

**Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC)  
Annual Report for Fiscal Year 2016  
July 1, 2015 – June 30, 2016**

*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, carryout the activities in the State Performance Plan (SPP), and the State Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP) 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 2015-2016 fiscal year, the SEAC elected MaryAnn Demchak to serve as Chair for this term, and Will Jensen 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>Jan Albertson</i>	<i>Special Education Administrators – 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>Robbin Dunn</i>	<i>Parents of Children with Disabilities</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>Caroline Longre</i>	<i>Parents of Children with Disabilities</i>
<i>Kate McCloskey</i>	<i>Department of Health &amp; Human Services</i>
<i>Kristine Minnich</i>	<i>Special Education Administrators - South</i>
<i>Joseph Morgan</i>	<i>Universities - South</i>
<i>Brian Patchett</i>	<i>Individuals with Disabilities</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>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>Michael Walker</i>	<i>Homeless Education</i>

### **SPECIAL EDUCATION STAFF TO THE SEAC**

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

### **2015-2016 MEETINGS**

During the 2015-2016 fiscal year, the SEAC met on November 18, 2015; January 26, 2016; March 16, 2016; and May 10, 2016.

## **ACCOMPLISHMENTS**

In keeping with their prescribed duties, the SEAC discussed many issues and generated a number of actions during the 2015-2016 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.**

### **Education Reform and NDE Updates**

#### **Due Process, Complaint, and Mediation**

##### **Activity**

The Committee received a report of complaints, mediation, and due process activity. Areas discussed were:

- Access to reports on website
- Dispute resolution area now available on NDE website
- Due process trend report
- New cadre of mediators and IEP facilitators

#### **Aversives and Restraints**

##### **Activity**

The committee received the October 1 report to the Legislative Counsel Bureau (LCB) regarding the use of aversive interventions and physical/mechanical restraints. Areas discussed were:

- Districts report to Local School Boards annually
- Department provides report to LCB annually
- Report includes number of instances in which physical restraint was used on pupils with disabilities; the number of instances in which mechanical restraint was used on pupils with disabilities; and the number of violations that occurred on students with disabilities, and by type of violation
- Data is disaggregated by school district and private school

#### **State Sponsored Charter schools**

##### **Activity**

The Committee received and discussed a memo from the Deputy Attorney General, State of Nevada that is the response to the memo dated February 20, 2015, from the Special Education Advisory Committee to the Superintendent of Public Instruction regarding concerns related to current special education practices and procedures in State Sponsored Charter Schools

- Disappointment that Superintendent of Public Instruction did not solicit a formal opinion from the Attorney General's Office
- Citations noted in memo were not complete specific to 34 C.F.R. 104.33(a)(3) and 34 C.F.R. 104.33
- Issue is complicated
- The LEA in this memo is the State Sponsored Charter School Authority, which complicates matters
- Lawsuit eminent
- Something needs to be done proactive about the disclosure of services

##### **Action**

The Committee passed a motion to table discussion for a future meeting.

## **Trauma Informed Education**

### **Activity**

The Committee received information on Trauma Informed Education and Schools. They discussed:

- Trauma-Sensitive Schools
- Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE) Study – Childhood Experiences: Abuse, Neglect, and Household dysfunction
- Ace Behavioral Outcomes
- The impact of ACE
- Prevalence of Trauma in Students
- Trauma & Brain Development - Trauma affects learning and school performance
- Noticeable and Hidden Effects of ACE
- Key Triggers for Students Impacted by Trauma
- Trauma & Behavior
- Un-informed View and Trauma-informed view
- The Necessary Paradigm Shift
- Trauma-informed practice
- Trauma-sensitive schools
- PBIS Framework for Trauma-sensitive schools
- <http://www.nctsn.org/resources/audiences/school-personnel/trauma-toolkit>

### **Action**

The Committee passed a motion that the Special Education Advisory Committee write a letter of support to the Office of Safe and Respectful Learning and the Superintendent of Instruction at the Department of Education supporting trauma informed education in schools for all students.

