



# Department of Education & Workforce

State Advisory Panel for  
Exceptional Children

## State Advisory Panel for Exceptional Children (SAPEC) Meeting

December 5, 2024

### Callo to Order

This meeting, held on December 5, 2024, brought together members of the State Advisory Panel for Exceptional Children to discuss various topics concerning exceptional children in Ohio. The session began with a welcome by Kim Moritz, who expressed gratitude for the attendees' presence and indicated that roll call would be taken.

### Roll Call

During the roll call, various members responded, confirming their attendance, including Rachel Barnhart, Trisha Barnett, and Matthew Grube, among others.

### Introduction of Director Dackin

Jo Hannah Ward, the administrator for the Office for Exceptional Children, introduced Director Dackin, who shared insights about the Department of Education and Workforce. He emphasized the importance of literacy, citing that nearly 40% of third graders were not reading at grade level and discussed the governor's executive order to implement the science of reading across school districts.

### Discussion on Education System Changes

Director Dackin elaborated on the recent changes in Ohio's education system, highlighting the restructuring of the Department of Education and Workforce. He mentioned the need for collaboration among all stakeholders to improve educational outcomes and encouraged panel members to advocate for their children's education.

### Panel Business

Following the introductions, the meeting moved on to panel business, where the approval of the minutes from the previous meeting was discussed. Rachel Barnhart motioned to approve the minutes, which was seconded by Katelyn Merzke.

### Membership and Committee Reports

Rachel Barnhart also reported on membership updates, noting that there were only nine applicants for new members, prompting a decision to reopen the application process.

## **Public Comments**

There were no public comments regarding unmet needs during this session.

## **Updates from the Office for Exceptional Children**

Jo Hannah Ward provided updates on the Office for Exceptional Children, emphasizing the importance of data collection and analysis to inform policy decisions. She mentioned the upcoming changes to indicators related to the identification and support of students with disabilities.

## **Monitoring and Compliance**

Sarah Brooks discussed the monitoring and compliance processes within the Office for Exceptional Children, explaining how districts would be assessed on their adherence to IDEA regulations. She outlined the various tiers of monitoring, including desk reviews and on-site evaluations, and the importance of accurate data collection in ensuring compliance.

## **Conclusion**

The meeting concluded with a reminder for attendees to complete the meeting evaluation forms and a note about the next meeting scheduled for March 12, 2025. Participants were encouraged to reach out with any further questions or concerns regarding the topics discussed.

Overall, the proceedings highlighted the ongoing efforts to enhance educational services for exceptional children in Ohio, with a strong focus on literacy, compliance with regulations, and stakeholder engagement to improve outcomes for students with disabilities.