



WAPSD

Wyoming Advisory Panel for Students with Disabilities

March 17, 2020, 9:00 a.m., Zoom Teleconference Meeting

Attendance: Rachel Crawford, Erin Swilling, Ann Armel, Nikki Baldwin, Christine Bullinger, Shannon Cranmore, Jennifer Duncan, Kathy Escobedo, Julie Heil, Davey Hough, Nicky Hulme, Dallas Myers, Ashley Robertson, Margee Robertson, Hayley Speiser, Pam Zamora

Guests: Deana Smith, WDE; TJ Mechem, DVR

MOTIONS

Administrative:

It was moved by Kathy Escobedo and Seconded by Erin Swilling that the December Meeting Minutes be approved as written. Motion carried unanimously.

Policy:

Welcome/Opening: Chairman Crawford called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. There was no public comment. Crawford read the Mission and Vision Statements for the Panel. TJ Mechem, a Program Consultant with Vocational Rehabilitation joined the meeting as a potential replacement for Ann Armel when her term expires in June.

Secretary Announcements

Jennifer Duncan updated the Panel on the Status of the WAPSD website and the changes the Panel is seeking. Duncan met with Communications Director Michelle Panos about the site and what the Panel envisions and the best way to get it set up. With the recent push to get COVID-19 information on the website, much of the Communications team's time has been occupied with that, but the site will be continually updated with current information to include agendas, minutes, letters and other proclamations the Panel has made as well as an archive of older materials.

Chair Report – Old and New Business, Rachel Crawford

Rachel Crawford updated the panel on new business. The Special Education cap was not removed during the legislative session. A letter was sent to the legislature regarding the Special Education Cap. Schools have been closed due to the COVID-19 pandemic and there are concerns about how Special Education students will receive all of their services remotely during the shutdown. Crawford is also concerned about access to mental health services during the quarantine for all students. Crawford followed up on responses to Erin Swilling regarding ideas for upcoming Parent Information Center (PIC) training. She has received input from the WDE and BHD but not from panel members. Crawford asked about finding a Department of Family Services representative for the panel. Margee Robertson said she would reach out to Jennifer Neeley about filling that role. Nicky Hulme agreed that Jennifer Neeley would be a good fit for the panel. Ann Armel asked about representation from someone who represents children in foster care, Robertson confirmed that Jennifer Neeley would meet that criteria as

well. Model IEP Forms to align with Wy-TOPP was another follow up project, Robertson said she would check with Kascinda Fleming on the status of that process. The IEP accommodation forms are still aligned with the previous assessment and need updating to match with the new one, Wy-TOPP.

Committee Reports

Ann Armel presented the Membership Committee report. A new chair will need to be elected since Ann is retiring soon and will be off of the panel. There is an opening on the panel for a legislator and a representative from DFS. More students may be needed based on the participation of the current students; Margee Robertson stated there is a need for more parents of students with disabilities. Erin and Ann developed a phone interview process that they felt worked well. For the Executive Committee, Rachel noted that the next meeting there will need to be an election for the Chair elect. The Executive Committee also sent a letter to the legislature regarding the Special Education cap.

There is also a Public Relations committee that could have a table set up with materials at various conferences and events around the state. They could encourage membership as well as public comment. Jennifer Duncan will send out a list with committees.

Margee asked for people who were interested in taking over Ann's chair role with the Membership Committee. Nicky Hulme is interested in both the Membership and Public Relations committees, would like some mentoring on both committees. Christine Bullinger also expressed interest in helping on both committees. Rachel Crawford would be interested in outreach and Public Relations. Rachel will be the chair of the PR Committee along with Christine and Nicky helping her. Nicky and Christine will head up the Membership Committee as co-leaders. The Executive Committee will be headed by Erin as the Chair and whoever is elected as chair elect.

The Legislative Committee has Davey Hough, Julie Heil, Dallas Myers on it and they will all continue in those roles.

Legislative Update

Margee Robertson provided the legislative update. HB 40, school finance, recalibration is underway and the consultants that are working on it have extensive knowledge of Special Education funding. Robertson is not sure their recommendations will be followed. Robertson gave an extensive breakdown of the Special Education funding and share it with the decision makers. HB 46, Special Education Funding, the cap on Special Education funding was not removed. HB 119, Medicaid billing for school based services, it was passed. SF 115, absenteeism and truancy, the bill did not pass.

SPED Director/WDE Updates

Margee Robertson updated the panel on the guidelines set out by WDE and OSEP regarding services for children with disabilities. With schools closing due to the COVID-19 pandemic, it is important that districts realize that if they are providing services for students, that students with disabilities need to receive their services as well. All the items listed in the IEP still need to be provided if other students are receiving students. Rachel Crawford expressed concern about the upcoming assessment for students, which will be difficult at best to provide when teachers haven't seen their students in several weeks, most specifically for students with disabilities who require accommodations to take the assessment.

Robertson is forming a committee to review and make updates to the Chapter 7 Rule regarding services for children with disabilities. She would like a variety of individuals on the committee to include administrators, educators, parents and special education professionals. The document will be sent out

to the panel, special education directors and superintendents for feedback and then the rule and regulation promulgation process will begin with public comment.