## ***Office of Safe and Respectful Learning\****

### **Activity**

*The Director of the Office of Safe and Respectful Learning provided information to SEAC regarding initiatives and programs in the Office of Safe and Respectful Learning and how this Office can address the needs of students with disabilities. Discussion ensued.*

- *Description of the Office of Safe and Respectful Learning*
- *Hailey's Law*
- *Statistics on Bullying*
- *Cyber Bullying*
- *Monitoring Social Media in the Schools*
- *Culture of School, Teachers that have relationships with students, relationships*
- *Definition of Bullying in Statute*
- *Empowerment Plans, Universal change in the system, benchmarks*
- *Safe to Tell*
- *Emergency Management Plans*
- *Evidence based training programs*

### **Action**

*The Committee passed a motion to send a letter to the DOE copying the SBE and the governor, that the SEAC supports the office of safe and respectful learning and the importance to all children especially to students with disabilities and encouraging them to adequately fund the office to be effective.*

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\* Added to final report from May 10, 2016 meeting

## **Individualized Education Plans**

### **Activity**

The Committee discussed the time and/or length of IEP meetings, student involvement and leadership at those meetings, and other areas of the IEP development.

- Representation no signing off on IEP
- Contracted hours
- Administrator not available
- Time limitations
- Scheduling issues
- Oversight by management

### **Action**

The Committee passed a motion that the Special Education Advisory Committee advise the Nevada Department of Education regarding the following concerns around the scheduling of IEP meetings. 1) Accommodating parents that can only attend meetings after or before traditional school hours, 2) IEP meetings being scheduled with inadequate time to develop a meaningful Individualized Educational Plan

### **Activity**

*The Director informed the committee that she met with the Special Education Directors and addressed the concerns brought up at the last Special Education Advisory Committee meeting. All districts were represented.*

## **Personnel Development/ Licensure**\*

### **State Personnel Development Grant**\*

#### **Activity**

*The Committee received an update on the current status of the SPDG grant. Discussion ensued.*

- *Increase academic performance of students with IEPs*
- *Enhance, Improve and Increase Student Performance*
- *Instructional Consultation, Assessment and Teaming (ICAT)*
- *Professional Development-School Level Participants and District and Administrators Participants*
- *Level of Implementation*
- *Consortium on Reaching Excellence in Education (CORE)*

### **Collaboration for Effective Educator Development and Reform (CEEDAR)**\*

#### **Activity**

*The Committee received information regarding the intensive technical assistance from the CEEDAR Center regarding teach prep programs in Nevada's systems of higher education. Discussion ensued.*

- *Nevada Leadership Team includes Nevada Department of Education and Institutes of Higher Education*
- *Monthly Meetings*
- *Application of CEEDAR tools*

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\* Added to final report from May 10, 2016 meeting

- *Goals*
- *Technical Assistance to bring both expertise and funding to assist the leadership team in meeting the goals developed in the Nevada*
- *Develop ongoing relationships*
- *\$200,000 to support CEEDAR, face to face meetings and work groups*
- *MOU with Nevada Department of Education and Institutes of Higher Education*
- *Leadership team will participate in national CEEDAR meeting*

### **Highly Qualified Status for Special Education Teachers (Every Student Succeeds Act)<sup>\*</sup>**

#### **Activity**

*The Committee received information regarding the highly qualified status of special education teachers now that the ESSA no longer requires HQ status of teachers. Discussion ensued.*

- *Every Student Succeeds Act replaced No Child Left Behind*
- *Teachers are currently not meeting the HQ status*
- *Does Special Education Advisory Committee want to support: Option 1- continue to hold special education teachers to the HQ status or Option 2- follow ESSA determine most effective practices for special education teachers*

#### **Action**

*The Committee passed a motion that the Special Education Advisory Committee advises the Department of Education that they support Option 2, having meaningful input with future licensure requirements for special education teachers.*

### **Alternative Route to Certification (Options Program)<sup>\*</sup>**

#### **Activity**

*The Committee received information regarding the options program that districts currently utilize to hire teachers for special education classrooms. Discussion ensued.*

#### **Action**

*The Committee passed a motion to advise the Department of Education of its support for the ARC/Options Program as applicable to special education licensure. Advisement to include support of the following:*

- *A period of 3 years to complete*
- *A monitored plan of annual coursework completion expectations*
- *A means for removal from the options plan for lack of adequate progress*
- *A mentoring Program*

*If the department appoints a committee to discuss or review ARC programs, SEAC should be represented.*

### **Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC)**

#### **Activity**

The Center for Technical Assistance for Excellence in Special Education (TAESE), provided training for the committee on the roles and responsibilities of the Special Education Advisory Committee. Topics of training included the purpose of the committee under IDEA, membership requirements, advisory role of the committee, roles with SPP/APR/SSIP, SEAC functions and procedures and priorities.

