

Special Education State Advisory Committee (SESAC)

GENERAL MEETING

MARCH 17, 2011

JHU/CTE

Columbia, Maryland

MINUTES

SESAC Attendance: Mary Baskar, Rachel London, Lorraine Costella, Rhonda Creecy, Dorie Flynn, Rachel London, Heather Sopher,

Excused: Dawn Koplos, Kelly Meissner, Eileen Watson, Amy Morales

Guests: April Kurth (attending on behalf of Eileen Watson); Joan Ericson, MSDE (presenter); Scott Peiffer, MSDE (presenter)

MSDE Staff: Carol Ann Heath, Sherea Makle, Donna Riley, Sharon West

Ms. London called the meeting to order at 1:10 pm.

Participants introduced themselves.

Review of Minutes:

- *Edits to Minutes:* Ms. Flynn identified incorrect information within Dr. Heath's updates at the November 2010 meeting. Ms. Riley will edit minutes accordingly.
- *Process for Approving Minutes:* Ms. London announced that because a quorum was not present, the minutes for the past three meetings again could not be reviewed for approval. Therefore, Ms. London will submit the minutes for the last three meetings to SESAC members via email. Members will be required to submit their vote on approving the minutes via email.

Membership Search:

Ms. London led the discussion on membership.

- An email was sent to nine members who had not attended 50% of meetings in the last 12 months, which is required according to SESAC Bylaws. One member responded providing sufficient information regarding her participation. Eight participants had not responded as of the meeting date. Those members would be considered to have resigned if they did not contact Ms. London.
- Attendance at SESAC meetings is essential. Members need to participate at least 50% of the time.
- Discussion followed.

- Ms. Glass shared that for many parents, the time of day in which meetings are held could be a problem. Many parent participants may also be overwhelmed trying to participate in the SESAC with their parental and work responsibilities.
- Ms. Glass asked for clarification on the number of parents that could serve on the SESAC. Ms. Riley specified that 50% of membership must be parents.
- Ms. Creecy asked if meetings could be teleconferenced. Use of technology could enable parents to participate. Ms. Sopher agreed, saying that the Maryland Department of Human Resources makes great use of online Webinars.
- Ms. West stated that the MSDE would share all suggestions with Dr. Heath, who supports the use of technology in an attempt to strengthen and diversify participation.
- Ms. London shared that the Executive Committee would consider editing the current nominating form. The nomination forms are disseminated to partnering organizations, local directors of special education, SECACs, etc.
- Ms. London asked if the nomination form should be revised in a way that the SESAC would get more information about a person's commitment level.
- Members discussed the idea of member-to-member contact asking why the participants are not coming to meetings (at least 50% of the time)
- Ms. Makle will share the proxy form with the SESAC leadership.
- Ms. London asked if the SESAC members in attendance today wish to establish an informal membership subcommittee.
- Participants discussed conducting an anonymous online survey or phone survey to contact members regarding their participation or non-participation. Ms. London will draft the survey and share with members in attendance for today's meeting for feedback. Members will email questions to rlondon@md-council.org or maryaf@aol.com for possible entry on the survey. Ms. London will also review the current nomination form. Ms. Riley will send the form to Ms. London.
- Ms. London will forward the minutes to SESAC members again (including today's revisions to the November minutes), and ask members to send their vote to smakle@msde.state.md.us.

Presentation-Certification Requirements for Special Education:

- Joann Ericson (need her title) presented on behalf of Jean Satterfied (need her title) who was ill and unable to attend the meeting.
- Ms. Ericson provided a brief overview:
 - Generic Certification Areas
 - Categorical Certifications
 - Routes to Initial Certification: 1) Complete Maryland approved program; 2) Complete an out of state approved program; 3) Approved professional experience; 4) Transcript Analysis; and 5) Resident Teacher Program.
 - Testing Requirements: Basic skills (reading, writing, mathematics), Special Education: Core Content Knowledge and Applications

- Adding an Endorsement: By Test (qualifying score on #035); or by course work (30 credits: 15 in the age-appropriate area and 15 in a related area).
- Additional information: Certification - www.mdcert.org or Code of Maryland Regulations (COMAR) – www.dsd.state.md.us.
- Maryland continues experiencing a statewide shortage of special education teachers. The MSDE Certification and Accreditation Branch will host a recruitment fair in Baltimore next spring.
- Questions and answers followed.
 - Ms. London asked about certification for general educators in light of inclusion of students with disabilities in regular classrooms. Ms. Satterfield answered that currently certification requirements do not exist for general educators regarding special education.

