

**Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC)
Annual Report for Fiscal Year 2015
July 1, 2014 – June 30, 2015**

*Prepared by the Nevada Department of Education
for Submission to the Nevada State Board of Education*

INTRODUCTION

The Nevada Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC) has played an active role in the state's continuous improvement and focused monitoring efforts. In order to help the state with these ongoing efforts to increase results for children and youth with disabilities and carryout the activities in the State Performance Plan (SPP), this important stakeholder Committee serves as:

1. An advisory group to the Nevada Department of Education (NDE) and the State Board of Education (SBE) relative to decisions that may affect special education.
2. A vehicle for disseminating information about federal and State regulations to the constituencies represented by the Committee.
3. An entity to provide support for polices and procedures that are initiated and/or implemented by the NDE and the SBE.

In order to serve these functions, the SEAC operates within the duties that are delineated at 34 CFR §300.169 of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA):

The advisory panel must--

- (i) Advise the State educational agency of unmet needs within the State in the education of children with disabilities;*
- (ii) Comment publicly on any rules or regulations proposed by the State regarding the education of children with disabilities;*
- (iii) Advise the State educational agency in developing evaluations and reporting on data to the Secretary under section 618;*
- (iv) Advise the State educational agency in developing corrective action plans to address findings identified in Federal monitoring reports under Part B of the act; and*
- (v) Advise the State educational agency in developing and implementing policies relating to the coordination of services for children with disabilities.*

The SEAC is comprised of a broad representation of individuals with knowledge and expertise in meeting the needs of children and youth with disabilities. The SBE makes appointments to the Committee, with each member serving a three-year term. At their first meeting of the 2014-2015 fiscal year, the SEAC elected MaryAnn Demchak to serve as Chair for this term, and Ellen Richardson Adams to serve as Vice-chair. Additional members for this fiscal year and the roles they represent are listed on the next page.

REGULAR MEMBERS

<i>Sheila Allred</i>	<i>Parents of Children with Disabilities</i>
<i>Pam Alvey</i>	<i>Special Education Teachers – North</i>
<i>Angela Blair</i>	<i>Charter Schools</i>
<i>Laura Bruni</i>	<i>Private Schools</i>
<i>Mary Bryant</i>	<i>Parents of Children with Disabilities</i>
<i>Diana Cannon</i>	<i>Parents of Children with Disabilities</i>
<i>MaryAnn Demchak</i>	<i>Universities - North</i>
<i>Ann Drendel-Haas</i>	<i>Special Education Administrators – North</i>
<i>David Frydman</i>	<i>Parents of Children with Disabilities</i>
<i>Shirley Gaw</i>	<i>Parents of Children with Disabilities</i>
<i>Ken Higbee</i>	<i>State Juvenile/Adult Corrections</i>
<i>Joseph Holguin</i>	<i>Special Education Teachers – South</i>
<i>Mary Ellen Horan</i>	<i>Parents of Children with Disabilities</i>
<i>Will Jensen</i>	<i>Special Education Administrators - Rural</i>
<i>Susan Lacey</i>	<i>Special Education Teachers - Rural</i>
<i>Bethany Lafferty</i>	<i>Parents of Children with Disabilities</i>
<i>Caroline Longre</i>	<i>Parents of Children with Disabilities</i>
<i>Kate McCloskey</i>	<i>Department of Health & Human Services</i>
<i>Kristine Minnich</i>	<i>Special Education Administrators - South</i>
<i>Brian Patchett</i>	<i>Individuals with Disabilities</i>
<i>Tom Pierce</i>	<i>Universities - South</i>
<i>Dorothy Pomin</i>	<i>Foster Care – Statewide</i>
<i>Robin Renshaw</i>	<i>Individuals with Disabilities</i>
<i>Ellen Richardson Adams</i>	<i>Parents of Children with Disabilities</i>
<i>Tammy Rieken</i>	<i>Parents of Children with Disabilities</i>
<i>Tara Shek</i>	<i>Parents of Children with Disabilities</i>
<i>Carrisa Tashiro</i>	<i>Protection and Advocacy</i>
<i>Karen Taycher</i>	<i>OSEP Funded State Parent Training Center</i>
<i>Rita Varney</i>	<i>Parents of Children with Disabilities</i>
<i>Robbin Vasquez</i>	<i>Parents of Children with Disabilities</i>