The WAVE Conference will be held in Riverton at Central Wyoming College July 28-30, 2020. The overarching theme of the conference will be High Leverage Practices. Save the Date information has been sent out and provides topics being covered. There is also a Call for Proposals for presentations at the WAVE conference. Each accepted presenter will receive complimentary conference registration and 3 nights lodging, plus a stipend of \$200. The University of Wyoming would like to add a literacy component to the conference.

The state grant that has been submitted to the US Department of Education and will be on the WDE website for public comment until April 15, 2020.

There has been an increase in parents asking for more specific services for their students with disabilities, including specific curriculum. Julie Heil asked if the Parent Information Center (PIC) could provide a guidance document for parents regarding this issue.

PIC Updates

Erin Swilling provided the panel with an update from PIC. There have been some program and staff changes; Terri Dawson, who was the Executive Director and founder of the program has retired. Erin has taken over Terri's position with PIC. Every state has at least one Parent Information Center with funding provided from the US Department of Education. They assist parents with knowing their rights, providing information for parents and their students receiving special education services. There are 4 staff statewide that service a specific area. One main goal individualized assistance to families – assistance was provided to over 2000 families between last March and November, many calls center around behaviors and more recently seclusion and restraint, which is guided by Wyoming State Statute which states it can only be used in a situation of imminent danger to the child or the staff; Nikki Baldwin with UW notified the board that the college of Education is now offering a Bachelors in Special Education and General Elementary Education and a Bachelors in Early Childhood Education, which they had eliminated for a while, and the curriculum will include behavioral health education; 50 IEP Meetings were attended around the state, however, the main goal is to help parents advocate for themselves and their child in the IEP process. PIC also hosts conferences throughout the year covering assistance for teachers and providers, parents and students and Erin would welcome any ideas from the panel for future content to be covered in these conferences.

619 Updates/WDE Data Updates

Deana Smith updated the panel on 619 Updates (Early Childhood) and WDE Data. Smith reviewed some of the documents that were provided at the Kindergarten Transition Summit that was held in January. The goal of the summit was to increase communication and build relationships between districts and child development centers (CDC's). She is working on having other events and opportunities to continue building those positive relationships. A lot of good practices have been an outcome of the summit i.e. lists of observation questions that districts are creating to give to CDC's, CDC teachers going to districts to observe kindergarten classes. Transition processes for children requiring special education are much longer, beginning as early as January in order to prepare the child on a social-emotional level to move into the kindergarten classroom. 14 best practices were determined from the summit with subcategories within those 14 overarching categories.

BHD Update

Kathy Escobedo gave an update on the Behavioral Health Division. They provide funding to the CDC's, there were more part C than Part B children, 3,645 total children receiving services through the CDC's. They are waiting on the legislature to hear about their funding for the next biennium. Legislatively, a study they would like the Early Intervention and Education program to undertake to study the funding for CDC's adequacy of funding, the method of requesting appropriations, mechanism for calculation and distributing funds. The legislature is not providing any funding for the study, it is to be done internally by October 1, 2020. Part B 619 questions – all CDC's have been closed through April 3 by the Governor, Part C services are discontinued for the time being. Kim Bach is the new Director for the EIEP, she has extensive background in special education. EIEP has been selected for Results Driven Accountability and has had their Data Drill Down with the WDE. They are schedule for monitoring in November, 2020. Escobedo shared that the Transition Summit was very helpful for them as well and saw a lot of good practices being suggested. There is training available for CDC staff in Casper at the end of April, depending on the Coronavirus lockdown. There was a training in January that included Neurologists from Colorado, Early Intervention processes as well as several state experts in the area of special education for pre school children. Escobedo also noted that her Department moved to their new offices in the Herschler building.

Tentative Upcoming Dates/Locations – May change due to COVID-19 Health Guidelines

*June 10, 2020, 4:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m. evening meeting over dinner

June 11, 2020 in Casper with John Copenhaver training

September 8, 2020 in Casper

December 8, 2020 via Zoom

March 9, 2021 in Casper

June 8-9, 2021 in Casper

*All meetings will be from 9:00 a.m. until 3:00 p.m. at Natrona County School District #1, Fairdale Room unless otherwise noted.

Advice, Recommendations and Action Steps

Margee follow up with Kascinda Fleming regarding the Accommodations page on the WDE website.

Margee check in with Jennifer Neilly and Brian Hickman regarding potential Panel membership.

PIC, Erin Swilling will provide curriculum and dyslexia reading information form.

Meet as committees offline and do committee work.

Jennifer send out document to panel with committees and term expiration date.

Panel submit ideas for PIC trainings to Erin Swilling

Continue to pursue individual from DFS to sit on Panel

A motion to adjourn was made by Christine Bullinger. The motion was seconded by Davey Hough. The meeting was adjourned.

The next meeting is scheduled for:

June 10, 2020 in Casper over dinner from 4-8 p.m.; June 11, 2020 in Casper at the Natrona County School District #1 for Board training with John Copenhaver.