

Wisconsin Council on Special Education Meeting Minutes

Date: March 12, 2021

10:00 am – 3:00 pm

Department of Public Instruction, Virtual Zoom Meeting
Meeting #329

DPI Attendance: Barb Van Haren, Julia Hartwig, Daniel Parker, Patti Williams, Courtney Jenkins, Lynn Winn, Rita Fuller, Rachel Zellmer, Erin Fath, Ben Kopitzke, Sharon Madsen, Susan Piazza, Brenda Jennings

Council Attendance: Erin Arango-Escalante, Loucricia Carson, Judy Colin, Hugh Davis, Meredith Dressel, Pearl Fessenden, Pamela Hencke, Michelle Johnson, Katherine Kramer, Julie Lidbury, Shannon Mattox, Kelly Mechelke, Lisa Misco, Kari Moore, Nelsinia Ramos, Deb Rathermel, Nikki Sprague, Amy Stevens, Nicole Vander Meulen, Carla Witkowski, and Sara Zwiefelhofer

Public Appearances: Bob Johnston

I. Opening

A. Assistant Director Daniel Parker welcomed the council and facilitated housekeeping.

II. Welcome

- A. Meeting called to order at 10:03am.
- B.

III. Public Appearances

- A. Bob Johnston was a public appearance and provided comment.

IV. Minutes of Meeting #328

- A. Chair motioned for an approval for the meeting minutes.
 - 1. Council member Judith Conlin motioned to approve the minutes as is. Council member Nicole Vander Meulen seconded the motion. The Council voted in favor of approving the minutes by saying aye.

V. Welcome New Council Members

- A. Chair called on the two new Council members Daysi Jimenez and Pearl Fessenden to introduce themselves.

VI. Correspondence/Chairperson's Report

- A. Electronic Public Forum Debrief
 - 1. Co-chair Nelsinia Ramos provided a debrief of the electronic public forum. There were 11 total comments. Chairs will review comments and prepare a response letter similar to the October 2020 public forum for the Council to review at the next Council meeting.
 - 2. The council discussed finding a way to have a survey for public forum to be anonymous rather than participant email sign-in through google. A committee was recommended to work on survey options. Council also provided a video with the survey about the uses of the survey. Possibly provide information about the participate in the forums/survey when parents are given information about their rights and responsibilities

B. Council members commented on whether or not public forum should continue twice a year and discussed distribution methods of getting forum information to families.

C. Nikki Sprague and Daysi Jimenez volunteered to meet for one hour to gather information on an ad hoc venture.

VII. IDEA Complaint and Due Process Hearing Findings & Decisions

A. Consultant Ryan McNamara & Assistant Administrator Patricia Williams provided an overview of the decisions and answered questions from Council. Council asked for a rough estimate of the percentage of these complaints were for students receiving in-person and/or receiving distance learning. Patricia Williams agreed to get information to Rita Fuller about exact percentages for the council. The council asked additional questions and Patricia Williams provided answers.

B. Summary of Complaints

- 68 complaints in 2020; more in large metropolitan areas
- Complaint issues: 4 behavior, 4 placement, 6 IEP development in last quarter
- Anticipate the number of complaints was down in 2020; they anticipate numbers will rise
- Question was asked if there should be more targeted assistance to specific areas
- IEP Development — primary concern: Did the IEP address needs around behavior particular to the need identified with goals developed around the needs? Was there too much emphasis on inclusion? Are IEPs individualized or are services pre-determined or based on schedules?

VIII. Special Education Team Director's Report

A. Julia Hartwig shared federal and state updates on assessment/accountability, ERRER II and III, ESDE, biennial budget, vaccines, extending the age of eligibility due to COVID, final joint federal notifications, transition readiness, PI 11 Rule changes, procedural compliance self-assessment, office of special education application, and accountability preview report feedback survey. Council asked for a copy of report or summary of her report to ahead of the meeting minutes in the future.

IX. Discussion: Council Process and Focus Area for Upcoming Year

A. The council chair Hugh Davis led a discussion on the duties of the council and what members should be doing to advise the state superintendent in the future. Council was divided up into four breakout rooms to discuss council member duties, what they want to accomplish out of this, and then share out in the whole group.

X. Lunch

XI. Special Report: State Performance Plan / Annual Performance Report / State Systemic Improvement Plan (SPP/APR/SSIP) Update

A. Courtney Reed Jenkins and Lynn Winn provided an overview and update on the State Performance Plan, Annual Performance Report, and the State Systemic Improvement Plan. Council members asked questions and presenters provided answers.

XII. Discussion: Extending the Age of High School Enrollment

A. The council chair opened up Extending the Age of High School Enrollment with legal questions which were answered by DPI administrators. The topic was opened up for discussion. Highlights include eligibility, compensatory services, transition, DVE, students' ability to access services during the pandemic, and what DPI can communicate to districts reminding them of requirements of compensatory services that could not be addressed during the pandemic. There are currently no updates as to what other states are doing concerning this. Judy Conlin motioned "the council recommends to the state superintendent that she inform districts of their ability to use ESSR funds to extend compensatory education for students who would age out at 21 to receive extended school year services in 2021-2022." Nelsinia Ramos seconded the motion. The council voted to accept the motion by saying aye.

- B. The council opted not to add legislative language to avoid further complicating the request. The council continued with discussions.
- C. Key takeaways:
 - 1. No state is introducing legislation to extend the age of eligibility.
 - 2. Compensatory Education: eligible to students who couldn't access transition services because of pandemic — extend it for 1 year. ESSER funds can be used to cover staff for compensatory service. Be aware these are one-time funds.
 - 3. Talk is that this would be a temporary change state law. Current thinking this should only be for one year. For students whose IEP transition goals couldn't be met. Would require changes in state law that could be used with Administrative guidelines. DPI will need to provide more information; OSEP would cover kids who would graduate this year and would get additional year of services.

XIII. New & Old Business

- A. Suggested Agenda Topics
 - 1. Assistive technology
 - 2. Monitoring the use of assistive technology
 - 3. Restraint and seclusion
 - 4. State collected data on subsets of special ed, students
 - 5. Growth for those for whom test is not appropriate but who don't qualify for alternate assessment.
- B. Council members reports and issues
 - 1. Council members discussed their preference for a contact information for the membership roster.
 - 2. DPI suggested adding council members' name with the CESA region map.

XIV. Announcements

- 1. Next Meeting Date (June 25, 2021)

XV. Public Appearances

- A. Bob Johnston was a public appearance and he provided comment.

XVI. Adjournment

- A. Council member Pearl Fessenden made the motion to adjourn the meeting and council member Michelle Johnson seconded the motion. All council voted in favor to adjourn the meeting by saying aye.
- B. Meeting adjourned at 2:41pm.