

Minutes

State Advisory Council For the Education of Individuals with Disabilities

The Arkansas Advisory Council for the Education of Individuals with Disabilities met in the Conference Room at the Victory Building, Suite 445, on Thursday, October 17, 2013.

Council Members Present:

Sarah Allen
Christine Archer
Kim Coles
Dana Davis
Courtney Eubanks
Bill Glover
Valarie Harvel
Jim Moreland
Julie Mayberry
Deborah Swink
Marylene Tate

Special Education Staff Present:

Martha Kay Asti
Jennifer Brown
Samantha Duclos
Danny Reed
Courtney Salas-Ford
Donald Watkins

Guest(s) Present:

None

The meeting began at 9:16 A.M. with introductions and welcoming of the Advisory Council Members and Special Education Staff by Deb Swink, Chairperson. Advisory members were asked to review the minutes from two previous meetings held on April 11, 2013 and July 17, 2013. Jim Moreland made a motion, and Julie Mayberry seconded the motion to approve the minutes from April 11, 2013. The minutes from July 17, 2013 were approved following a motion by Julie Mayberry and seconded by Jim Moreland.

The Special Education Unit representatives gave section reports.

Martha Kay Asti, Associate Director, Special Education Unit – Lisa Haley, Administrator for Monitoring & Program Effectiveness was out of state attending the Southeast Regional Resource Center meeting. Ms. Asti presented the report for the Monitoring & Program Effectiveness (MPE) section. She explained that on-site monitoring began on October 8, 2013 and that MPE is working toward a tiered system of monitoring school districts. The tiered system would include a system of support based on the needs of individual LEAs. Districts would be considered as Tier I, II, or III with various requirements for monitoring and reviews according to the placement in the tiered group.

Ms. Asti shared that the new/revised forms Lisa Haley discussed in the previous meeting have been posted on the Special Education website. Those include the *Prior Written Notice of Action* and *Notice of Conference*. The *Temporary Consent for Placement* and *Parent Consent for Initial Placement* have been removed from the special education website and should no longer be used. The *Conference Notice Enclosure* form and *Informed Consent* form are no longer ADE required forms, but they will remain on the website. They may be used at the discretion of the local district.

Courtney Salas-Ford, Administrator for Dispute Resolution – Ms. Salas-Ford reported that the SEU had five new hearings that were requested. Two were settled and the remaining three are pending. There were three new state complaints, one of which was resolved through

mediation. She reported that there were 15 mediations and 11 facilitated IEPs since July 1, 2013, which is an improvement from the 36 mediations last year. This was attributed to better communication and understanding of the mediation process. Ms. Salas-Ford explained that a facilitated IEP is a cross-trained mediator that is present at the IEP meeting.

Donald Watkins, Administrator for Grants & Data – Mr. Watkins reported that the ADE Special Education staff was not been furloughed due to the federal shutdown. He added that interviews had been conducted for two vacancies in his section and anticipated that both positions would be filled soon.

He reported that the Grants & Data staff continues to provide technical assistance to District and Education Service Cooperative (ESC) personnel. Cycle 9 financial reports were due to APSCN by August 31, 2013 and Cycle I budgets were due September 30, 2013. This data will be used to prepare Title VI-B Budget Review and Review Notices. His section will continue to make monthly/periodic payments to district/co-ops/agencies for Title VI-B, Sp Ed Preschool, ARMAC, Medicaid match payments, Area Service Grants, and state appropriated programs – JDC, Residential, Easter Seals, HDC, DYS-JTC.

Mr. Watkins shared that Grants & Data staff provided finance training on August 6 for approximate 50 Special Education Supervisors and business officials at Crowley's Ridge ESC. Grants & Data also participated in the Special Education Non-Traditional Program meeting with school district and residential facilities representatives. Additionally, his section worked with other special education sections to close the satellite offices in Conway, Sherwood, and the MITS office and make the move to Suite 425 in the Victory Building.

Grants & Data worked to review and revise guidelines and procedures for reimbursement for Catastrophic Occurrences. The Student Registry was amended to gather needed information and eliminate the Student Demographics and the ABILITIES scale. He announced that training for Catastrophic Student funding will be conducted later this month or early November.

Jennifer Brown, Administrator for Curriculum and Assessment – Ms. Brown gave an update on the content she covered at the Special Education Supervisors' Academy. She discussed the two assessment groups and provided information specifically about the National Center and State Collaborative, which is the new alternate assessment for Arkansas students with significant cognitive disabilities. She added that professional development for curriculum and instruction was available at <https://arksped.k12.ar.us/caNCSC.html> and <http://www.ncscpartners.org/resources-cop-presentations>.

