SPECIAL EDUCATION ADVISORY COUNCIL

April 8, 2015

9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

**PRESENT:** Debbie Cheeseman,Annette Cooper, Shari Dela Cuadra-Larsen, Sage Goto, Martha Guinan, Valerie Johnson, Zaidarene Place, Barbara Pretty, Susan Rocco, Rosie Rowe, Tricia Sheehey, Todd Takahashi, Jasmine Williams, Susan Wood

**EXCUSED**: Brendelyn Ancheta**,** Tammy Bopp, Gabriele Finn, Debbie Kobayakawa, Bernadette Lane, Dale Matsuura, Stacey Oshio, Kaui Rezentes, Ivalee Sinclair, Lani Solomona

**ABSENT:** Bob Campbell, Dan Ulrich, Amy Wiech

**GUESTS**: Daintry Bartoldus, Brian De Lima, Jeffrey Krepps, Suzanne Mulcahy, Ricky Shimokawa, Steven Vannatta

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| **TOPIC** | **DISCUSSION** | **ACTION** |
| **Call to Order** | Chair Martha Guinan called the meeting to order at 9:11 a.m. |  |
| **Introductions** | Members introduced themselves to guests. |  |
| **Announcements** | Amanda Kaahanui announced the following:  • The SPIN Conference will be held on April 16th, and SPIN needs a final count of members who will assist in manning a SEAC table and those staying for lunch.  • The SEAC meeting on May 13th will include a luncheon to acknowledge members for their year of service. Members were asked to select their top two choices of entrees to assist in finalizing the menu. | A banquet menu from the Olde Spaghetti Factory was distributed. |
| **Review of Minutes for March 11, 1016** | Suzanne Mulcahy corrected a comment on page three under the APR Indicator 5Least Restrictive Environment: she is the source of the quote “if you expect kids can reach for the stars, they will,” not the LA Unified School District. | The minutes were approved as corrected. |
| **Special Education Director’s Report** | Shari Dela Cuadra-Larsen reported on the following: SSIP Targets  SEAC’s feedback was taken into consideration when setting proficiency and growth targets. The median grown percentile builds from a baseline of 43% to 60% in year five. The reading proficiency target rate will be 3% for next year, building to 50% in the final year. The push for higher proficiency targets should result in a jump in performance on indicator 3 (reading proficiency).  Planning Schedule  A Leading by Convening meeting is scheduled for April 27th with Susan Wood and Steven Vannatta to talk about parent and student engagement. A working group meeting is set for May 7h.  SSIP Submission  The initial feedback on Hawaii’s submission is positive. The team did a narrative powerpoint with information from the first submission. |  |

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| **Update by the OCISS Assistant Superintendent** | Suzanne Mulcahy shared information on the following items:  OCISS reorganization  OCISS is targeting July 1st for its reorganization of positions and functions. Suzanne plans to meet with employees on April 13th and will have more information to share with SEAC in May. Part of the reorganization is reassembling special education positions that were slated to move out of OCISS in the last iteration of the re-org, as they are needed to provide technical assistance to the field. The last five people hired have doctorates, and one holds a doctorate in special education.  Professional development  Suzanne is continuing to work with District Educational Specialists (DESs) on professional development and finding some more motivated than others. The Complex Area Superintendents are receiving the same training.  Staffing methodology  Suzanne spent most of a day asking DESs how they distribute special education positions in their district and discovered 13 different practices. She is coming up with a common protocol and will then reach out to SEAC, HSTA and other stakeholders to see if we have a better suggestion. The original weighted methodology is not suitable, because people used it to incentivize receiving more personnel.  Training on Inclusion  The current staff at OCISS do not have recent experience in a school setting, so Suzanne is taking the responsibility to go out to all 15 complex areas by August to do a full day of inclusion training. She asked members to send her examples of model teachers and classrooms where inclusion is delivered in a high quality manner. Suzanne is hoping that some of these successful teachers can help co-present the training. She would like examples of inclusion with a variety of student populations, including students on a certificate route.  Questions/comments from members and guests  Q. Are you looking at delivering your inclusion training in high schools? A. Yes. Kindergarten through grade 12.  C. You might also want to visit a preschool inclusive classroom, as the U.S. DOE is stressing the need for high-quality inclusive settings for kids 3-5. A. I | Members are asked to email examples of successful inclusion classrooms/teachers to Suzanne Mulcahy, Susan Rocco or Martha Guinan. |

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| **Update by the OCISS Assistant Superintendent** | Questions/comments from members and guests (cont.)  want to do a separate training on early childhood inclusive settings at a later time as it will be more complicated.  C. One of the messages I hope you can convey to decision makers is that parents who are the most vocal advocates sometimes feel that the principal tends to suggest that they are unreasonable or unrealistic. Getting negative feedback from the principal or the Student Services Coordinator hurts parents’ feelings and is demoralizing. We ask for more empathy for parents who are trying to be advocates as best they can. A. I have talked about changing the administrator’s training program to spend more time on special education issues. I hope I can help people learn how to listen and stay until the end to see things change. I may ask for personal stories and comments that I can share in my training, so we have real-time examples.  C. Thank you for trying to maintain open communication with us. |  |
| **Presentation on Inclusion from the April 5th Student Achievement Committee Meeting** | Tricia Sheehey shared her PowerPoint and discussion points from the April Student Achievement Committee (SAC) meeting. Included in those points:  • Inclusion is based not on acceptance but on embracing of differences.  • All of us as a community have to move from a vision of inclusion to a commitment to make it happen.  • Effective teachers who know how to deliver inclusive instruction have the most impact on student outcomes.  • Parents also must be aware of the benefits of inclusion and advocate for their children.  • With the proper services and instruction, most children will benefit from the general education environment.  • The students without disabilities in inclusive classrooms often become advocates for their classmates with disabilities.  Tricia concluded by talking about the University of Hawaii’s preservice training programs, including a merge program where a general education professor and special education professor co-teach. The UH Special Education Department has three times more students this year, but no additional faculty.  Questions/comments from members and guests:  C. I did research comparing the resource room to an inclusive classroom. The |  |

