



WAPSD

Wyoming Advisory Panel for Students with Disabilities

September 8, 2020, 9:00 a.m., Zoom Teleconference Meeting

Attendance: Rachel Crawford, Erin Swilling, Ann Armel, Christine Bullinger, Jennifer Duncan, Kathy Escobedo, Penny Hawk, Nicky Hulme, Dallas Myers, Margee Robertson, Anedra Selley, Hayley Speiser, Pam Zamora

Guests: Deana Smith, WDE;

MOTIONS

Administrative:

It was moved by Penny Hawk and seconded by Anedra Selley that the June Meeting Minutes be approved as written. Motion carried unanimously.

Policy:

Welcome/Opening: Chairman Swilling called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. She opened the meeting for public comment.

Secretary Announcements

Secretary Jennifer Duncan took roll call and it was determined that a majority was present. Duncan also shared that part of her reports time will be making sure that everybody's contact information is current. She sent a Google form to the Panel asking them up provide current information, this will be done prior to every meeting.

Chair Report – Old and New Business, Erin Swilling

Chairman Swilling introduced herself as the new chair for the coming year. She reviewed the process of building the agenda; the Executive Committee meets with Margee Robertson and Jennifer Duncan about 3 weeks ahead of the meeting and build the agenda based on items Panel members have wanted to discuss or that have been requested during a previous meeting. She encouraged Panel members to notify her of items in that interim that they would like to see on a future agenda. Margee Robertson suggested adding 2 tabs to the contact spreadsheet that has contact information for the Executive committee and then a third tab to have requested agenda items on there. This spreadsheet would be shared 3 weeks before the meetings. This process will begin with the next meeting on December 8, 2020.

Chairman Swilling thanked Rachel Crawford for her service as the previous Chair, she appreciated her diligence, time and effort put into making things better for children with disabilities. Swilling also indicated that much of the new business is going to be covered by the items in the agenda today.

Committee Reports

Chair Swilling reviewed the various committees on the Panel and their membership. She encouraged Panel members that may not be serving on a committee to choose one. Swilling asked if there was a historical precedent for the committees that the Panel has currently: Membership, Executive, Legislative, PR/Outreach. There are required committees per the by-laws but others may have been formed based on specific areas to be addressed at the time. Chair Swilling and Jennifer Duncan will meet and review the by-laws and Swilling asked anybody who may have some historical information on committees to send that to her.

SPED Director/WDE Updates

Margee Robertson provided updates for the Panel regarding guidance for schools during the COVID crisis. The most recent guidance was released in August from OSEP. The delivery of all services and provision of FAPE that IDEA outlines has not changed, there are no wavers for not meeting all set requirements, even in a virtual education situation. If a school is open to any students, students with disabilities must also be able to attend in person and receive all services. Also of note is that all providers and educators must still enact Child Find, as defined by IDEA, and identify students with potential disabilities and conduct IEP meetings to determine services needed.

All districts were required to submit Smart Start plans, which outlines how they will open in all situations: completely open, providing some virtual and some in person learning and a completely virtual learning situation. These plans must identify everything that goes into providing education from transportation, to provision of food to learning and all of these areas must be addressed and a provision made for them in any of the three situations. All services for students with disabilities must also be provided in all three scenarios of the Smart Start Plans.

WAVES/Resources “Living Document” on WAPSD Page Update

Deana Smith provided a report to the panel on the upcoming WAVES sessions, which will be held several times a month throughout the school year. Presentations will have a focus on both K-12 and Pre-K providers and educators. These sessions replace the annual WAVE conference that is held the last week of July each year. Registration information has been sent out to all SPED Directors, CDC Directors, attendees of the Early Childhood Summit in January and other providers around the state. Session subjects were chosen from a survey that was sent out to a variety of providers and administrators around that state who indicated what areas of professional development they thought were important.

