

**GOVERNOR'S COUNCIL ON DISABILITIES AND SPECIAL  
EDUCATION**

**Education Committee  
MINUTES**

**LOCATION**

**Governor's Council Conference Room  
3601 C Street, Anchorage, Alaska  
Teleconference**

**Meeting Date  
August 17, 2017  
1:30 p.m.**

**Attendees:**

David Kohler - Chair  
Jill Burkert  
Don Enoch  
Jeanne Gerhardt-Cyrus  
Tracy Culbert  
Margaret Kossler  
Patrick Pillai  
Anthony Cravalho  
Alex Fogarty  
Kristi Fuller  
Rebecca Himshoot  
Maria Pepperworth  
Ina Boucher  
Kathryn Rose  
Mallory Hamilton  
Meghan Clark

**Staff:**

Anne Applegate  
Patrick Reinhart

**Prepared by:** Sheila Garrant, Peninsula Reporting

## **CALL TO ORDER – 1:30 p.m.**

### **ROLL CALL**

### **WELCOME FROM THE CHAIR**

David Kohler welcomed committee members to the meeting.

### **Announcements and Good News**

David Kohler welcomed Kathryn Rose, who joins the committee seated in the student transition seat; Karen Jenkins, who represents the Department of Corrections; and Ina Boucher, who comes to the committee with a wide breath of experience as a rural educator and parent.

### **Conflict of Interest Declarations**

No conflicts of interest were declared.

### **Executive Director Report**

Patrick Reinhart joined the meeting to share the following items:

- The Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority is recruiting for two Trustee vacancies.
- The Governor's Council meeting is scheduled for October 2<sup>nd</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2017 at the Frontier Building in Anchorage. Public testimony will be taken at 4:30 – 5:30 on October 2<sup>nd</sup>. The theme for public testimony will include a celebration of inclusive playgrounds and parks.
- The Council is hosting a Self-Advocate Summit prior to the Council meeting on September 30<sup>th</sup> – October 1<sup>st</sup>, 2017. For more information, contact Ric Nelson at the Governor's Council office. Scholarship funding for travel is available.
- October 4<sup>th</sup>, 2017, the Council is hosting an all day FASD five-year plan development session. The contact person at the Council is Lanny Mommsen.

### **APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA**

Mallory Hamilton **MOVED** to approve the agenda as written, **SECONDED** by Don Enoch. Hearing no opposition, the motion **PASSED**.

## **APPROVAL OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING MINUTES**

Patrick Pillai **MOVED** to approve the meeting minutes from May 2017 as written, **SECONDED** by Mallory Hamilton. Hearing no opposition, the motion **PASSED**.

## **CORRESPONDENCE**

Anne Applegate reported the correspondence as follows:

- A comment letter was sent related to the second draft application for the ESSA state plan.
- A memo was sent to the U.S. senators regarding culturally and linguistically diverse students in rural Alaska's transition reality.
- Thank-you letters were sent to the U.S. Senate delegation as a follow up to the meetings the Council had with them in July while attending the OSEP Leadership Conference.
- Sent the grant application for Administration for Community Living Grant, "Living Well in the Last Frontier". This is a multi-year grant that has a diverse set of grant partners. Awards will be announced August 21<sup>st</sup>.

## **REPORTS**

### **Chair's Report**

David Kohler shared his experiences while attending the OSEP Leadership Conference in Washington, D.C. in late July and his visits with the Alaska Senate delegation the team conducted in conjunction with Stone Soup Group. They had the opportunity to discuss funding challenges Stone Soup Group has endured in the last few years and some of the activities they have been involved in as the DD Act partnership provider agencies, state agencies, and stakeholders in the state, which was important for the delegation to understand as budget discussions begin at the national level.

Anne Applegate shared that she was able to talk with Senator Murkowski and her staff about Medicaid in schools and brought with her very good data provided by Anchorage School District and Kenai Peninsula Borough School District. Anne noted that it appears Senator Murkowski does not support the voucher system for Alaska's education system.