SPECIAL EDUCATION STAFF TO THE SEAC

<i>Marva Clevon</i>	<i>Director, Office of Special Education</i>
<i>Kim Boles</i>	<i>Secretary to the Advisory Committee</i>

2014-2015 MEETINGS

During the 2014-2015 fiscal year, the SEAC met on November 12, 2014, January 22, 2015, March 10, 2015, and May 7, 2015.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

In keeping with their prescribed duties, the SEAC discussed many issues and generated a number of actions during the 2014-2015 fiscal year. Following is a summary of the activities of the Committee relative to each of these federally conferred duties:

1. Advise the State educational agency of unmet needs within the State in the education of children with disabilities.

Due Process, Complaint, and Mediation

Activity

- The Committee received a handout summarizing the number of due process, complaints, and mediation requests including how many due process requests went to hearing, and how many complaints were investigated.

Legislative Updates

Activity

- The Committee received information regarding the 2015 Legislative Session including bill drafts pertinent to special education. They also were informed about key points relative to education from the Governor's state of the state including: pre-filed bills, governor's priorities, legislative website, and bill tracking.
- The Committee received updated and new information regarding special education bills in the 2015 Legislative Session including: The Governor's recommended budget, special education units to be converted to a per pupil "weighted" formula, special education contingency account, SB132 paraprofessional training, AB115 qualification for speech and language (section 43), SB13, AB128.
- The Committee received the following updates and new information regarding special education and the 2015 Legislative session:
 - Education Initiatives for the New Nevada
 - Early Learners
 - Fund Preschool Development Grant Match - \$10 Million
 - Expand Full Day Kindergarten - \$85 Million
 - Read by Grade Three - \$27.2 Million
 - Modernizing the Nevada Plan
 - Add Special Education Weights - \$25 Million
 - Establish Education Contingency Account - \$5 Million
 - Expand Zoom Schools Program - \$50 Million
 - Create a Victory Schools Program - \$50 Million
 - Fund Gifted and Talented Students - \$10 Million
 - Middle School and High School
 - Nevada Ready 21 Technology Grants - \$48.4 Million
 - Career & Technical Education (CTE) Expansion - \$8 Million
 - College and Career Readiness Grants - \$8 Million
 - Jobs for America's Graduates (JAG) Expansion - \$4.6 Million
 - Advanced Placement - \$1.2 Million
 - Investing in Change
 - Great Teaching and Leading Fund - \$9.8 Million
 - Social Worker Grants
 - Safe and Respectful Learning Environment Office - \$36.2 Million
 - Underperforming Schools Turnaround - \$10 Million

- Charter School Harbor Master - \$20 Million
- Education Reforms for the New Nevada
 - Ensure every student is reading at grade level by grade three – SB391
 - Protect student data – AB221
 - Modernize the Nevada Plan for School Finance – SB508
 - Temporary rollover of bonding authority for the construction and maintenance of local schools, with state oversight
 - Opportunity Scholarships for poor students to attend private school – AB165
 - Appointment of local school boards – AB339
 - Allow local governments to create smaller schools districts in urban counties and consolidate school districts in rural counties – AB394
 - Collective bargaining reform in our school system
 - Expand breakfast in the classroom – SB503
 - New Office for Safe and Respectful Learning – SB504
 - Achievement School District to manage chronically underperforming schools – AB448

Action

- The Committee passed a motion that the Committee advise the Director of Special Education to work with the Commission on Services with Persons with Disabilities and/or other stakeholders to make sure that language in proposed SB13, Section 4-Sub-section 5 comes into accordance with OCR and Department of Justice guidance.