Presentation-Common Core Standards/Professional Development for Special Educators:

- Scott Peiffer (need his title)
- Mr. Peiffer provided a brief overview along with the following two handouts: (1) The 2011 Maryland Educator Effectiveness Academy (EEA) for Reading, English Language Arts, Mathematics, STEM and School Leaders; and (2) Educator Effectiveness Academy Information Sheet for School Principals
 - *Educator Effectiveness Academy:* As part of the Race To The Top (RTTT) grant, MSDE will conduct 11 regional education effectiveness academies during the summer 2011, 2012, 2013. Participants will include: principals, reading English/Language Arts staff members, mathematics staff members and staff members representing science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) content in the schools (as designated and selected by the school principal).
 - *Master teachers:* The MSDE in partnership with participating local school systems is recruiting teachers to become master teachers to facilitate the 2011 Maryland Educator Effectiveness Academies. Interested teachers will have to complete an application and are required to have certain qualifications, including Master's degrees or advanced professional certificates and successful teaching or co-teaching in specific content areas.
- Questions and Answers followed.
 - Ms. Creecy asked if educators working with students who receive services through an IEP would be included in the academies. Dr. Pheiffer stated that school principals make the decision on which educators will participate.
 - Ms. Baskar asked how master teachers were being selected. Dr. Pheiffer stated that the MSDE is collaborating with educators throughout the State to review applications, using a specific rubric, and select top candidates. The MSDE is approximating 150 master teachers statewide.

- Ms. Baskar expressed concern regarding master educators to include special educators. Dr. Pheiffer shared that members of the DES/EIS staff participate in planning meetings regarding special educators.

FFY 2011 Federal Application

- Federal allocations have not yet been made.
- Application is posted on the MSDE website.
- MSDE is accepting comments through April 15.

COMAR Amendments—Public Hearings

- Written comments are being accepted.
- Hearing scheduled for March 28, 9-12, MSDE, 9th floor conference room.

Assistant State Superintendent's Update

- OSEP Verification Visit Report:
 - One finding regarding how MSDE estimates excess costs. MSDE has created a new forms/method to request this information from locals.
 - New cycle of visits for the next five years being scheduled by the OSEP. MSDE is updating CRAEG information on the annual anniversary of the visit to ensure continual updates in preparation for the next visit.
- Legislative Updates:
 - Dr. Heath provided a Legislative Overview handout summarizing the status of relevant legislation as of the meeting date.
 - Maryland Hearing Aid Loan Bank legislative hearing went well. The previous legislation for this initiative sunset in 2004. The current legislation seeks permanent approval.
 - Insurance for Autism: Ms. London stated that a Maryland Delegate (need name from Ms. London) plans to amend the related bill to be more restrictive to cover insurance for behavioral health services, including ABA for children age 2 to 6.
 - Concussion Bill: Dr. Heath stated that there could be a possible increase in referral to special education. Ms. West shared that there is a focus on getting more students injured by concussion identified and assessed for special education and related services.
 - Dr. Heath shared a document entitled, *Secretary Duncan Vows to 'Move Away' from the 2 Percent Rule in Assessing Students with Disabilities*, dated March 15, 2011. The document states that: "U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan vowed Tuesday to abolish the so-called "2 percent rule" that obscures an accurate portrait of the academic needs of America's students with disabilities." Dr. Heath encouraged SESAC members to closely follow this issue, as it will affect students with disabilities' access to curriculum and assessments.
- State Budget Process:

- Budget cuts include tens of billions of dollars and effect several programs, such as Head Start.
- Career and technology education in the President's 2012 budget has been drastically cut.
- Special education looks like it will fair well, in terms of funding; however, many funding cuts will affect our ability to work with partnering agencies and place children in appropriate settings.
- Maximizing of funding: The MSDE is working with locals to encourage a specific "spend down" order of monies (from Federal, State
- Division Updates:
 - Lead specialist for low incidence now on board. (Need her name) She will also coordinate the Hearing Aid Loan Bank (HALB).
 - Karla Marty, section chief.
 - Fran Sorin, promoted to PD coordinator.
 - Hired one complaint investigator. Have another candidate under consideration.
 - Division's State Board of Presentation, for March 22, 2011, 2:00 p.m. SESAC members are invited to attend.

Comments/Open Discussion

- Ms. West shared information about the Parent Survey.
 - Scheduled to begin early April.
 - Will be posted on-line.
 - For the next year, locals would like the flyer to reflect how the survey data will be used.
 - The MSDE has provided suggestions to the local school systems to improve parent participation.
 - Ms. Flynn stated that non-public school want to be included in the next survey.
 - Ms. West encouraged SESAC members to support local SECACs in reaching out to families and encouraging parent responses.
 - For the 2009-2010 school year, a text field exists for parents to submit comments online or include on the written survey. Written comments were printed by the MSDE and shared with the local school system.
- Ms. Riley shared a brief overview of the handouts:
 - *Status Report: Part B FFY 2009 APR (1/28/11) Indicator Performance At-A-Glance.*
 - *Maryland Part B State Performance Plan Extended Targets, January 28, 2011*
- Ms. London followed up on the following item:
 - Comments on the changes in regulation and application: Ms. London will draft a letter on behalf of the SESAC and will share the letter with members for feedback/approval before submitting to the MSDE.

Ms. London adjourned the meeting at 3:30 p.m.

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