With regards to the appropriations process for the education budget, Anne Applegate spoke with Senator Murkowski and her staff about the current budget proposals from the President and the Health Committee that would be starting in September, and they recommended that the Council start looking at the proposals coming out of the Health Committee related to special education.

David Kohler noted that the OSEP Leadership Conference was informative. The keynote speaker highlighted disproportionality with a takeaway for David that disproportionality is critical to student's lives and future livelihoods as well as other long-term impacts.

With regards to the CEC/CASE Legislative Summit, Anne Applegate reported that during their delegation visits, they forwarded talking points from the CEC and CASE that focused on full funding for IDEA.

## **SESA**

Patrick Pillai reported the following activities for SESA:

- SESA received the grant award for Alaska Autism Resource Center.
- SESA has two multi-disabilities staff vacancies, which are proving to be hard to fill.
- SESA has scheduled a STAR training in Bethel August 21<sup>st</sup>, and is planning a follow-up STAR training for ASSEC in February 2018.
- Part of the funds raised through the Autism Walk was donated to the Autism Society of Alaska for their upcoming conference.

## **DEED**

Don Enoch reported the activities for DEED as follows:

- FY 18 monitoring schedule is complete and posted on DEED website.
- APR/SSP and SSIP were submitted and are pending a final approval.
- Submitted a new state personnel development grant, PINE, for review and expect to hear results in late summer.
- Still in process of working on a MOA with DVR.
- The handbook is almost through its first review. DEED will provide a copy to the Governor's Council for review.

- The parent handbook has been updated. This was done in collaboration with Mat-Su LINKS.
- The GMS is close to being complete for 2018.
- DEED is promoting the Governor's Council's Transition Handbook to districts.
- DEED is experiencing two staff vacancies as Cassidy Jones and Sam Jordan have moved on to other positions.
- DEED has identified the unmet special education needs for the SSIP to include graduation rates and supporting 3 to 5-year-old programs.
- OSEP findings from last year's fiscal audit are being closed out this month, which is a major accomplishment for the Department.
- Development and implementation of any special education policies are not currently being considered, except for the SSIP.

Don Enoch stated that there are no new regulations or rules proposed for special education at this time. He noted that the federal reporting has been submitted for the year and is available online at the DEED website.

## **CASE**

Tracy Culbert stated that there was no update from CASE.

## **DLC**

A report from the Disability Law Center was not available for the meeting.

## **Stone Soup Group**

Alex Fogarty reported that Stone Soup Group has several parent trainings scheduled for next month, and information and registration forms can be found on their website.

Alex Fogarty reported that Stone Soup Group will be in Bethel in September for the Bethel Special Education Conference to talk about parent engagement and will provide a parent training.

Alex Fogarty shared that as the parent training and information center in response to an overwhelming request for support services from parents to attend IEP meetings, they are developing a system to respond to the requests based on levels of service. They will review and determine what

the parent's needs are, make an assessment and plan to help prepare parents for IEP meetings or other school-related meetings, and then empower them so that they can potentially attend independently. This does not mean that they will not attend meetings, but is in response to the needs versus the ability to serve with the staff limitations.

## **Project SEARCH**

Anne Applegate noted that there is no news to report with regards to Project SEARCH.

## **Alaska Advisory Board for the Education of Deaf and Hard of Hearing Students**

A report from the advisory board was not available for the meeting.

## **OLD BUSINESS**

### **SEAP Membership Demographics and Majority Requirement Survey Update**

Anne Applegate reported that the response to the survey has been great. There are two statutory membership seats yet to fill. She will send the survey to the new committee members so they can identify their demographics.

Anne Applegate noted that the next steps include training and developing a priority list for the advisory panel that complies with IDEA regulations.

### **ESSA State Plan Application**

David Kohler stated that the public comment period ended July 31<sup>st</sup>, and information regarding the state plan application can be found on the committee agenda.

### **SEAP Training**

David Kohler stated that they will be looking at SEAP training for the committee in the near future.

