

STATE ADVISORY PANEL FOR EXCEPTIONAL CHILDREN
March 26, 2019 9:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.
Quest Conference Center

Call to Order

Tony Cochran, SAPEC Chairperson, welcomed everyone to the meeting and called the meeting to order.

Roll Call

Monica Drvota, Assistant Director, Office for Exceptional Children conducted roll call. The following SAPEC members were absent: Valerie Alloy, Marbella Caceres, Tina Evans, Liesl Gyurko, Kimberly Hauck, Dana Hollis, Vicki Palur, Myrrha Satow and Gregory Taylor.

Guests

Interested stakeholders attending today's meeting:

Jennifer Harlin, Barb McKenzie. Ms. Jean Mendis participated by phone to make public comment on today's agenda.

Panel Business Approval of the November 29, 2018 Minutes

A motion was called to approve the November 29, 2018 meeting minutes. The motion was seconded. There was no discussion. Minutes were unanimously approved.

Public Comment

The floor was opened for public comment. Ms. Jean Mendis introduced herself as an individual who is deaf and the parent of a child who graduated and is deaf. Ms. Mendis expressed concerns that education for hearing impaired students is not equal to education provided to typical students. Her second concern was about qualifications of interpreters who work with students who are deaf and whether Ohio has enough interpreters to meet the needs of deaf students.

The executive committee reviewed Ms. Mendis written comments during the November 29th executive committee meeting. They requested additional information from the department about these issues and revisited the issues during the March 26th meeting. The Office for Exceptional Children offered to conduct additional research to identify other offices that might assist with addressing Ms. Mendis' concerns. SAPEC's role is to listen to questions and concerns from parents of children with disabilities and share those concerns with the Office for Exceptional Children. The executive committee will work with the department on a response to Mrs. Mendis' concerns.

No other public comments were received.

SAPEC Chairperson's Report

The membership and elections committee will present a ballot for selection of new SAPEC members, a vice chairperson and member-at-large during the SAPEC meeting on May 9th. Four candidates will be nominated to become SAPEC members to replace panel members whose second three-year term expires in June 2019. All nominees meet the criteria outlined in SAPEC's bylaws and were interviewed and the committee.

Ron Rogers, current vice chair, will begin as SAPEC chairperson in June and Tony Cochran will continue in an ex-officio role.

The executive committee asked panel members interested in serving as chairperson for the membership and elections committee and policies and procedures committee to volunteer. Panel members interested in serving on the executive committee as co-chairperson of a standing committee should contact Tony Cochran or OEC staff.

Emerging Issues/Unmet Needs

No emerging issues or unmet needs were reported.

Office for Exceptional Children's Report

Related Services Personnel Shortage Workgroup, Kim Monachino, Director, Office for Exceptional Children

Ohio House Bill 49 requires creation of a related services work group. This group is charged with reviewing related services personnel shortages, identifying causes, proposing solutions to shortages in school settings and evaluating the long-term sustainability of potential solutions.

The work group identified several challenges that impact personnel shortages such as recruitment, providers leaving the profession for private sector employment, working conditions, traveling, paperwork, and provider caseload.

The committee created short, medium, and long-term goals to address related services personnel shortages and developed a variety of resource documents. ODE conducted a survey to collect information about recruitment and retention of related service personnel in school districts. Survey results will be analyzed and shared with stakeholders. One-page information briefs that describe the role, responsibilities and expectations of various related service providers are posted on the Ohio Department of Education website at <http://education.ohio.gov/Topics/Special-Education/Related-Services>. Other products will be developed and shared before the end of the year. The workgroup will develop and submit a report to the general assembly describing the committee's work and recommended solutions.

Part B Application Process, Kalinda Watson, Assistant Director, Resource Management, Office for Exceptional Children

IDEA governs how states and public service agencies provide early intervention, special education, and related services. The Ohio Department of Education receives two types of grants, formula grants and discretionary grants that are administered by the Office for Exceptional Children to fund special education programs. IDEA Part A supports general provisions. Part B supports providing education for all students with disabilities. Part C supports services for infants and toddlers. Section 611 supports school age students and covers children age 3 through 21.

Ohio received roughly \$430 million in the past four years to fund services for school age children 3-21. Ohio's preschool grant was roughly \$12 million. Districts receive 80 – 90% of these funds go directly to districts for programs for exceptional children.

The Department must ensure that the public is aware of how funds are allocated and have opportunities for public comment on the application. Ohio's Part B application, submitted annually, will be posted on the Ohio Department of Education website for 60 days. Those interested in commenting on Ohio's application can do so until April 15, 2019.

Operating Standards for the Education of Children with Disabilities Update – Monica Drvota, Assistant Director, Office for Exceptional Children

The Ohio Department of Education rule revision process will continue through Spring 2020. Internal workgroups are drafting proposed changes to the ten remaining rules. SAPEC will have an opportunity to review the 10 rules over the next year beginning with the nonpublic rule in May.

The Office for Exceptional Children values stakeholder feedback on the rules and is developing a plan to share 2-3 revised rules during each meeting. SAPEC members are encouraged to attend as many meetings as possible to provide feedback on the revisions. The 2019-2020 SAPEC schedule will be shared during the next meeting. SAPEC meetings will probably be held at Quest Conference Center.