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|  | Questions/comments from members and guests (cont.):  students in the inclusive classroom made a three-year gain in one year.  C. Since there is a new switch to an inclusive philosophy, we need to be mindful of parents who want their child to remain in a self-contained classroom. We get a lot of calls at my agency about “why LRE?”  C. LRE for deaf students can be quite different.  C. For people with developmental disabilities, this is a big thing to create more inclusive environments. Many older adults have been segregated all their life. Now there is a chance for kids in school to learn about inclusion.  C. Research shows that preschool inclusion helps to facilitate inclusion in elementary school to yield the best outcomes. A. The Office of Early Eduction is attached to the Governor, but it is not in the Department of Education, making it harder for DOE to oversee preschool inclusion.  C. (Brian) The reason for this focus was because Hawaii’s LRE stats were so low, and we felt it was important for Board members to be educated on inclusion. I thought Suzanne’s decision to bring in a prinicpal of an elementary school with positive results demonstrated that it can be done with educated, trained and committed people. A. I chose Maunawili because when I was a principal, we had a special education population of 20%, many of whom were incorrectly identified. After Maunawili instituted Response to Intervention, we had only one referral for special education.  C. Board member Horner said “if we put more money in special education, it will take away from general education.” This comment speaks to the need to continue to have these discussions.  C. Po’okela was mentioned by Debbie Farmer at the SAC meeting. For many at SEAC, Po’okela was a disappointing project that was touted for years as being a major improvement strategy but failed to yield data or lasting results.  C. I was at an IEP meeting last night at Aikahi Elementary where deaf kids are included, and as a result, the other students accept them as peers. It would be nice to have that occur at all schools.  C. I like the idea of inclusion seminars. It would be wonderful if DOE could offer them to the staff serving incarcerated adults who are IDEA eligible. That population is craving professional development. |  |

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| **Legislative Update** | Daintry Bartoldus from the State Council on Developmental Disabilities updated members on the status of previously discussed legislation impacting students with disabilities. Susan Rocco added information about SCR 153 which was drafted by the Coalition to address the long-standing problem of inflexibility in utilizing contracted personnel like skills trainers. Unfortunately, HABA and other individuals misread the resolution as a tool of the Department to take away one-to-one services, and the House version of the resolution was killed based on misinformation.  Questions/comments from members and guests:  Q. Can you comment on the effective date of a bill? A. A long off effective date lets committees pass a bill along for further discussion. Most bills that make it through the entire legislative process have an effective date of two years or less.  C. (Shari) If SCR 153, the resolution calling for a two year pilot of contracting on a block basis for greater flexibility, does not pass, the Department is willing to sit down with a working group to discuss the feasibility of finding more efficient ways to utilized contracted services without taking away from student services.  C. The new contract for autism services says schools can contract for group instruction.  C. I believe SCR 153 would provide greater flexibility. The new contract allows group instruction only for a specific student co-hort. I’m pleased that people are open to suggestions, and I hope the working group for SCR 153 will consult with providers regarding the feasibility of suggested solutions.  C. (Shari) DOE believes in the benefit of contracted services. We will never get to the point of having 100% of services provided by DOE personnel. | A six-page summary of bills and their status was disseminated. |
| **Membership Update** | Susan Rocco provided several member updates:   * Brende Ancheta is still home recuperating, but is feeling better and hopes to return to SEAC in May. * Tom Smith has moved to the Mainland for medical treatment.   Todd Takahashi reported that he approached Lynette Lukela, a former DES who was hired by Kamehameha Schools, to serve as a private school representative but discovered that she has since left that position. He also talked with an autism  specialist—Gavin Villar--at the North Central Community Children’s Council |  |

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| **Membership Update (cont.)** | meeting who is interested in joining SEAC. He is the current CCC Parent Co-Chair there. Brian De Lima added that it is really important for SEAC to energize its membership, especially with the support of Suzanne Mulcahy. Susan Rocco asked for a few volunteers to serve on a nominating committee. The nominations would include potential new members to be sent for approval to the Superintendent, as well as candidates for SEAC leadership in the upcoming school year to be voted on in May. | Todd Takahashi, Rosie Rowe and Barbara Pretty volunteered to serve. |
| **Input from the Public** | Amanda Kaahanui shared information about related services she is seeking for her son Ikaiki who will be transitioning into 7th grade next year. Isle Interpret provides Computer Assisted Notetaking (CAN) remotely. The notes reflect what is being discussed in class by the teacher and students. Amanda thinks Ikaika would benefit from CAN to keep up with what is happening in the classroom. The class notes get emailed to the student at the end of the day for further review. If Ikaika’s receives the CAN descriptive services, he will be only the second student in the state to utilize it. She promised to keep members posted on further developments. |  |