

**State Special Education Advisory Committee**  
**DRAFT Meeting Minutes**  
**July 21-22, 2005**  
**Holiday Inn at Koger Center**  
**Richmond, Virginia 23235**

**THURSDAY JULY 21, 2005**

**MEMBERS PRESENT**

Michael Behrmann, Charlene Christopher, , Emily Dreyfus, Stacie Ellis, Anne Fischer, Heidi Lawyer, David Martin, Cindy Mills, Linda Richardson, Rick Richardson, Carmen Sanchez, Peter Squire, Mike Wong

**STAFF PRESENT**

Pat Abrams, Doug Cox, Judy Douglas, Judy Hudgins, Cathy Pomfrey, Paul Raskopf, Sandra Ruffin, Nate Sparks, Vivian Stith-Williams, Irene Walker-Bolton, Kelley Wynne

The Chair, Charlene Christopher called the meeting to order and distributed copies of the Bylaws. Introductions were provided.

Ms. Christopher distributed the past meeting minutes. The April meeting minutes were approved with corrected spelling of Annett Sannuti's name on page 3.

**Motion:** Mike Behrmann made the motion and it carried.

**Membership**

Mr. David Martin and Ms. Leslie Snyder are to be reappointed. New appointments include: Parent region VI, Representative from Juvenile Justice/Corrections agency and a representative from the child welfare foster care system. The appointments are expected to be made at the September Board of Education meeting.

**Nominations Committee**

Ms. Anne Fischer nominated Carmen Sanchez to fill vacancy of at-large position on the executive committee.

**Motion:** The motion carried.

Ms. Anne Fischer agreed to serve in category of secretary. David Martin nominated; Stacie Ellis seconded. Motion carried. As Anne Fischer is on executive committee, an at-large position is vacant. Nomination for this position should be submitted at the October meeting.

## **Subcommittee Structure**

Ms. Christopher reviewed the executive committee's recommended new subcommittee structure. Discussion followed. The present members indicated committees they prefer. Assignments will be made at the October meeting.

<b>STANDING SUBCOMMITTEES</b>	<b>AD HOC SUBCOMMITTEES</b>
Executive	Data & Reports
Nominating	Constituency Involvement
State Operated Program	Restraint & Seclusion
Policy & Regulation	Autism

## **SSEAC Report to Virginia Board of Education**

The SSEAC annual report and communicating with the State Board of Education was discussed.

**Motion:** Mike Behrmann moved that the SSEAC continue with an annual report and quarterly supplements, as needed. Rick Richardson seconded. Motion carried.

Ms. Christopher will develop the annual report covering the period of 2004-05 and send a draft to the SSEAC members for their review and feedback. The report will be discussed for approval at the October meeting.

## **Future Meeting Dates and Locations**

Ms. Christopher provided a brief summary of past meeting dates and locations. The committee members agreed to travel outside of Richmond for two meetings each year and set a two-year schedule. The 2006-07 schedule is considered tentative until revisited in July 2006.

October 6-7, 2005 – Prince William  
January 12-13, 2006 – Richmond  
April 26, 27-28, 2006 – Abingdon  
July 13-14, 2006 – Richmond

October 19-20, 2006 - Harrisonburg  
January 11-12, 2007- Richmond  
April 19-20, 2007 - South Hill  
July 19-20, 2007 - Richmond

## **Constituency Reports**

Anne Fischer (representing parents in region 2) expressed issues about losing a local special education director and more requests for placement of students with disabilities in regular classes.

Emily Dreyfus (representing parents in region 5) expressed issues on secondary transition, lack of placement in regular classrooms, and confusion about the new Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA) 2004 requirements.

Carmen Sanchez (representing parents in region 4) voiced concerns similar to the previous constituents' reports and added discipline as a concern in her region.

Heidi Lawyer (representing parents in region 1) expressed concern about understanding the new IDEA 2004 mandates and implications for local policies.

