

State Advisory Panel for Exceptional Children (SAPEC)
December 3, 2020
Virtual Meeting

Meeting Minutes

Call to Order

The SAPEC virtual meeting was called to order by SAPEC Chair, Ron Rogers. All members were welcomed. Ron went over the virtual meeting protocol and reminded members to complete the evaluation form that is now through SurveyMonkey.

Sandy Kaufman, Office for Exceptional Children, conducted roll call. Members absent were Valarie Alloy, Tina Evans, Liesl Gyurko, Jessica Minor, and Tami Wozniak-Smith.

Ron Rogers welcomed SAPEC guest, Barb Mackenzie and reviewed the guest's protocols and responsibilities.

Monica Drvota, Associate Director, Office for Exceptional Children, welcomed two of OEC's new Assistant Directors, Heidi Kleinman and Sarah Buoni. Both introduced themselves and expressed their excitement in officially starting their new roles as well as being more involved with SAPEC.

Panel Business

Ron reminded members that we have open positions on the executive committee and membership committee. All of those interested should send a letter of interest to Parise Callahan. Trisha also mentioned that if you are up for a second term please re-apply. SAPEC also needs to fill positions for Member-at-Large (MAL) and a SAPEC Co-chairperson. These applications are due by the end of January.

Ron reminded members to complete the evaluations following the SAPEC meeting. The executive committee and Office for Exceptional Children staff do look at these closely and we value the suggestions and feedback that members provide.

No public comments or unmet needs were reported.

Office for Exceptional Children Director Updates

Jo Hannah Ward, Director of the Office for Exceptional Children provided an update on the Student with Disabilities roadmap plan *Each Child means Each Child*. It is our plan to have it released in late December. Jo Hannah reminded everyone that it is not a separate plan from the department's strategic plan, *Each Child Our Future*, but rather an extension to activate the specific needs of each child, including those students with disabilities and students who are gifted.

Monica added that the OEC rules will move to state board in February. The OSD/OSSB rule is up for public comment currently until December 16th. Also, the PBIS Restraint and Seclusion rule is moving forward to being passed in March. As previously mentioned, there is a new provision that adds a complaint process in the rule. Guidelines for this complaint process will be developed and reviewed by SAPEC. OEC will bring this to SAPEC possibly in March 2021. The three new developmental disability rules will be reviewed by SAPEC during our next meeting in January. We will have facilitated breakout discussions to assist SAPEC members with reviewing and providing feedback on the rules.

Jo Hannah reminded SAPEC members to keep in mind that the department has updated guidance on Ohio's Reset and Restart website for Ohio's districts and schools related to the pandemic and guidance on how to operate during this time. OEC is also putting together joint guidance with the Department of Developmental Disabilities. This guidance will be coming in December.

Jo Hannah Ward shared an update on Ohio's Special Education Profiles and Ratings. Kara Waldron, Program Administrator, Office for Exceptional Children, and her team are currently working to get the data out very soon. The special education profiles are created annually for each district and school. These profiles display performance over time on key indicators for students with disabilities and notify the district of any required activities for each indicator. Due to the pandemic and school building closure, the department did not release the Special Education Profiles last spring. We did not want to release the profiles and start the clock for activities with prescribed timelines when districts were not able to address them.

The 2020-2021 Special Education Profiles consolidates required actions for 2019-2020 and 2020-2021. This means that one or both years may trigger a required action. Districts will complete one process regardless of which year of data triggers the required action. Each district's Special Education Rating will be released with the profile. This year's profile will be released in two phases. The first phase will include only indicators with required actions. These required actions are based on indicators covering student outcomes, procedural compliance, disproportionality and required annual surveys. The first release is targeted for this month. We're working to release the profiles next week if possible. We'll send notifications to superintendents, special education contacts and community school sponsors when the profiles are available for review. The second release is targeted for April 2021 and will address informational indicators for both years that do not have required actions. At our next meeting we'll share more details on this year's Special Education Profiles, including the number of districts with required actions for each indicator.

Heidi Kleinman, Assistant Director for Dispute Resolution, Office for Exceptional Children, gave a brief overview of a systemic complaint filed against Toledo Public Schools. OEC received the complaint in late spring from ABEL. The complaint alleged that special education students served by Toledo Public Schools were not receiving the services they should have been receiving (remote services, not providing the same services for everyone). OEC investigated and issued a letter of findings. The district did a great job of following up. The district has been issued a corrective action plan which is very specific, and the dispute resolution team is working with them to correct it.

Amy Szymanski, Secondary Transition and Workforce Development Consultant, Office for Exceptional Children, gave an update on Ohio's Secondary Transition Plan. Beginning in 2018, the Ohio Transition Plan was incorporated into the Ohio Employment First Transition Vision Workplan, which outlines the work of the Ohio Employment First Taskforce. The Taskforce is required per Ohio Revised Code. The integration provides credibility to and ensures sustainability of the work. In May 2020 a steering committee was developed. The steering committee is made up of individuals from the department, OCALI, Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities, The Ohio State Family Engagement Center, as well as national experts. The goal of the secondary transition plan is to deploy and disseminate cross-agency professional development that focuses on identified critical topics (e.g. implicit bias, cultural and linguistic diversity) as the foundation for improving family engagement for transition-aged youth by May 2021. As more work is completed, Amy will provide updates to SAPEC members.

