in the State. That is what was done at the retreat, we say these five things are things we think are problems and we decide which ones to focus on. The committees flush out those problems, find the data, and they find the information about those problems and then we advise the Commissioner. Katherine agrees with Holly that we need to understand enough about the scope and objective to be able to intelligently vote. She also

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agrees with Jen on the mental health and resources priorities. She encourages the members to look for things that we can make meaningful progress on ourselves. Melissa echoed Becky's comments in that our purpose is to advise and choose priorities to delve into them. She feels more discussion on that the priorities are going to be gives less time to work on the actual priorities. Dale stated that working in the higher ed field students are not coming to them excited about being teachers. She also stated if we as a group can come up with an actual plan to give to our Commissioner at the end of this year with things he could look at and implement through the IHEs. Carin said that we can't address for our students if we don't address the teacher shortages. She also suggested though we may feel powerless to affect real change, our job is to advise the Commissioner and we need to elevate this to a higher level. Kari agreed with the priorities Esther chose and that priority five could be grouped in with priority four. Becky stated that the Office of Social and Emotional Wellness works on mental health pieces listed in priority number so we would be making some implicative work if that sways anybody either way. Tracy since we've done teacher shortage a couple of times why are we not considering doing a subcommittee so they can focus on that.

Tracy would like to amend the motion so that goals and benchmarks are in the priorities and priority number five is added. This was seconded by Holly. She wants to amend her amendment and have two, four, and five be the priorities with goals and benchmarks and have a subcommittee for teacher shortages. Karen S seconded the motion.

Karen R wanted to remind everyone that the charge of the SAC is to advise the Department of Education regarding unmet needs in the State. She suggested that the members think about what our resources are and think about what value added we might bring that is not necessarily somewhere else. Esther is not able to support this motion because we need the subcommittees to do the goals and benchmarks as they are too time consuming. Moira wants to recap the votes from the retreat to see what the three highest ranking things were. She said it seems like we work on the same things and make the same recommendations so it might be time to bring in something new. The minutes from the retreat show that priorities that had the most support were three, four, and five. Moira added that she thinks the State is well aware of the educator shortage and doesn't think we can add value to that. Joanne stated that she'd like to see two, four, and five be the priorities and agrees the subcommittees do the goals and benchmarks.

Motion #4 To add goals and benchmarks to priorities two, four, and five before the vote and create a subcommittee for teacher shortage.

Roll Call Vote: 6 approved; 11 opposed; 0 abstained – amendment does not pass.

Esther made her motion to include priority number five so the new priorities would be two, three, four, and five. Karen S seconded the motion.

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Motion #5 Vote on accepting four priorities for our priorities being two, three, four, and five.

Roll Call Vote: 11 approved; 0 opposed; 0 abstained – motion carried.

Motion #6 Carin made a motion to have the December 7th meeting which was seconded by Karen S.

Roll Call Vote: 11 approved; 0 opposed; 0 abstained – motion carried.

Motion #7 A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Esther and seconded by Dale.

Roll Call Vote: 11 approved; 0 opposed; 0 abstained – motion carried.