Education Reform and NDE Updates

Activity

- The Committee received and reviewed the October 1 report to the Legislative Counsel Bureau regarding the use of aversive interventions and physical/mechanical restraints.
- The Committee received updated information regarding their concerns previously brought forward regarding the alternate assessment process in Nevada including equity with general education teachers videotaping, videotaping being eliminated or reduced to random sampling, representation from SEAC or NAA task force, social/emotional impact, meaningfulness of the test and other issues reflected in the minutes of the November meeting.
- The Committee received a handout and a PowerPoint presentation by the Deputy Attorney General regarding the open meeting law.
- The Committee heard a presentation regarding the application for the State Personnel Development Grant (SPDG).
- The Committee was updated on the SPDG which was submitted February 13, 2015 for approximately \$800,000 a year for 5 years.
- The Committee received an update regarding the Workgroup and Commission on Professional Standards meetings regarding teacher licensure specific to special education licenses (particularly related to autism and intellectual disabilities) including information that: no regulation changes have occurred in Autism/ID; concerns about qualification of SED teachers and the need for specialized training and students with behavioral issues are not always labeled as SED.
- The Committee discussed a potential need for technical assistance and professional development regarding policies and procedures related to the development and implementation of positive behavioral interventions and supports including how to deal with escalating behavior; school wide PBS; increased opportunities for parents, teachers and school staff; continuing education opportunities, NDE training and resources to districts; change in culture and special education administrators' impact.

- The Committee received an overview and a handout on Response to Intervention (RTI) including what each district is implementing, guidance and resources.

Action

- The Committee passed a motion that the Committee act as an advisory group for the SPDG grant.
- The Committee submitted a letter of support for the SPDG grant.

2. *Comment publicly on any rules or regulations proposed by the State regarding the education of children with disabilities.*

Activity

- The Committee received a handout and discussed proposed changes to NAC in the November meeting including those needed for alignment to federal law.
- The Committee discussed NAC 388.430 regarding the identification of pupils with Developmental Disabilities including a memo from a speech pathologist, a proposal to extend the age from 6 to 9.

Action

- The Committee provided a letter of support to the State Board regarding proposed changes to the NAC outlined in handouts provided during the November 12, 2014 meeting.
- The Committee passed a motion to not support changing the Nevada Administrative Code in the identification requirement of the Developmentally Delayed category.

3. *Advise the State educational agency in developing evaluations and reporting on data to the Secretary under section 618.*

Activity

- The Committee received an update regarding the Special Education State Performance Plan (SSIP) targets including proposed targets, new reporting cycle on Feb. 1, Annual Measurable Objectives (AMO), target adjustment advisement.
- The Committee received an update regarding the State Identified Measurable Results (SiMR) including goals; improving performance of third grade students with disabilities on statewide assessments in reading/language arts; and Assess, Plan and Teach (APT).
- The Committee received information regarding the final submission of SSIP (Indicator 17) and the next steps relative to Phase II.
- The Committee received information regarding the State Performance Plan and Annual Report (SPP/APR) submitted February 2015 including which targets were met and which were not as reflected in the minutes of the May Meeting.

Action

- The Committee passed a motion to advise the Department to maintain the target using the current years percentage (4%) as the baseline for Indicator 2.
- The Committee passed a motion to advise the Department to maintain the target using the current years percentage (63.9) as the baseline on Indicator 5A.

4. Advise the State educational agency in developing corrective action plans to address findings identified in Federal monitoring reports under this part.

Activity

- The Committee received updated information about their concerns brought forth previously regarding the compliance agreement developed for the alternate assessment process and were informed about what the agreement from OSEP states.

5. Advise the State educational agency in developing and implementing policies relating to the coordination of services for children with disabilities.

Activity

- The Committee discussed possible concerns related to special education procedures in State Sponsored Charter Schools.
- The Committee received an updated report on State Sponsored Charter Schools and FAPE and discussed the need for technical assistance to the leadership of these charter schools and parent training, upon receipt of the NDE memo.
- The Committee was informed that the Attorney General is conducting an analysis of the issue of State Sponsored Charter Schools and FAPE. It will be shared with SEAC upon completion.
- The Committee received information regarding Integrated Employment including research on what is happening in Nevada and other states, survey preparation, focus groups, data gathering and by-laws and the Task Force on Integrated Employment.
- The Committee discussed the Task Force's struggle to get Integrated Employment in Nevada, the outreach project including survey and focus group completion. Recommendations including collecting data, adequate funding, employer involvement, skill sets and transportation needs, were discussed.

Action

- The Committee formed a subcommittee to draft and send a letter to the Department of Education requesting clarification of FAPE obligations and responsibilities of State Sponsored Charter Schools.
- A memo was sent to the Superintendent of Public Instruction on the issue of State Sponsored Charter Schools and FAPE.