Stacie Ellis (representing parents in region 3) expressed concern about secondary transition.

Rick Richardson (representing local special education administrators) expressed that directors' priority is to be in compliance with the new IDEA 2004 and that the Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) has been very helpful. The local directors are also waiting for guidance from the U.S. Department of Education on the additional two percent of students with disabilities who can be waived from on-grade level testing.

David Martin (representing school division superintendents) contacted the Virginia Association of School Superintendents (VASS) leadership regarding the SSEAC's recommendation to the Board of Education for local policy on the use of restraint and seclusion. After the Board of Education is contacted, this information will be disseminated to VASS membership.

Linda Richardson (representing parents in region 8) expressed concerns from parents of students leaving high school and inadequate preparation for the workplace.

Mike Behrmann (representing higher education faculty) expressed concerns with the new IDEA 2004 highly qualified requirements for special education teachers.

Peter Squire (representing persons with disabilities) expressed that the youth groups with which he is involved don't know about the policies that have an impact on their education experience and that people making policy should go directly to youth to get their input. Assistive technology is an area where youth need better services

### **Assistant Superintendent's Report**

Mr. Doug Cox, assistant superintendent for special education and student services, announced new Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) staff members: Dr. Vivian Stith-Williams, parent ombudsman; Mr. Tom Manthey, coordinator of the state improvement grant; Mr. Ron Geiersbach, due process hearing coordinator.

Mr. Cox's report included:

1. An update on the U.S. Office of Special Education's monitoring verification visit. A copy of the letter was provided.
2. An update of the consolidation of the two state schools for the deaf and the blind. Two proposals to consolidate the schools were received and are on the Department of

General Services website. The Board of Education will be discussing this at the July 27 meeting.

3. An update on the proposed licensure regulations that included revisions to the special education teaching endorsements. The recommendations made by the task force were accepted by the Advisory Board on Teacher Education and Licensure (ABTEL) and will be reviewed by the BOE at the July 27 meeting. There was discussion about the possible need to change them to address elementary and secondary due to the IDEA 2004 requirements for highly qualified special education teachers.

### **Public Comment**

1. Mr. Tim Moore expressed his desire for the SSEAC to address issues with high school students to have access to regular diplomas.
2. Ms. Cherie Takemoto encouraged the SSEAC to take an active role in the revisions of the new IDEA state regulations to ensure parent rights and involvement. She expressed desire to have the revised procedural safeguards document quickly translated into other languages. The Parent Educational Advocacy and Training Center (PEATC) received issues on several topics including: IEP measurable goals/objectives, discipline and use of homebound for placement, and access to regular education curriculum and classrooms.
3. Mr. Graham Peers and Mrs. Jennifer Peers expressed concern about the proposed placement outside of the regular classroom for their daughter.
4. Ms. Paige Shaw invited people to attend training sponsored by the Endependence Center.

*The committee recessed for lunch.*

### **Assistant Superintendent's Report, continued**

Mr. Nathan Sparks provided an update on the new option available for students with disabilities to participate in the state assessment, the Virginia Grade Level Alternative assessment (VGLA). The audit was successful. Additional information will be presented at the October SSEAC meeting.

**Presentation - Crosswalk of Essential IDEA 2004 Mandates and Proposed Federal Regulations** (Dr. Judy Douglas and Ms. Kelly Wynne, VDOE, Office of Dispute Resolution and Administrative Services)

Dr. Douglas presented information on the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) that was reauthorized in 2004. School divisions were provided with information

and training to distinguish which areas of the IDEA 2004 statute change the current Virginia special education regulations, because they will be held to the statute as of July 1, 2005. The U.S. Office of Special Education released proposed regulations based on the IDEA 2004 law for public comment. After they become final, then Virginia can begin revising the State special education regulations. The changes were reviewed.