## **New Business**

### **Proposed Changes to Vocational Education in DEED**

David Kohler reported that there was a proposed change to vocational education in the DEED regulations to include grades 7 through 12. He noted that that is a change from grades 10 through 12.

### **Executive Order on Regulatory Reform**

David Kohler reported that public comment on the executive order on regulatory reform is due August 21<sup>st</sup>. Anne Applegate asked for guidance on the comments from the committee. Anne recommended that input on the front end of the process might include a general comment to the Department of Education, and to OSEP particularly, noting that the IDEA is a cohesive, complicated, interconnected scheme and to piecemeal or pull out regulations could have an adverse effect for children, because all of the regulations are inter-related and there could be a domino effect that will be unable to control. Jeanne Gerhardt-Cyrus **MOVED** for Anne to continue development of a letter in relationship to the executive order on regulatory reform, **SECONDED** by Mallory Hamilton. Hearing no opposition, the motion **PASSED**.

### **Alaska Education Challenge Update**

Rebecca Himshoot shared a PowerPoint presentation titled “*Alaska’s Education Challenge*”, which is an initiative from Governor Walker to address Alaskan student achievement gaps and increase graduation rates by making sure every student in the state has equal opportunities to learn and succeed.

Rebecca Himshoot highlighted the following information from the presentation:

- Committees were set up to address five core areas:
  - Student Learning Committee – amplify student learning.
  - Educator Excellence Committee – ensure excellent educators.
  - Modernization & Finance Committee – modernize education system.
  - Tribal & Community Ownership Committee – inspire tribal and community ownership of educational excellence.

- Safety & Well Being Committee – promote safety and well being.
- Each committee includes parents, students, school and district leaders, school board members, teachers, legislators, business leaders, and tribal representatives.
- The committee charge was to develop three recommendations related to the assigned strategic priority that will transform the education system based on:
  - Must be systemic and apply to all students, schools, employees, and communities;
  - Not require resources beyond direct control;
  - Produce measurable results that can be benchmarked against higher performing states and countries.

Rebecca Himshoot stated that ESSA is not Alaska's vision for public education. The goal is that it will support and nourish the vision of public education held by Alaska stakeholders. Over time, as the Alaska Challenge becomes formalized, the ESSA plan will be revised.

Karli Lopez commented that there doesn't appear to be representation specifically from the disability population, and **MOVED** that the Council draft a letter to the commissioner regarding representation either by the Council members or family members on the Alaska's Education Challenge committees, **SECONDED** by Margaret Kossler. During discussion, it was recommended to obtain a list of people who are on the committees to ascertain representation and to make considerations to not publicly identify people with disabilities. Hearing no opposition, the motion **PASSED**.

## **Upcoming Meetings and Conferences**

### **Alaska's Education Challenge Meetings**

Meeting audio will be live streamed on <http://akleg.gov/index.php#tab5> for members of the public:

- **Student Learning Committee**
  - August 29, 9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.
  - September 26, 1:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.



- **Educator Excellence Committee**
  - August 31, 9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.
  - September 28, 1:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.
- **Modernization & Finance Committee**
  - August 22, 9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.
  - September 18, 1:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.
- **Tribal & Community Ownership Committee**
  - August 30, 9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.
  - September 19, 1:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.
- **Safety & Well-Being Committee**
  - August 24, 9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.
  - September 27, 1:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.
- **Education Board Meetings:**
  - September 14 - 15, 2017 – Audio – Regular quarterly
  - October 5, 2017 – Anchorage – Work session Alaska's Education Challenge
  - November 2, 2017 – Juneau or Audio – Special meeting Alaska's Education Challenge
  - December 7 - 8, 2017 – Audio – Regular quarterly

## **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The Education Committee's next meeting is scheduled for September 21<sup>st</sup>, 2017.

## **ADJOURN**

Tracy Culbert **MOVED** to adjourn, **SECONDED** by Patrick Pillai. Hearing no opposition, the motion **PASSED**, and the meeting adjourned at 3:00 p.m.