

Wisconsin Council on Special Education Meeting Minutes

Date September 27, 2019

10:00 am – 3:00 pm

Department of Public Instruction, Room P41

Meeting Minutes #323

Council Members Present: Stacy Stone, Sara Zwiefelhofer, Jennifer Mims-Howell, Nikki Sprague, Loucricia Carson, Nikki Vander Meulen, Kristin Burki, Michelle Johnson, Pamela Hencke, Carla Witkowski, Sally Flaschberger, Vicki Davis-Davila, Deb Rathermel, Nelsinia Ramos, Cynthia Perry (phone).

DPI Staff Present: Rita Fuller, Daniel Parker, Patricia Williams, Julia Hartwig, Carolyn Kiefer, Nico Mitnacht, Mike Hickey.

10:00 am – 3:00 pm

- 1) **Business Meeting #323** The Council's chair called the meeting to order at 10:03 am.
- 2) **Welcome and Introductions** The Council made introductions in a round table format.
- 3) **Public Appearances** One public appearance
- 4) **Minutes of Meeting #322** Minutes were reviewed, motioned for approval and seconded.
- 5) **Correspondence/Chairperson's Report**
 - Chair's Annual Report
 - a) The Council's chair summarized the highlights in the Council's annual report to the State Superintendent for the 2018-2019 year. The council emphasized the importance of family voice in statewide work. The Council posed no questions or amendments to the annual report. This report will go to department directors for approval before being sent to the State Superintendent.
 - Public Forum Letter to Participants
 - b) March 2019's Public Forum online listening session participants received a Council chair letter of response that was reviewed by the Council at the June 2019 meeting. The letter included resource links for parents (e.g. DPI and state resources). The letter encouraged parent participation in the Indicator 8 family engagement survey during the year the school district is in the cycle to complete the annual data collection. The Council chairs felt that adding advocacy groups to the letter for parents was an important and useful addition. DPI will email the Council chair letter of response to Council members.
 - Review of Council's Updated Policies & Procedures Document
 - c) The Public Forum section was discussed and the Council suggested this section could be shortened and generalized to make future revisions easier in years to come. It was suggested to add a list of options for how individuals can participate

in the Public Forum. Council members also want to add language that states the process for running the Public Forum.

- d) Council asked how satellite sites are determined for Public Forum. It was noted that some of the CESAs are too far for some parents to travel. Additional sites need to be staffed and it has been a challenge to ensure Council members attend every year. The online commenting period was added for people who can't attend the satellite site locations in person. For Public Forums starting in 2020, Council will further discuss if parents can participate using a virtual web platform (e.g. Zoom) from any location. DPI is limited to what features we can use for Public Forum. The Public Forum Listening Session is 1.5 hours and the Council doesn't have the capacity to receive too many live comments by Zoom. If the online comment period does not have the capacity or time to allow live comments through a Zoom location, one suggestion is to send a message that the session is now over and participants can submit comments electronically through an online form.
- e) The Council discussed Public Forum Flier comments from Council member Nelsinia Ramos that could improve the flier moving forward. The comments address how the Public Forum could create more awareness across the state. The suggestions in language changes may be incorporated for Council Public Forums beginning in 2020. On social media, the pdf of the Public Forum flier doesn't have live hyperlinks to sign-up to locations (CESAs). DPI will request the media team make the Public Forum flier social media accessible with live links.
- f) Teachers on the Council comment they have never seen the Public Forum fliers and wonder how the Council can get the information to more families. Council will continue to discuss how to better disseminate Public Forum information.
- g) The Council's chair reiterated why each voice is so important to understand what is happening in Wisconsin. Council members' word of mouth and sharing of information are needed to create improvements in Wisconsin. Council is the voice for the State Superintendent when it comes to students with disabilities in the state. Information about Council and Public Forum is on the [Council's DPI website](#).

Council Nominations for Chair and Vice Chair Vote

- h) Council nominated Pamela Hencke to be the Council chair and Nelsinia Ramos was nominated for vice chair. There was a vote initiated for chair. All of the Council presented voted in favor. None were opposed. None abstained. There was a vote initiated for vice chair. All of the Council present voted in favor. None were opposed. None abstained.

6) Review Idea Complaint and Due Process Hearing Findings & Decisions

- a) Council asked questions about compliance rulings and DPI Assistant Director Patricia Williams from Compliance was present to answer questions.

7) Special Education Team Director's Report

- a) Julia Hartwig, Director, introduced staff new to the WI DPI Special Education Team, presented an overview of vacant positions, and provided brief summaries on the following topics:
 - (1) The Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) determined that Wisconsin once again met requirements under state IDEA determinations and

explained how Differentiated Monitoring and Support (DMS) is a part of Results Driven Accountability. In addition, Wisconsin met the Every Student Succeeds Act 1% participation threshold requirement, Wisconsin met requirements. Wisconsin remains at the Universal level for Compliance and Results, and is that the Targeted level for Fiscal and SSIP.