She explained that NCSC will be conducting pilot testing in the spring and that it will be voluntary for any school that chooses to participate. The pilot will be administered sometime between late February and April 2014. There will be a period of time for online math and then another time for online ELA. Districts could also volunteer to participate in the PARCC field-testing. Field-tests will be conducted with both computer and paper/pencil versions. PARCC accommodations that differ from current allowable accommodations will be written into student IEPs.

Ms. Brown reported that all Educational Service Cooperatives had hired their Behavior Support Specialist (BSS) with the exception of one. That one is contracting on a purchase service basis until they are able to hire a full time BSS. CIRCUIT is still being utilized for the purpose of making referrals and requesting technical assistance from grant groups, including the behavior

support specialist. Since July 2013, 238 referrals have been made through CIRCUIT. She announced that six professional development opportunities have been provided by the ADE SEU this school year for the BSS. Upcoming professional development opportunities planned are: *Functional Behavior Assessment and Behavior Planning: Dr. Eric Hartwig*, October 29 & 30, 2013 and *Essentials for Living: Dr. Patrick McGreevy and Troy Fry*, November 21 & 22, 2013.

Martha Kay Asti, Associate Director, Special Education Unit – Ms. Asti provided a report for the State Program Development section. On September 2, 2013, the Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services notified the ADE that our application for the State Technical Assistance Projects to Improve Services and Results for Children who are Deaf-Blind grant, was approved and funded. CAYSI (Arkansas Deafblind Project) is a five year grant and that will be completed September 30, 2018. This year Arkansas had 142 students on the registry. Recently the Project received two additional referrals to add to the 8 pending ones. CAYSI provides technical assistance to assist students with dual sensory impairments, their families and teachers. During this spring, eight students received individualized consultations (6 school based and 2 home visits). These were conducted in Monticello, Ashdown, Mayflower, and Little Rock. CAYSI and Easter Seals Outreach continue to collaborate, plan, and present workshops to teachers and service providers of children with significant disabilities on best practices for instruction. This workshop, “Meeting the Needs of Students with Severe/Multiple Disabilities: Doing What Works!” was conducted in Little Rock, Branch, Pine Bluff and Shirley.

The Arkansas Co-Teaching Project continues to be requested by many schools and will be providing yearlong professional development to a statewide cohort of 19 schools from 7 districts during 2013-2014. Of the school represented, two have been identified by the ADE as Priority Schools. In addition to the traditional face-to-face sessions, the Arkansas Co-Teaching Project will be providing a variety of ongoing supports throughout 2013-2014. Onsite coaching will be provided to all schools. The Co-Teaching Project continues to work on resources that will be available to administrators, co-teachers, and other support staff in Arkansas. Plans are also in the works with AETN to create an IDEAS online co-teaching course for administrators. As always, the Co-Teaching staff continues to offer technical assistance to all schools interested in starting or improving a co-teaching program.

Howie Knoff, Project Director, SPDG – Dr. Knoff announced a new hire, Petra Bland, who has worked in ADE SEU for many years, was chosen by Martha Kay Asti to take over the vacant special education recruitment/retention position. Ms. Bland will work with SPDG in the Goal 4 area. There are two other positions open at this time and it is anticipated that one will be filled soon. In addition SPDG continues to highlight three major professional development initiatives for the U.S. Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) in the areas of effective instruction, literacy, and behavior. SPDG staff completed a major project developing a video/YouTube tape with school staff from across the state discussing their involvement in school-wide Positive Behavioral Support Systems (PBSS), implementation, and its impact on their schools, staff, and students. The tape will be placed on the Home Page of the SPDG website and will be used in training and the promotion of their work. The SPDG continues to support special education recruitment and retention activities across the state, as well as financially supporting paraprofessionals working toward their highly qualified status and undergraduate students who are earning licensure in different areas of special education. Dr. Knoff represented SPDG at the annual OSEP Grant Directors’ Conference in Washington, DC from July 14-17, 2013. Jennifer Gonzales presented nationally in September on the SPDG’s involvement in the state’s Common Core State Standards preparation and implementation.