## **FRIDAY JULY 22, 2005**

### **MEMBERS PRESENT**

Michael Behrmann, Charlene Christopher, Emily Dreyfus, Anne Fischer, Heidi Lawyer, Linda Richardson, Carmen Sanchez, Peter Squire, Mike Wong

### **STAFF PRESENT**

Pat Abrams, Doug Cox, Cathy Pomfrey, Irene Walker-Bolton, Judy Hudgins, Paul Raskopf

### **Subcommittee Reports**

#### **Restraint and Seclusion Guidelines**

Ms. Irene Walker-Bolton (VDOE staff to the subcommittee) reviewed the draft document. There was discussion addressing the listing of committee members and the title.

**Motion** - Carmen Sanchez moved that all reports from SSEAC not include individual names of SSEAC members, but do include names of subcommittee members involved in said report. – seconded by Mike Behrmann, motion carried

**Motion** - Emily Dreyfus moved that a note be added to preface that the policy applies to all students – Carmen Sanchez seconded, motion carried

**Motion** - Heidi Lawyer moved to change the title to “Guidelines for the Development of Policies and Procedures for Managing Student Behaviors in Emergency Conditions in the Public Schools of Virginia focusing on Physical Restraint and Behavior”. – Mike Behrmann seconded, motion carried

**Motion** - Charlene Christopher moved to send the document with a letter (from the SSEAC) requesting the Board of Education to require local school divisions to have a policy on restraint and seclusion. – motion carried, Emily Dreyfus abstained

## **Assistant Superintendent's Report, continued**

### **Service Delivery/Staffing Taskforce**

Dr. Patricia Abrams provided information on convening a task force to study service delivery and staffing, including caseloads, to make recommendations for policy and guidance. The dates for the meetings are October 4, 5 and November 9, 10, 2005. Committee representation was requested. The following members expressed interest: Charlene Christopher, Anne Fischer, Mike Behrmann. Peter Squire recommended that youth also be represented and he would be able to provide names for such representation.

### **Special Education Data Update**

Mr. Paul Raskopf presented information on the new federal data requirements and provided Virginia's placement data. He explained that there were five standard reports in the past: child count, placement, exit, personnel report, discipline, suspension/expulsion. States now have new reports for dispute resolution, state assessment participation and performance, and early intervening services.

Mr. Raskopf explained that the new federal requirement for a State Performance Plan will cover a six-year period and states will submit annual performance reports. The SSEAC new subcommittee on "Data and Reports" will be helping to develop the six-year plan

**Presentation - Local Advisory Committee Effectiveness Training Update** (Ms. Judy Hudgins, VDOE, Office of Student Services; Ms. Eileen Hammer, Partnership for People with Disabilities)

Ms. Hudgins and Ms. Hammer provided an update on the collaborative training project to assist local special education advisory committees. Input was analyzed from surveys that is being used in the development of a guide for local special education advisory committees. Parents and educators are reviewing the guide. A pilot training session is scheduled for September 14. October and November are targeted for regional trainings; a pilot training will probably be in Richmond. SSEAC parent representatives will be invited to participate. Ms. Hudgins distributed the current list and mailing labels of local advisory committee chairman.

### **Public Comment Follow-Up**

Mr. Cox provided follow-up information to the last committee's public commenters. Discussion occurred about issues parents are having with placements in the least restrictive environment (i.e., regular classrooms vs. self-contained classes).

**Presentation - Highly Qualified Special Education Teachers** (Mr. Doug Cox )

Mr. Cox reviewed the Board of Education's policy on the new IDEA 2004 requirements for special education teachers to be considered "highly qualified" as is referenced in the

*No Child Left Behind Act.* Copies of the Department of Education's question and answer document were distributed.

Mr. Cox offered to assist the committee if they want to make public comment on the proposed Federal IDEA regulations. He indicated that he made public comments on behalf of the National Association of State Directors of Special Education (NASDSE).

*The meeting was adjourned.*