- (2) WI DPI released a new bulletin on [Supported Decision-Making Agreements](#), is in the process of updating a framework and bulletin on conducting comprehensive special education evaluations, and is continuing to provide resources and support through workshops and trainings on the [WI DPI College and Career Ready IEP \(CCR IEP\) framework](#).
- (3) Updates were provided relating to this year's Procedural Compliance Self-Assessment (PCSA), State Superintendent's Conference on Special Education and Pupil Leadership, current administrative rules and scope statements, and State Superintendent Stanford Taylor's first [State of Address](#) focusing on equity.
- (4) DPI is piloting a speech and language evaluation system using the educator effectiveness framework to support a performance based continuous improvement system for speech and language pathologists in Wisconsin schools. There will be a pilot in the coming year. Participants will agree to use the process and resources and provide feedback via a series of surveys. Feedback will be used to refine the system. More information can be found on the DPI speech and language web page: <https://dpi.wi.gov/sped/program/speech-language/slp-evaluation>. There will be a similar process for **coaches**. Information can be found on the DPI coaching webpage: <https://dpi.wi.gov/coaching/coach-evaluation>.

10) Special Report: State Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP)

- a) A special report on Wisconsin's [State Systemic Improvement Plan](#) (SSIP) for Indicator 17 was provided as well as a discussion on future opportunities to support the work of our SSIP. When OSEP announced a shift on how states would be accountable for the success of students with disabilities, Wisconsin, with input from Council, selected a reading/literacy focus as part of Wisconsin's [Results Driven Accountability](#) (RDA) focus. The SSIP outlines how Wisconsin has developed and implemented structures to improve this reading/literacy focus. An overview of the four improvement strategies that are part of the SSIP were discussed. These four strategies are focused on results and rooted in equity. As part of RDA, annual targets were set in 2013, and the department has met all previous targets with the exception of the target set for last year. Going forward, the Department may have an opportunity to apply for a federal State Personnel Development Grant (SPDG) to support Wisconsin's work on improving outcomes for students with disabilities and sought feedback from council on the following:
 - (i) considerations for selecting an evidence-based practice/area of focus
 - (ii) considerations for selecting schools/districts for a study cohort, particularly focused on the next State Personnel Development Grant application opportunity

Council discussed and shared their thoughts for these considerations with the group.

11) Special Report: Continuum of Services - Full Inclusion

a) This special report examined full inclusion and discussed how it relates to least restrictive environment. The report discussed how removal from the regular education environment occurs only if the nature or severity of the disability is such that education in regular classes with the use of supplementary aids and services cannot be achieved satisfactorily. In addition, the report focused on IEP team meeting requirements, such as how placement decisions/changes require an IEP team meeting.

12) Special Report: Special Education Budget Items and Dyslexia Update

a) This special report outlined the state's budget for special education in Wisconsin. It touched on student enrollment, growing poverty, homelessness, how poverty impacts achievement, and how mobility impacts graduation. It demonstrated how districts have an increased reliance on referenda to meet school funding demands. There have been over 3,200 referenda since 1993. Additional points from the presentation included:

- school populations and demographic diversity have changed significantly and continue to change across Wisconsin
- two thirds of Wisconsin districts show declining enrollment
- rates of poverty have increased rapidly

b) Dyslexia Update: There may be bills coming at the end of this legislative session, given the interest in Wisconsin and the legislative council committee study. There is one bill closer to passage than others. That bill relates to the development of a dyslexia guidebook for schools.

13) Break

14) New & Old Business

a) Council worked within table groups to recommend Council agenda topics for the December council meeting.

- 1) Discuss Special Education funding and submit an action plan and priorities to the State Superintendent.
- 2) Discuss Least Restrictive Environment (LRE) and develop recommendations for the State Superintendent on how inclusion looks around the state with recommendations on how Wisconsin can move forward to ensure students with disabilities are really feeling included. This report will address equity and Least Restrictive Environment. Council suggested including a future agenda item to discuss how they should move forward with this discussion and what processes are needed for developing these recommendations.

b) An update was provided by a council member on potential changes in Wisconsin's seclusion and restraint law. Council requested a DPI presentation on how DPI is supportive of current or future legal requirements, how districts are trained on seclusion and restraint, and how DPI is providing information to school districts on Act 125.

- c) Questions were asked about epilepsy training/cognitive seizures. Council members believe DPI help Council members locate these resources and provide brief information about this topic.

8) Council Member Reports and Issues

- a) Council commented that changes in Wisconsin's seclusion and restraint law is something to watch regarding Act 125 in upcoming legislative session.
- b) The only satellite site for Public Forum this year is Milwaukee Public Schools School Support Center.

9) Announcements

- a) Leadership Conference (Nov 14-15) Glacier Canyon Lodge
- b) Public Forum (Wednesday, October 16, 2019)
- c) All Council members were encouraged to attend October's Listening Session and discussed the Council's role at the listening session (e.g. taking notes and listening). Council members are encouraged to interact with participants after the public forum to answer questions or provide any information.
- d) DPI will communicate to RSN to reach out to Council members inviting them to their CESA.
- e) Next Meeting Date (December 6, 2019).

10) Public Appearances: None

11) Adjournment 2:34 pm