The Committee reviewed and discussed SEAC Annual reports which are summaries of actions

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<sup>\*</sup> *Added to final report from May 10, 2016 meeting*

taken by the Committee relative to each of the federally conferred duties.

**Action\***

*The Committee approved the 2016 report with the removal of one phrase from the draft.*

**Activity**

The Committee discussed the possibility of adding students or students with disabilities to the Special Education Advisory Committee. Areas discussed were:

- Age minimum (16) – maximum (22)
- Chaperone for travel
- Student Alumni
- Release from school
- Representation for North, South, Rural
- Description of role on committee and orientation to Special Education Advisory Committee and school site support to share out SEAC information
- Shorter Term - Annual
- SEAC members acting as mentors

**Action**

The Committee passed a motion to expand SEAC membership by 3 spots to include persons that have been served in Nevada by special education during their school career and are at least 16 years of age and no older 22 years of age at the time of nomination. The 3 additional spots shall represent Students in the South, Students in the North, and rural. The term of membership shall be one year.

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

**Activity**

The Committee received and discussed information on the proposed regulations and amendments to NAC 395 regarding the Special Education Contingency Account beginning the 2016-2017 school year and information about the NAC workshops which took place February 1, 2016 in Carson City and Las Vegas.

The Committee received and discussed information about the English Language Acquisition Department Endorsement and the implications to special education licensure. Every new license will be required to have 12 credits for this endorsement.

**Action**

The Committee passed a motion, regarding the English language acquisition endorsement, that the chair of SEAC draft a letter to the Board that the Special Education Advisory Committee recognizes the importance of addressing ELL needs, but has concerns and recommends research to answer those concerns.

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

**Activity**

The Committee heard an update on the current status of the development of Phase II of Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP) and Nevada's participation in the National Center for System Improvement's Language and Literacy Cross-State Learning Collaborative. Areas discussed were:

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\* Added to final report from May 10, 2016 meeting

- Implementation of Access, Plan, Teach Program in Clark County to improve reading in grade 3
- Read by 3
- Focus on Literacy
- Currently building Phase Two of the implementation of SSIP

The Committee received information regarding the SPP/APR report submitted in February 2016.

Areas discussed were:

- IDEA SPP/APR overview
- Summary of Nevada's work with OSEP funded technical assistance centers and resources
- Technical assistance sources
- Actions taken
- Baseline data, targets, and improvement activities
- Performance indicators

*The Committee received a final update on the current status of the development of Phase II and Nevada's participation in the National Center for Systemic Improvement's Language and Literacy Cross-State Learning Collaborative. They discussed:*

- *Improving results for Student with Disabilities*
- *Strategies to increase state capacity to structure and lead meaningful change in LEAs*
- *Indicator 17*
- *State-identified measurable results (SiMR)*
- *Assess, Plan, Teach (APT)*
- *APT Leadership Team*
- *National Center for Systemic Improvement (NCSI)*
- *Language and Literacy Cross-State Learning Collaborative*
- *IDEA Data Team*
- *Phase II has been submitted*
- *Development of Family Involvement Activities*

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

There were no activities in this area

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

**Activity**

The SEAC members that were involved with the integrated employment effort reported to the committee the current updates and information relevant to the committee.

At every meeting, the committee received updated information regarding activities that the NDE is participating in regarding post-secondary transition including intensive technical assistance from the National Technical Assistance Center for Transition (NTACT). Areas discussed were:

- Nevada's Transition Conference
- Student Leadership Conference
- Intensive Technical Assistance Plan (ITAP)
- Working with District, Agency, and School Staff
- Areas of Focus: Career Awareness, Community Experiences, Interagency Collaboration, Self-Determination/Self-Advocacy, and Transition Programs.

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\* Added to final report from May 10, 2016 meeting