SPECIAL EDUCATION ADVISORY COUNCIL

Minutes – December 9, 2016

9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

**PRESENT:** Brendelyn Ancheta**,** Debbie Cheeseman,Annette Cooper, Gabriele Finn, Jenny Gong (for Sage Goto), Martha Guinan, Valerie Johnson, Amanda Kaahanui (staff), Patti Meyer (for Dale Matsuura), Thomas Moon (for Stacy Oshio), Kaili Murbach, Kaui Rezentes, Susan Rocco (staff), Rosie Rowe, Tricia Sheehey, Ivalee Sinclair, Todd Takahashi, Steven Vannatta, Gavin Villar, Jasmine Williams

**EXCUSED**: Bernadette Lane, Charlene Robles, James Street, Amy Wiech, Susan Wood

**ABSENT:** Bob Campbell, Gabriele Finn, Toby Portner, Dan Ulrich

**GUESTS**: Daintry Bartoldus, Brian De Lima, Lisa DeLong, Nancy Gorman, Lanelle Hibbs, Jeffrey Krepps, Suzanne Mulcahy, Stephen Schatz, Cherlyn Tamura, Corin Thornburg

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| **TOPIC** | **DISCUSSION** | **ACTION** |
| **Call to Order** | Chair Martha Guinan called the meeting to order at 9:05 a.m. |  |
| **Introductions** | Members introduced themselves to guests, including presenter Dr. Lisa DeLong from Kailua Intermediate School and Lanelle Hibbs, Complex Area Superintendent for Kailua-Kalaheo Complexes. |  |
| **Bright Spots – A Presentation by Kailua Intermediate School** | OCISS Assistant Superintendent Suzanne Mulcahy introduced Dr. Lisa DeLong, Principal at KIS, and gave a brief history of school efforts to provide inclusive programming. Dr. DeLong, who has been at KIS for five years, described its culture as college-going, real world connections and student agency (excitement about learning). Data informs their practice and drives action. Currently the achievement gap is 54% and the range of reading ability is from 2nd grade to college level. In 2015, teachers at KIS urged Dr. DeLong to consider co-teaching models, so the faculty and administrators researched models, visited Ewa-Makai Middle School, and started a binder with all the questions and answers that came up. Now that the program is in place, 83% of the student body is in the general education classroom 90% of the day. Dr. DeLong found SEAC’s handout regarding Universal Design for Learning (UDL) timely, as KIS is striving to use UDL to give students different ways to show what they have learned.  Questions and comments from members and guests:  Q. Are you using longitudinal data systems (LDS) or the Early Warning System for your data source. A. Early Warning System (EWS).  Q. Who has access to the data? A. It’s available on a need to know basis—a teacher’s own class data or school-wide data, if an | A handout entitled “What is Co-Teaching?” was distributed. |

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| **Bright Spots – A Presentation by Kailua Intermediate School (cont.)** | Questions and comments from members and guests (cont.):  administrator is accessing the data. EWS is not in a format that parents can use yet, so the report card would be their source of data.  Q. Did you put your co-teaching program together with additional positions? A. No, we used existing resources. We did have the leverage of using a couple of general education teachers from the Weighted Student Formula, so our class size is 22-24 students.  Q. How many students attend KIS? A. 790.  C. It’s nice to hear that the co-teaching proposal came from your staff. Half the battle is getting teachers on board. A. A lot of time the will is there; we just help them with their dreams.  Q. Did you notice a change in your parent partnerships? A. Our parents are very happy with the model.  C. (Amanda) My son Ikaika went from getting “well-below” test scores in elementary school to making the honor role at KIS last quarter. I don’t have to force him to do homework, and he likes school. He was having some trouble with Algebra, so he’s now in a targeted class with the same curriculum and getting a B.  Q. Is the pull-out class for all kids who are struggling? A. Yes we have both special and general education students who are behind.  C. By catching students up and filling in pukas while teaching grade level curriculum, we give students a chance to progress and move on.  Q. How do we get this to happen in other schools? A. (Stephen S.) The  Strategic Plan gives a direction and sets LRE as well as achievement gap measures. The challenge is to allow flexibility to schools, so that solutions are locally developed, and we provide support (like through the data system). We want to find successes and scale them up. A. (Suzanne) I have talked about inclusion to Complex Area Superintendents four times and spent time explaining their LRE data. Our teleschool branch is creating a video. We also have a Request for Proposal to develop a huge inclusion opportunity, offering professional development to teachers and principals over a three year period. |  |