WY Transition Team, Assessment Questions

Margee Robertson provided an update for the panel. Kascinda Fleming, WDE Assessment Consultant with the SPED Division, is working closely with DVR to take a closer look and provide a better post-secondary transition for students with disabilities from high school to college, a trade program or into the workforce. The Assessment team is currently working the Special Education teachers to train them on providing the Wy-ALT assessment to their students. The team is also working hard to make sure the accommodations required for a student in and IEP match the accommodations provided by the assessment

PIC Update

Erin Swilling provided the panel with an update on the Parent Information Center. They recently submitted a grant for their next 5 year funding cycle, their year runs from October 1 – September 30. Results should be known by the middle to end of September. Parent information centers around the country are hearing from a lot of parents now, just like they did in the springs, that this all feels

overwhelming. Top concerns brought to her are virtual learning, provision of special education services in a virtual scenario and progress monitoring. The schools' obligations remain the same, but the delivery of services is a concern. Swilling noted that all communities have different concerns and they are working hard to put parents in contact with other parents who has experienced a similar situation, making parents one of the "experts in the room" to provide guidance and mentorship.

BHD Update – Kathy Escobedo

Kathy Escobedo updated the Panel on the current Behavioral Health Division budget cuts. The EIEP received a unit reduction of 12.9%. Part B/619 did receive a budget reduction but this reduction came from the EIEP unit's budget allocation and did not result in reductions to the Part B/619 contracts. Part C received an approx. 22% reduction which did impact Part C contracts. The Part C program is working closely with OSEP regarding these reductions and what implications it may have with applying for the next Part C grant. They were given a figure that amounted to about a 12.9% reduction. 6b 19 was reduced as there were less children to report, but Part C, which is all early childhood, was entirely cut. They will be working closely with OSEP for how to apply for their Part C grant.

Part B 619, all CDC's have resumed on sight preschool. Some parents requested teletherapy sessions be continued and CDC's are making that happen. When the preschools went virtual in the Spring, parents were preoccupied with taking care of older children so some preschool age children fell behind, the CDC's did a terrific job of working with families and getting children the services they needed current. The training Part B training modules are available on the UW Canvas platform, there is also a virtual training that will supplement the modules being held in October – January. Part C virtual training modules are available on the UW Canvas Platform over the next several months. The Early Intervention Council Part C reported on their annual performance report which has 11 indicators, Wyoming received a "Needs Assistance" rating. CDCs are working hard on their Child Find requirements, the child count is due December 1.

Presentation – Jessi Westing

Jessi Westing with Substance Abuse and Mental Health Ombudsman Program presented information to the Panel regarding her organization and the services they provide. The Wyoming Guardianship Program is the parent organization that has this program within it. An ombudsman is an impartial middleman that works between clients that have a substance abuse and/or a mental health disorder. The assist individuals navigate the behavioral healthcare system. They also can assist family members and friends of these individuals, anyone who is in their support system as well as assisting professionals working in the substance abuse and mental health fields. Wyoming is one of only five states in 4 countries that have this service, and the only one that has the substance abuse portion. The organization is a direct result of a class action lawsuit that was filed by an individual who was not able to be released from the State Hospital as there were no follow up services in their community. The settlement outcomes included community based mental health services, single point of communication within communities to address crises, case management, sufficient staffing at the Wyoming State Hospital and the Ombudsman Program. Some of the services offered are information and education, referral service, and coaching. They also work closely with other programs that serve similar communities.

DVR Update

Ann Armel provided an update on DVR. DVR is facing budget cuts like other agencies, no positions have been lost and they are trying to protect their paid service dollars. An online learning academic program is available that needs funding, TJ Mechem is in charge of that. The Wyoming Transition team is a

partnership with WDE and DVR and they have begun meeting. They are looking to build capacity and cooperation with many other agencies involved, which may be very essential during budget cuts.

Ann is retiring and her replacement will just need to fill out the Membership Application and send it to Jennifer.

Advice, Recommendations and Action Steps

Reach out for committee work history – descriptions/guidelines – find previous orientation information

Letter of support for BHD funding to legislature: 2 letters one from WDE and from the Department of Health to the JEC/Governor’s Office.

SPDG Grant – MTSS/DBI-Parent Engagement Piece; Tier 2 or 3 intervention – how could funds be used to train parents to help children be

It was moved by Ann Armel and seconded by Kathy Escobedo to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried unanimously.

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

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.