Martha Kay Asti, Associate Director, Special Education – Ms. Asti reported that Jeanie Donaldson, MITS Director was unable to be at the meeting. Ms. Asti briefly went over the first quarter report for Medicaid. She reminded members that schools have to get parental consent to release student information for Vision & Hearing Screenings. The Revalidation Process has not officially begun, but the new process will be implemented for providers, and that they are completing new applications at this time. She explained that schools would have to be seen as providers by private insurance companies so the districts can recoup funds for medical services being provided by the schools. We are waiting to see how the process will work for the Medicaid private option waiver, once it is approved by CMS. The MITS office will be moving to the Victory Building on October 17 & 18, 2013. Notices will be sent out to districts for the address change.

Martha Kay Asti, Associate Director, Special Education – Dr. Jody Fields was unable to attend the meeting but did submit her report from IDEA Data and Research. Ms. Asti provided a summary of the information to Council members. Rajan Arora, Carrie Anderson and Dr. Fields provided on-site workshops on eSchool. They conducted data entry training for LEA special education staff. They completed the Cycle 7 review during September. It was announced that Mr. Arora has been assigned to the Special Education office as the acting IT Coordinator following the departure of the individual in that position. The IT Coordinator position is currently being advertised.

Dr. Field's presented Arkansas' process for collecting post-school outcomes data to the National center for Post-school Outcomes' Community of Practice (COP) via a webinar in September. Part B in partnership with Part C applied for and was selected to be a state partner for the DaSy Center's Early Childhood Framework project. The partnership required the participation of the State's Data Managers and Early Childhood Coordinators for Part B and Part C. Arkansas is one of 7 states involved in the project. DaSy is an OSEP funded center focusing on early childhood (0-5) data systems. Dr. Fields and Carrie Anderson attended the Fall EIMAC meeting in Washington, DC. Also, Dr. Fields attended the Southeast Regional Resource Center (SERRC) meeting in New Orleans, LA along with Ms. Lisa Haley.

Jennifer Brown, Administrator for Curriculum and Assessment – Ms. Brown provided information on elective courses. She explained that the students' IEP team determines the level of participation in elective or "pull out" courses. The IEP team is mandated to ensure the student is educated in the least restrictive environment, and is to consider the supports, aids, and supplemental services that are necessary to support a student in the general education environment with typically developing peers. She added that Section 13 of the Arkansas Special Education Regulations addresses Least Restrictive Environment.

In response to a question about physical education for students with disabilities, Arkansas does not have a specific teacher license area for Adaptive Physical Education, and there are currently no teaching preparation programs in Arkansas for this. Some universities do offer courses in adaptive physical education as an elective, and many teacher preparation programs in Arkansas require coursework in teaching with students with disabilities. Physical education services for students with disabilities are addressed in the Arkansas Special Education Regulations in Section 5.07. The most frequent method for providing specially designed physical education is through the collaboration of the physical education teacher, the special education teacher or coordinator, and when applicable, the related service providers for the student – primarily the physical therapist and/or occupational therapist.

Martha Kay Asti, Associate Director, Special Education – Ms. Asti announced that the Arkansas Department of Education (lead agency) submitted and received funding for the grant, Promoting the Readiness of Minors in Supplemental Security Income (PROMISE). The grant is a 5-year research grant. It was collaboratively written by many state agencies, each one committing to participate in the model project. Those agencies included: Arkansas Department of Career Education (Arkansas Rehabilitation Services and Adult Education), Arkansas Department of Workforce Services, Arkansas Department of Human Services (Medicaid, Division of Blind Services, Division of Developmental Disability Services, Division of Behavioral Health Services), Arkansas Department of Health, Sources for Community Independent Living Services, the Clinton Foundation and the University of Arkansas. The PROMISE Partners propose to increase educational attainment for youth SSI recipients 14-16 years of age and their families; improve rates of employment, earnings and job retention for recipients and their families; increase total household income for participants and families; and reduce SSI payments over the long-term. To accomplish these goals, PROMISE Partners will implement a Model Demonstration Project (MDP) incorporating the key intervention strategies of intensive case management services, in-school and supplemental training, and two paid competitive work experiences for youth recipients of up to 200 hours each. PROMISE will recruit enough eligible participants to have 1000 child recipients and families in the treatment group and 1000 child recipients and families in the control group. PROMISE staff will be trained in data collection procedures and the importance of fidelity to the model in order to obtain accurate data.

It was announced that the next Advisory Council Meeting will be held Thursday, January 23, 2014.

Ms. Swink asked if there were any topic suggestions for future meetings.

Julie Mayberry talked about being concerned about playground equipment in all school districts and student access to that equipment for students with disabilities to make sure they meet ADA requirements.

There were no additional questions or comments.

Jim Moreland gave the motion to adjourn. Sarah Allen seconded the motion. The meeting adjourned at 1:39 P.M.