



WAPSD

Wyoming Advisory Panel for Students with Disabilities

June 11, 2019, 4:00 pm, Fire Rock Steak House, Casper, WY

Attendance: Rachel Crawford, Erin Swilling, Ann Armel, Ammon Bullinger, Christine Bullinger, Andrea Clubb, Julie Heil, Dallas Meyers, Margee Robertson, Deb Montoya, Shelley Hamel, Trystin Green, John Copenhaver, Jennifer Duncan

MOTIONS

Administrative:

It was moved by Ann Armel and Seconded by Andrea Clubb that the March Meeting Minutes be approved. Motion carried unanimously.

Erin Swilling moved that Rachel Crawford be nominated to be elected Chair of the WAPSD Panel; Ann Armel seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously

Policy:

Ann Armel moved that the Panel come up with a draft letter stating what they stand and advocate for to be presented to the Legislature regarding the Special Education Cap. Julie Heil seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Welcome/Opening: Rachel Crawford kicked off the meeting and went around the room for welcome introductions. Mission/vision statements were read, reviewed the March Minutes then opened the floor for any public comment. We did not receive any public comment.

Minutes need to contain a listing of attendance and the panel members would like them sooner so they can be reviewed prior to voting to approve.

Margee Robertson, SPED Director Report & Discuss Areas of Improvement:

Margee Robertson presented reports on the number of students being served by Special Education Services. Robertson also reviewed student proficiency on the statewide assessment in general education and special education varying cohorts – there is statewide concern that the graduation rate in the special education cohort is low and directly correlates to proficiency on the statewide assessment. The overall goal is to close the gap between general education and special education populations in their proficiency and graduation rate. Robertson presented the Special Education Programs Unit Report Card, which shows data for the entire state including graduation rate, dropout rate, and subject participation rate.

Margee is meeting with an outside organization to provide guidance in strategic planning for state improvement in Special Education outcomes. Two to four goals with measurable outcomes will be set and she asked the panel to provide some feedback on potential goals to incorporate into the improvement plan. Some suggested goals were to eliminate all the “red”, areas of deficiency, on the statewide data reports by Ann Armel; Julie Heil would like to see more training on Wy-TOPP



WAPSD

Wyoming Advisory Panel for Students with Disabilities

accommodations and more pre-planning and allowing practice for the teachers to assist students, it would be important for each district to have a Special Education teacher on their assessment teams.

Margee reviewed the internal improvements and changes within the Special Education Programs division including efforts to tighten up processes, to watch carefully how each dollar is spent and bringing on necessary administrative staff and education consultant positions.

1% Forms Share Out, Margee Robertson:

Margee presented information regarding the 1% forms provided by Kascinda Fleming, WDE, who works to support the Wy-ALT Assessment and Standards. A flow chart of the proposed process to assist IEP teams make a decision on which assessment their students should take. There must be a significant cognitive disability to qualify to take the Wy-ALT and that determination is made by the IEP team through a series of testing and observation as well as meeting with the students, parents and instructors.

Robertson also presented a guiding document that outlines what the 1% conditions and criteria are. OSEP requires states to keep their total percentage of Special Education Population taking an alternative assessment under 1%. If it is higher, documentation and data must be provided to justify the higher percentage.

Parent Training Inquiry, Margee Robertson

WDE SPED contracting outcomes must benefit students in the state, per Robertson. Increasing areas of concern are early identification and the transition from preschool to kindergarten. Early identification has been proven to assist children with the transition from preschool to elementary school. Education for parents, child development centers and school districts is necessary to implement early identification. One other issue occurs at the end of K-12 school. Once the student exits the public school system, their services stop so it is very difficult to continue on into post-secondary education. The panel agreed that parent education for children at both ends of the education journey is essential for successful transition and education for the student. Many panel members shared personal stories or situations they have heard from other parents about their struggles working through the system, learning the jargon, knowing who to contact and how to advocate.

State Foundation Public Comments, Trystin Green:

Trystin Green, WDE, presented information on the public comment being received on the State Foundation Funds. Special Education was funded fully prior to 2018, after that the Legislature capped Special Education funding based on what was spent in the 2017-2018 year and would be applied to the 2020-2021 school year. Additionally, they appropriated \$2 million dollars for out of district placement for Special Education Students. Rules were promulgated for the \$2 million extra funded and are entitled Chapter 45 Rules, which are now open for public comment through July 19, 2019.



WAPSD

Wyoming Advisory Panel for Students with Disabilities

Ann Armel moved that the Panel come up with a draft letter stating what they stand and advocate for to be presented to the Legislature regarding the Special Education Cap. Julie Heil seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Ann Armel noted that the voice of the letter should be addressing the Legislature's focus on economic development; if students aren't educated they will not be future employees and business owners to grow Wyoming's economy. The Hathaway Scholarship was developed to meet that end, but students may miss the mark to utilize the Hathaway if appropriate services are cut short due to budget cuts. According to the Panel by laws, it is part of their responsibility to comment on rules that will affect children receiving special education services. All agreed that educating legislators about Special Education Funding/IDEA would be beneficial as they don't understand that the money comes in after the requirements are met, not before and that suddenly putting a cap on what districts can receive is detrimental. Dallas Myers stated that legislators need to understand that Education is an investment in infrastructure.

Staffing Shortages, Shelley Hamel:

Shortages in Special Education teachers, school psychologists and other essential staff exist in all districts in Wyoming. This affects the delivery of Special Education Services for those students that need it – Margee Robertson asked the panel to think about ways to encourage more teachers to continue their education and focus on Special Education and other essential roles. Shelley Hamel shared some initiatives that may assist with the situation. The director of the Professional Teaching Standards Board is looking at working with the University of Wyoming to offer a 2x2 certification program for teachers which would include certification in Career Technical Education and Special Education as well as offering the Special Education certification online.

By-Laws Update

Rachel Crawford reviewed the by-laws to outline the duties of the Chair prior to the election.

Chair – Elect Election:

Rachel Crawford moved that Erin Swilling be nominated to be elected Chair-elect of the WAPSD Panel; Ann Armel seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously

After the motion and second, a paper ballot vote was held and Erin was elected Chair-elect.

Margee Robertson reviewed the open positions on the Panel; there is a need for more students with disabilities on the panel; a legislative member; and a parent member; a representative with DFS. 2 parents have applied for open positions. Shannon Cranmore will be a WDE member filling the McKinney-Vento opening on the board.

Margee Robertson reviewed the process for accepting and reviewing applications for openings on the panel as outlined in the by laws.



WAPSD

Wyoming Advisory Panel for Students with Disabilities

Rachel Crawford noted that she would like to attend the Office Special Education Programs Leadership Meeting in July in Washington DC as Chair of the WAPSD Panel. Margee Robertson said that Rachel could attend that conference and that she would be reimbursed by the WDE for her travel, lodging and M & IE.

The next two meetings are scheduled for:

September 12, 2019 in Cheyenne, State Library, 2800 Central Ave, Cheyenne, WY 82001,
[Wyo State Library](#)

December 12, 2019 via Zoom

We will keep the 9am start and each meeting's end time will depend on the agenda for that day.

A motion to adjourn was made by Christine Bullinger. The motion was seconded by Erin Swilling. The meeting was adjourned.