

SPECIAL EDUCATION

Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)
IDEA B State Advisory Panel

9801 North Kelley- Oklahoma City, Oklahoma – Oklahoma Department of Rehabilitation Services
12:30 p.m.- 4:00 p.m., March 2, 2017

MINUTES

Present:

Aaron Bullock, Andrea Kunkel, Ashlee Robson, Becky Moore, Bonnie McBride, Cassie Nash, Chris Karch, Cindy Gould, Erika Olinger, James Martin, Jamie Lahey, Janice Morris, Jennifer Karner, Jo Anne Blades, Kathy Wheat, Katy Young, Kaylin Coody, Linda Jaco, Linda Whaley, Lori Wathen, Lori Wieder, Lydia Wilson, Malarie Deardorff, Mandy Seward, Marsha Herron, Michelle Keiper, Michelle Koehn, Michele Scott, Nancy Goosen, Noel Tyler, and Tiffany Jenkins.

Absent:

Alicia Blair, Angela Chada, Ann Trudgeon, David Bloese, Doris Erhart, Freida Burgess, Heather Hancock, Jaci Tolbert, Jennifer Collier, Jennifer Robinson, Kayla Bower, Kim Osmani, Kimberly Heard, Latisha Coats, Martin Barry, Melissa White, Sharon Baker, Sharon Coppedge-Long, Sherri Coats, Todd Loftin, and Traci Cook

State Department of Education Employees:

Erik Friend, Ginger Elliott-Teague, Cheryl Denley, and Matt Wade

Visitors:

Mirka Bullock, Leslie Gregory, and Lynn Hodge.

Jo Anne Blades: Welcome

Ms. Blades called the meeting to order 1:20 PM

Ginger Elliot-Teague (OSDE): Updates / Results Driven Accountability

Todd Loftin was absent from the meeting so Ms. Elliot-Teague presented updates on his behalf. The grant application for IDEA B is due in May. The draft has been posted on the OSDE website and feedback is encouraged. The budget listed is estimated based on previous budgets. If anyone has questions regarding the draft or grant application, they are encouraged to call Mr. Loftin.

The Oklahoma Disability Law Center is updating their priorities for case selection and is requesting input. Surveys were placed on the registration table at the panel meeting (Survey Attached).

Results Based Accountability Presentation: A few things need to be changed in Oklahoma related to monitoring, oversight and data calculation due to regulatory changes coming out of OSA. OSA is asking for this to be done at a district and State level. Proposals are being presented for feedback on how to move forward. (PowerPoint Attached)

Erik Friend (OSDE): Disproportionality

Mr. Friend discussed Significant Disproportionality. New rules have been issued through OSEP (34 CFR Part 300.646 and 300.647). Mr. Friend discussed the purpose of the new rule, the categories of measurement, the timeline for implementation, action items for discussion, proposals and answered questions. The State is required to revise the calculations and definitions in regards to significant disproportionality. A standard methodology must be established and used and the State must address and clarify significant disproportionality in disciplinary actions. There are now five categories in which to report significant disproportionality which must be publicly reported. Now there are two different rules regarding comprehensive early intervening services and voluntary early intervening services. Students age 3 -21 will now be identified as of July 2020, however OSDE's suggestion is to start that now. (PowerPoint Attached)

Disproportionality exists when students in a racial or ethnic group are more likely to be 1.) more like to identified with a disability 2.) more likely to be identified with a particular disability 3.) placed in a more restrictive environment 4.) suspended or expelled more than any other students in other racial or ethnic groups.

Indicator 9 & 10 and Indicator 4B look very familiar. If a district is found significantly disproportionate in either Indicator 9 or 10, then their policies, practices and procedures can be examined. We are asking to align the requirements for the three indicators (9,10 and 4B). Discipline is measured in Indicator 4B.

If a State is identified as significantly disproportionate, they must provide the annual review as well as a revision of policies, practices and procedures if appropriate. The LEA is required to report publicly on the revision of policies, practices and procedures. Under section 613(f), the LEA is required to reserve 15% of funds to provide for comprehensive coordinated early intervening services addressing factors that contribute to the significant disproportionality. There is a change – previously if the LEA was required to reserve 15% of funds, it was only to go towards students that were non-disabled from ages 6-21. Now funds can be reserved for ALL students, disabled and non-disabled, from ages 3-21. However, this is not the case when the funds are being voluntarily set aside.

The timeline for implementation of the procedures is as follows: Identified LEAs will have to reserve 15% of federal IDEA funds for comprehensive CEIS in the 2018-2019 school year. Data from 2017-2018 and prior years will be used for identification and placements. Data from 2016-2017 and prior years will be used for discipline. Official notification letters will be sent to the districts in the spring of 2018. Information will be used for Child Count 2017. It is suggested that districts start including 3-5 years old now since it minimize the initial effect on the districts and the process will not have to be changed again in three years. There are 98 ways that a district can be identified as significantly disproportionate and a district can be identified in more than one of each of these areas. These areas include seven racial/ethnic groups and fourteen categories. All disabilities, six disabilities categories, two placement categories and five discipline groups.

Any questions, concerns or input can be directed to Erik Friend at erik.friend@sde.ok.gov (405) 521-2198.