Ohio's Strategic Plan for Education - Kim Monachino, Director, Office for Exceptional Children

Kim Monachino referred to Ohio's Strategic Plan – each child our future, available on ODE's website and other resource documents provided to SAPEC members. In conjunction with Ohio's Strategic plan, the Office for Exceptional Children is designing a plan that clearly articulates the department's effort to address achievement performance gaps between students with disabilities and their typical peers. The Special Education Road Map will acknowledge the targeted effort needed to ensure that students with disabilities achieve the goals outlined in Ohio's Strategic Plan.

The design and implementation of the Special Education Road Map involves three groups. The steering committee, facilitated by a national expert, is charged with oversight, and guiding the process. An internal staff committee, comprised of staff representing 10 offices, will oversee the day-to-day plan implementation. Four work groups will be charged with discussing issues related to one of the following topics - literacy, disproportionality, post-secondary transition, and inclusive leadership. The committees will examine various aspects of educational experiences for students with disabilities. Our goal is to develop a final set of recommendations by December 2019 that will lead to improved outcomes for students with disabilities.

The Office for Exceptional Children is conducting two stakeholder input activities. A survey was disseminated to over 200,000 building administrators, teachers, and other staff to collect input from district personnel. A series of Family Town Hall meetings will be conducted statewide to collect stakeholder input based on a set of guiding questions.

Wendy Stoica reported on Family Town Hall meetings that were conducted in Dayton and Columbus. One additional Town Hall meeting, in the Cincinnati area, will be added to the schedule and a virtual Town Hall meeting will be planned. Chrissy Cline will lead the department's efforts to identify and document effective practices used by districts and schools in Ohio. The Special Education Roadmap is projected to be completed by December 2019.

Plan to Improve Learning Outcomes for Students with Disabilities - Kara Waldon, Program Administrator, Office for Exceptional Children

Kara Waldon led the review Ohio's data story outlined in a resource document titled Equity in Education. The document highlighted data on several top topics including:

- Who are our students with disabilities?
- Inclusive learning environments,
- Safe and supportive environments
- Performance and preparation

SAPEC members engaged in table discussions, asked questions, shared suggestions, and written comments about the data. Panel member observations were about the quality of education for students with disabilities, professional development needed on topics like trauma informed care, the reliability of self-reported data, and the need for districts to make staffing changes to address performance gaps.

Transportation Rule Update - Sarah Buoni, Education Program Specialist, Office for Exceptional Children

Sarah Buoni provided an update on the status of Ohio Administrative Code 3301-51-10 Transportation rule. Stakeholder meetings were conducted with various groups including the Ohio Association for Pupil Personnel Administrators (OAPSA), State Support Team directors, transportation directors, special education advocates and others. ODE received nineteen comments through the public comment portal. All feedback was reviewed, and changes were made to ensure consistent terminology throughout the rule, the term “child” was changed to be consistent with language in other rules, and recommendations from SAPEC on the summary of requirements were included. Final draft documents may be shared with the State Board of Education committee in May and presented by the full board for discussion and a vote for approval in July.

State Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP) Early Literacy Pilot, Kara Waldon, Program Administrator and Ashley Hall, Education Program Specialist, Office for Exceptional Children

The Ohio Department of Education submits an annual report on implementation of the State Systemic Improvement Plan Early Literacy Pilot. The first cohort of pilot schools is in their third year of implementation and the second cohort is completing their second year. Highlights of the second full year of Pilot implementation were shared.

- Reading Tiered Fidelity Inventory showed increases across the board in teams, implementation, resources, and evaluation.
- More than 900 coaching sessions were conducted across both cohorts. Data literacy, phonological awareness, beginning phonics, use of assessments and oral language development are among the most frequent coaching topics.
- Evaluation results showed an increase in educator knowledge and teachers are participating in systems coaching and instructional coaching sessions.
- Curriculum based measures showed increases in performance of grades K-1 students in specific areas and increases in performance for students with disabilities in cohort one over the three years of implementation.

New insights about student performance and the first collection of data on how increased teacher knowledge is translating into classroom practice will be available in the 2020 SSIP Annual Report.

State Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP) Early Literacy Pilot - Parent focus group results - Jacinda Dariotis, Director, University of Cincinnati Evaluation Services Center and staff

The University of Cincinnati Evaluation Services Center presented findings from parent focus group sessions conducted in cohort 2 schools. Panel members discussed three themes that emerged from the focus group data.

- Theme #1: Parents need familiarity with the early literacy pilot
- Theme #2: Competing demands limit engagement. Parents can't always attend meetings to learn about the pilot. Families have limited time to engage in literacy activities at home.
- Theme #3: More communication is needed between parents and schools. Parents are interested in knowing more about the academic performance of their children and how to help them at home.

The evaluation team shared several recommendations that were offered by focus group participants. They recommended using newsletters, that districts use a consistent communication platform such as Class DoJo and providing training for parents. SAPEC members participated in table discussions about focus group results and offered additional recommendations such as using text messages or live chats where parents can share ideas, providing workable tips to parents about working with children, using universal design in our approach to family engagement, and engaging parents at the beginning of the pilot to facilitate buy-in.

Agency Reports and Member Announcements - Tony Cochran and Sandy Kaufman

No agency reports were provided.

Closing Comments - Kim Monachino and Tony Cochran

Members were asked to leave the completed meeting evaluation form on the table. A motion was made to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded. There was no discussion. Meeting adjourned.