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| **Bright Spots – A Presentation by Kailua Intermediate School (cont.)** | Questions and comments from members and guests (cont.):  Q. Are there any students with severe disabilities included in your co-teaching classes? A. The students with the most severe disabilities are included for elective classes.  C. My challenge as a teacher preparation program at UH is to ensure that those kids get included for most of the day. These children really benefit, as do students without disabilities, and it builds supports for the future.  C. As a parent of a son with significant disabilities who was one of the first to be included at Pearlridge Elementary decades ago, I have to say that it was quite devastating to take that sense of belonging away as he moved to middle and high school.  C. (Brian) Thank you for educating the Board. When we visited your school, some members were not aware of what inclusion means. For everyone here, we have to be vigilant about talking about the achievement gap. Now that schools see that the Strategic Plan will be measuring inclusion and the gap, I hope that they will see the imperative to move forward. The challenge is for staff who are not true believers.  Q. Has the achievement gap improved at KIS? A. Yes.  Q. Are related services provided in the general education classroom?  A. It depends. Speech covers all three levels.  Q. Is your experience with related services that missed sessions are made up? A. Yes, ours are made up. I tell teachers that they have to let me know, and I can call the CAS. Principals have to demand efficacy.  C. One of the problems with related services is that therapists leave after 4-5 years to work in the private sector. Positions will always be in short supply unless we pay better. A. I put teachers in that category, too. |  |
| **Inclusion Data Sharing** | Suzanne provided a chart identifying the percentage of students who spend 80% or more of the day in a general education classroom by complex area. She also referenced the state by state comparison of Part B Educational Environments that shows Hawaii at the bottom with 36.9% of students inside the regular class for 80% or more. CASs were given data broken down by school, but that information is not currently available | Members were directed to SEAC’s website for a copy of the report: <http://seac-hawaii.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/11/HI-SSIP-Phase-1.pdf>. |

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| **Inclusion Data Sharing (cont.)** | to the public. Suzanne said she may be able to talk to Data Governance to see if more data can be shared. Susan R. referred members to the SSIP that was submitted in April 2015. It has a data section showing inclusion rates per complex area, along with absentee rates, achievement scores, teacher qualifications and suspension rates. Schools that had good inclusion rates but poor general education student achievement also tended to have poor special education student achievement. Amanda added that monitoring is needed to ensure that the LRE percentages reflect meaningful inclusion. |  |
| **Review of Minutes of November 4,2016 Meeting** | Susan R. added a clarification that the national rate of LRE for 80% or more has actually increased by 10% over the last decade (to the current 62%). Martha added her name to Susan Woods as suggesting the use of last name initials under **Review of Minutes for October 7, 2016**. Annette Cooper corrected the date on the first page. | The minutes were approved as corrected. |
| **Final Draft of the Joint BOE/DOE Strategic Plan** | Martha shared that the Plan was approved by the Board of Education on December 6th with the addition of several amendments. Brian reported on the amendments that he offered:   * Placing the highest priority on addressing struggling students, * Endeavoring to use highly qualified teachers for vulnerable students, * Restraining from a culture of testing, unless a school chooses to conduct additional testing with the okay of its stakeholders, and * Reducing the target for absenteeism from 13% to 9%.   Board member Darrel Gallera offered additional indicators for the achievement gap and parent engagement. Board members also discussed developing additional measurements for Goal 3. Martha described SEAC’s testimony that urged setting distinct targets for special education performance on specific indicators. She also recently attended Tammi Chun’s Community Partners Group where they began to talk about how to measure parent involvement. | A copy of the Plan’s **Executive Summary** and **Appendix C - Target Setting Worksheet** was distributed. |

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| **Final Draft of the Joint BOE/DOE Strategic Plan (cont.)** | Questions and comments from members and guests:  C. When looking at absenteeism, it is important to tease out if students are being kept home to take care of siblings.  C. In high school, female students are kept home more often, while “rascal” boys are sent to school.  C. On the Big Island, highly dysfunctional parents tend to home school their kids, and we find out that they are three grade levels behind.  C. We ought to set a goal that is higher than 51% for inclusion.  C. If we set high goals, principals say, “that’s not fair; it’s too high.”  C. (Brian) We set it up that you get extra points if you tackle the absenteeism rate in high school.  C. In Applied Behavioral Analysis there is a strategy for setting a criterion based on data. When setting a goal, like a criterion, we need to focus on what we want to achieve.  C. Statistically, you should do a horizontal and vertical comparison with several years of progress plotted. You set a reasonable goal and then compare individual schools on the horizontal axis.  C. (Brian) When we go to the Legislature this year, we need to all pull together on the budget. The Board is totally committeed to addressing the achievement gap. There are only so many resources to go around, and we have to help the most vulnerable students.  C. (Thomas) There are people in DOE that have been fighting for inclusion from the very beginning. The issues are really challenging and some issues will not be solved by DOE alone. It takes a whole village to raise a child. |  |
| **Recommendations Regarding a Shared Vision for Inclusion** | Steven Vannatta reported that the subgroup meeting around developing a shared vision for inclusion noticed that **Nā Hopena A‘o—**the framework of values and beliefs based on Hawaiian culture included in both the **Strategic Plan** and the **Blueprint for Public Education**—also supports the philosophy of inclusion. The subgroup took key statements related to inclusion and placed them under four of the six elements of **Nā Hopena A‘o** or **HĀ** (Breath). They asked for input from members and are also | A description of **Nā Hopena A‘o** from the Department of Education’s website and a draft vision of inclusion was distributed. |