Office of Early Learning & School Readiness Updates

Jody Beall, Assistant Director, Office of Early Learning and School Readiness, gave the early learning updates. The Preschool Special Education rule did not get voted out of the State Board of Education. Early Learning hopes to have more information to share in January. The plan is to implement the Preschool Special Education rules in July. Jody shared an opportunity regarding the Personnel Prep Grant. The early learning team would like to extend an invitation to SAPEC members to be a part of an advisory team. Wendy Grove, Director, Office of Early Learning and School Readiness, will be leading the team. Those interested should reach out to Wendy Grove as soon as possible. The plan is to convene the advisory group meeting and begin working in January. Wendy can provide more details to those interested.

The Preschool Special Education team is beginning to identify partnerships for internet services and the pathway from preschool to school age. This information will be shared with SAPEC when complete. The team acknowledges that PBIS is slowly starting to move out of just the school setting. They have begun working with Head Start partners as there has been a lot of interest in getting started. The first web series on this will begin next Friday. The web series will begin with a phased approach with Head Start directors, then will move to staff. The PSE team is very excited to be partnering with Head Start and for this initiative to be introduced in early childhood settings.

The Early Learning team is also working to update the early learning and development standards. These standards are now eight years old so there is a definite need for updating. As they go through the updating process, the team will share with SAPEC for suggestions.

There has been considerable discussion around updating the department's webpages for families. In August the agency invited families to talk with the department with children ages 3-21. The department received feedback on various topics in education including their experiences when they reach out to the department for help. It was also asked whether they felt our webpages were useful to them. Based on the feedback, the Office of Early Learning and Office for Exceptional Children decided to update these webpages. We would like SAPEC members to provide feedback and let us know what is missing. SAPEC members will receive information with links to these webpages and guiding questions to collect your feedback. Your feedback and suggestions will be discussed during the next meeting in January 2021.

SAPEC Learning Topic (11 Districts Overview)

Monica Drvota and Andrea Faulkner, Assistant Director, Office for Exceptional Children, provided a high-level overview of the 11 District Plan (DOE). The Doe lawsuit was originally filed in 1993 and was related to funding issues. Students with disabilities were later added to the case when Disability Rights Ohio filed a lawsuit. A settlement agreement was finalized on March 2, 2020. This agreement required the Ohio Department of Education Office for Exceptional Children to develop a five-year plan to improve state support for special education and create measurable improvements in student performance.

The Doe Settlement Agreement has 12 provisions which the Office for Exceptional Children has broken into narratives. Three narratives were reviewed by SAPEC today. Moving forward, OEC will have quarterly meetings with the advisory group which is made up of Office for Exceptional Children staff, staff from the Office of Early Learning and School Readiness, ODE Senior Executive Director, Legal Counsel from the Department and Disability Rights Ohio. The 11 District Plan must be submitted to the court by March 2021.

Andrea Faulkner continued the presentation by discussing how the 11 District Plan will advance equity across the state. Andrea stressed that although this plan is targeted to 11 specific districts in the state,

the plan will eventually be applied statewide. This plan will provide the opportunity to close gaps for students with disabilities who are not currently receiving equitable educational access.

SAPEC members participated in facilitated breakout discussions where they reviewed and discussed three narratives. Following the breakout discussions, SAPEC members returned to whole group discussion and shared their observations from the breakout discussions.

SAPEC Learning Topic (Each Child Means Each Child)

Joe Petrarca, Associate Director, Office for Exceptional Children, provided an update on our students with disabilities roadmap strategic plan titled *Each Child Means Each Child*. State superintendent DeMaria charged OEC to develop a plan to improve learning experiences and outcomes for students with disabilities. OEC is in the process of crafting the plan, *Each Child Means Each Child* which will articulate the vision set by *Each Child, Our Future* for Ohio's students with disabilities. The plan is currently being edited by Office for Exceptional Children staff and senior leadership. The components of the plan include three focus areas, recommendations of broad strategies that form the foundation the plan and action steps which state specific efforts designed to carry out the tactics that will positively impact students with disabilities.

OEC created a guiding coalition to advise the office on the development of a five-year implementation plan for *Each Child Means Each Child*. The guiding coalition had their first meeting at the end of October to become familiar with the plan and coalition members were assigned to subgroups to help guide the work. The coalition will meet quarterly through June 2021 to finalize the five-year plan. The Office for Exceptional Children will continually provide updates on *Each Child Means Each Child* as the plan and its implementation is developed.

Closing Remarks & Meeting Adjourned

Monica mentioned that SAPEC will review three new rules in January as well as some family engagement items that Jody and Lyndsay mentioned earlier in the meeting. Ron reminded all members to complete the meeting evaluation through the SurveyMonkey link. Any and all feedback is appreciated. Our next meeting will be Thursday January 21st.

It was noted that a motion to approve the November 5th meeting minutes was not proposed earlier in the meeting. Ron Rogers asked for a motion to approve the minutes. A motion was proposed by Traci Arway and seconded by Bonnie Brown. Meeting minutes were approved unanimously.

A motion was proposed and seconded to adjourn the meeting. Meeting Adjourned.