Subcommittee Reports: (PowerPoint Attached)

Teacher Preparation, Knowledge and Practice –Chair: Linda Jaco

The Teacher Preparation, Knowledge and Practic subcommittee workgroup met on January 23rd in Stillwater, Oklahoma. Ms. Jaco shared the notes from that meeting. Marsha Herron reviewed a particular part of the meeting, providing new and uniquely different information. These notes were then distributed to the entire workgroup for review. This subcommittee was responsible for looking at professional development and the various issues involved in getting a degree and what happens after the completion of a degree. This subcommittee provides comprehensive feedback to the Department of Education regarding professional development and is requesting the panel's feedback on what the subcommittee has presented. The next step for the subcommittee is to submit their proposals to Todd Loftin for consideration.

Behavior and Suspension – Chair: Erika Olinger

The Behavior and Suspension subcommittee workgroup met on February 28th at the State Department of Education. They came up with six objectives regarding major concerns behavior and suspension. They identified the barriers that are causing these concerns. Dr. Olinger provided the example that districts may cannot afford to have quality behavior training or they are unaware of the resources that are available. The subcommittee listed the barriers and focused on specific solutions to those barriers. A suggested solution to the example that Dr. Olinger provided could be having a list of resources in the state of professional with behavioral expertise for districts to utilize when facing behavioral issues. The notes from this meeting are currently being compiled and will be distributed to the panel as soon as that is completed. One of the six items discussed was policy and/or legislation regarding seclusion and restraint. A bill was passed out to the House Common Education Committee on Tuesday February 28 2017 (152.0) which the IDEA Behavior and Suspension subcommittee encourages the panel to read as this bill goes against current policies and procedures according to OSDE and has strong points to consider (PDF provided).

The subcommittee is welcoming new members. If anyone is interested, please contact Erika Olinger. The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday April 12th from 9 am – 12 pm at the University of Central Oklahoma.

Lack of Special Education Personnel – Chair: Nancy Goosen

The subcommittee on Lack of Special Education Personnel met on February 16th in Edmond, Oklahoma to discuss whether there truly is a shortage of teachers and if that teacher shortage is only in the area of Special Education or if it is all related services. The subcommittee has found that the shortage is in all related services; it is not only Special Education teachers but also school psychologists, occupational therapists, and speech therapists. It is not only in Oklahoma due to revenue shortfalls, but all over the United States. 82% of Special Education professionals are stating that there are not enough professionals to cover the increasing number of children that are requiring services across the nation. 51% of all school districts across the nation, with 9% of these schools being in a high poverty area, claim to struggle to find highly qualified Special Education teachers and other professionals.

The subcommittee evaluated possible reasons for the lack of Special Education Personnel including, low pay, lack of respect, lack of training, insufficient funding, and graduate schools no longer accepting enough applicants. Suggestions that the subcommittee has to increase the number of qualified Special Education personnel are to have public awareness which demonstrates what school psychologists, occupational therapists and speech pathologists do. High school students need to be encouraged to pursue the field of Special Education. Ms. Goosen suggested bringing back the registry training for “Trainer to Trainer”. Dr. Olinger had suggested Intersessions where students would spend five days conducting universal screening and receiving data analysis. Ms. Goosen also advised looking for grants both in Oklahoma and Federal grants to help fund projects to assist in these efforts. Webinars and satellite conferences for school districts at local universities are suggestions that were also presented.

A barrier that exists for students who want to pursue a degree in Special Education is the cost of tuition. The subcommittee addressed possible loan forgiveness or a scholarship program. The option of students starting at a Career Tech or Community College was also suggested as a way for students to become acclimated to the field of Special Education. Fast track online programs were also mentioned.

There is a law in Oklahoma that has a minimum salary schedule and the bills that are currently asking for a 5% raise to teacher’s salary should be changed to 7%. The salary schedule currently tops out and the jumps in pay are low. This salary schedule should change in order to encourage qualified teachers to stay in the field longer.

Workgroups:

Dyslexia – Chair: Michele Scott

Autism – Chair: Mandy Seward *We had 34 total responses. We are looking at guidance from you, to identify the priorities we want to focus on first. There was a motion by Mandy Seward to have 3 priorities and Lydia Wilson seconded the motion. Linda Jaco made a motion for each panel to meet in between the IDEA B meetings and that motion was seconded. The panel broke into 3 groups and chose a leader and recorder to discuss the 3 priorities chosen, which are: 1) Teacher Preparation, Knowledge & Practice, 2) Behavior & Suspensions, and 3) Lack of School Personnel.*

Each leader in the group reported back. Todd Loftin later decided that an employee from Special Education Services will facilitate each of the 3 groups for future meetings. Jacque Cullen will facilitate Teacher Preparation & Knowledge, Shawna Keene and Jessica Collins will facilitate Behavior & Suspensions and Christa Knight will facilitate lack of Sped Personnel.

Jo Anne Blades: Meeting Dates/Location

The next IDEA B Panel meeting is June 1st, 2017 in Tulsa, OK at Tulsa Tech Riverside (Cheryl will send details).

Jo Anne Blades: Adjourn

Motion made to adjourn the meeting, seconded, meeting adjourned @ 4:00 p.m.

cld