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| **Recommendations Regarding a Shared Vision for Inclusion (cont.)** | planning a meeting with a complex area superintendent suggested by Stephen S. (Chad Farias from the Big Island). Martha added that in the graphic representation of **Nā Hopena A‘o**, all of the elements (bubbles) are connected, and we like to think of inclusion in the same way: intertwined and overarching.  Questions and comments from members and guests:  C. From my personal experience, the challenge is how to implement inclusion in high school. My daughter is stuck in a fully self contained classroom all day, and doesn’t get to go to classes with other students.  C. This is a vision. How you implement the vision is a different task. We need to keep implementation in the back of our mind.  C. The vision is a big picture view. Schools can ask themselves, “Does our school look like this?”  Q. Would it be proper to mention including kids in typical settings? To stress being together in the same shared spaces?  C. I like the phrase “meaningful inclusion.”  Q. Where does the vision go from here? A. (Martha) We will have it as SEAC’s vision to share with others. |  |
| **Status Update on Staffing Issues** | Martha drew attention to a chart showing the topics under staffing that were addressed in the September and October SEAC meetings. There was agreeement that these topics would be periodically reviewed to prompt members to offer updates when they are available.  Staffing methodology  Suzanne shared that she has been working on staffing issues with the DESs to gain a greater understanding of how positions are distributed. Together they came up with a draft of 3 options for distribution and funding. They also identified a lack of consistency in protocols and communication from complex to complex. They voted on the 3 options and now wan to bring their new methodology draft to SEAC and HSTA for consultation. She and the DESs would also like to change how Article VI positions are described and sent out. They are part of Collective |  |

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| **Status Update on Staffing Issues** | Bargaining now, and it is hoped that a more flexible use for these positions can be negotiated. Thomas added that when planning to allocate resources, the weaker the protocol, the more options for misuse and misinterpretation. It is critical that the decisions be based on the needs of the students and that the protocol be as strong as possible. Ivalee asked if the new methodology can be finalized in time to apply it next August, and Suzanne replied that it will be used in 2018.  Funding for Restraints and Seclusion training  Suzanne reported that the Department has set aside money to do the training, but the additional approval needed to create a position was denied. In the meantime, OCISS is creating a temporary position to organize the training and keep track of data. The notice to parents has just been approved by the Attorney General’s Office for distribution to schools. 75 trainers have received training from a master trainer. Suzanne’s biggest concern is that Jean Nakasato is going to retire at the end of the year, and she has been responsible for many of these actions. Jeff Krepps, a contract provider, asked for more information about the training model selected.  Flexible Use of Contracted Services  Ivalee reminded members that the Senate passed a resolution last session asking DOE to work with community members to design how to implement a more flexible use of contractors in order to meet the needs of students while using funds efficiently. She asked Suzanne for a target date to work on the resolution. Suzanne replied OCISS is trying to get a lot of things scheduled and targeted by June 30th.  Universal Design for Learning  Susan and Amanda shared a handout on UDL that was adapted from a special edition of the SPIN News. | Suzanne will invite Jean Nakasato to present to SEAC on the training to date. Copies of the notice to parents will be shared with SEAC members when they become available. |
| **Agenda Setting for January 13, 2017 Meeting** | Members agreed on four main topics for discussion at the next meeting:   1. Presentation on the Staffing Methodology Models 2. Update on Restraints and Seclusion Training 3. Presentation of APR Data 4. Update on the Inclusion Vision |  |

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| **Input from the Public** | Related Services at Neighbor Island Charter Schools  Ivalee relayed a call she received from a parent on the south side of the Big Island whose child is at a charter school. The DES told her that in order for the student to get speech therapy, mom must take him to a school that is an hour away. Mom is not happy, because she doesn’t understand why the service can’t be provided at the charter school.  Discussion points included the following:   * Allocation issue or a difference in understanding the protocol? * Mom should contact the Complex Area Superintendent and copy Suzanne, so that she can jump into the conversation.   Standards-based IEPs and Present Levels of Performance (PLEP)  Rosie reported that more schools are telling parents that they have received new training on how to reformat the PLEP to bring it in line with the requirement for standards-based IEPs. Some of the current PLEPs now start with strengths, but the change in formatting has left parents thinking that the changes are not in the best interest of the student.  Discussion points included the following:   * Teachers were asked to do standards-based IEPs 20 years ago. If done right, they will lead to greater achievement, because the more traditional goals are often set too low. * I like that it calls for detailed, specific information. However, most of the staff are old school and don’t know how to do it. * The concept you are describing was never a hard mandate, but a strong recommendation, because it is best practice. It sounds as if the problem is with the explanation. The purpose is to collect all of the needs, strengths and interventions in each area of the PLEP. * Suzanne will bring up to the DESs the need to embed time in the IEP to talk about any changes in protocol.   Credit Recovery Class without Accommodations  Jasmine reported on the denial of a student’s accommodations; however, it appeared the issue was more that the computer-based program could not be modified and another option would have been more appropriate. |  |