SPECIAL EDUCATION ADVISORY COUNCIL

Minutes – August 11, 2017

9:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.

**PRESENT:** Brendelyn Ancheta**,** Debbie Cheeseman,Sage Goto, Martha Guinan, Amanda Kaahanui (staff), Dale Matsuura, Thomas Moon (for Stacey Oshio), Kaili Murbach, Kaui Rezentes, Rosie Rowe, Susan Rocco (staff), Tricia Sheehey, Ivalee Sinclair, Todd Takahashi, Steven Vannatta, Gavin Villar, Jasmine Williams, Susan Wood

**EXCUSED**: Annette Cooper, Gabriele Finn, Cathy Kahoohanohano, Bernadette Lane, James Street, Christina Tydeman (liaison to the Superintendent), Amy Wiech

**ABSENT:** Bob Campbell,

**GUESTS**: Daintry Bartoldus, Justin Hughey, Maile Kaopua

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| **TOPIC** | **DISCUSSION** | **ACTION** |
| **Call to Order** | Chair Martha Guinan called the meeting to order at 9:14 a.m. |  |
| **Introductions/*Why I Serve on SEAC* Exercise** | Martha and Steven Vannatta asked members to introduce themselves and offer a one-word description of their motivation for serving as a volunteer on SEAC. | Susan Rocco will arrange the words into a graphic for distribution to members. |
| **Announcements** | Amanda Kaahanui made the following announcements:  1) The member section of SEAC’s website (seac-hawaii.org) is being updated; members who have not previously submitted a photo and a brief description of themselves are asked to email both to [spin@doh.hawaii.gov](mailto:spin@doh.hawaii.gov)  2) Olelo taped sections of the April 2017 SPIN Conference, including the keynote by Benjamin Chu and the awards presentation.  3) A SEAC membership roster is circulating, and members are asked to update their contact information.  4) Guest Maile Kaopua and Amanda, as parent members of a Community Children’s Council, were invited by Steven Vannatta to facilitate a session on parent engagement at the Educational Leadership Conference. The audience was made up exclusively of DOE educators and administrators. They brainstormed good solutions for barriers to parent engagement such as language, time, and finances.  Martha made two announcements:  5) HawaiiKidsCAN is holding an Educational Equity Symposium on September 16th to bring agencies and individuals to come together on equity issues around special education, English learners, Hawaiian immersion, etc. The new Superintendent will be present. | Amanda will send out the schedule of viewings.  Members who want a Save the Date flyer for the HawaiiKidsCAN event are asked to identify themselves to Amanda or Susan R. |

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| **Announcements (cont.)** | 6) The Children and Youth Summit will be held at the Capitol on October 13th—the same day as SEAC’s October meeting.  7) Susan Rocco announced that the Department of Education is  transitioning the provision of special education due process hearing services from the Office of Administrative Hearings in the Department of Commerce and Consumer Affairs to the Office of Dispute Resolution (ODR) within the Attorney General’s Office. Gavin Villar added that he had heard that DOE and ODR were going to try to make the decision process fall within 45 days to avoid untimely extensions.  8) Daintry Bartoldus announced that President Trump’s proposed budget has eliminated independent funding for Developmental Disabilities Councils, Traumatic Brain Injury Councils, and Independent Living Councils, proposing instead to merge these three programs despite their very different mandates and functions. There may be a need for community advocacy on this issue. |  |
| **Review of Minutes of May 12, 2017 Meeting** | No changes were made to the draft minutes. | The minutes were approved as distributed. |
| **Review of SEAC Functions and Member Responsibilities** | Martha reminded members that they represent their stakeholder group and are expected to convey information to as well as receive information from these stakeholders. She reviewed other responsibilities including several that are key Leading by Convening principles. She also directed members to the latest Annual Report to review SEAC member functions. Daintry Bartoldus of the Developmental Disabilities Council also reminded members that SEAC’s Legislative Committee plays an important role in providing testimony at the State Legislature. |  |
| **Meeting Calendar for SY 17-18** | Members were asked to approve a meeting calendar for the rest of the school year. The proposed calendar has meetings set for the second Friday of the month in all months except November and December, when the meeting will be held on the first Friday of the month. The change was necessitated by a holiday and room availability. Martha also notified members that 919 Ala Moana Blvd.’s 5th Floor Conference Room would be unavailable to SEAC after the December meeting, as | The draft calendar was approved. |

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| **Meeting Calendar for SY 17-18 (cont.)** | SPIN has relocated to a new office on Richards Street. Christina Tydeman has inquired about the availability of the OCISS 2nd floor conference room on 22nd Avenue and their annex; however, none of rooms were open on SEAC’s meeting dates. Martha asked if members were aware of other meeting space that might be available after December. Todd Takahashi said that the University of Phoenix was opening up their classrooms, and he will inquire about the cost. Justin Hughey offered to check with the Hawaii State Teachers Association (HSTA) to see if they can accommodate SEAC meetings. |  |
| **Selection of Priority Areas** | Steven Vannatta and Susan Wood assisted Martha in gathering input from members on which big topical areas (or buckets) they would like to focus on in the school year. Steven said that the challenge was balancing input from the Department and other experts with time to share and build SEAC’s own knowledge, as well as time for output, including recommendations.  Selection of main discussion topics  Last school year, SEAC addressed staffing shortages, inclusion, student assessment and professional development. Members were given the choice of continuing to study these four issues, or to adopt new issues. Three new buckets offered for discussion included the achievement gap/opportunity gap, discipline and suspensions, and secondary transition. Charlene Robles suggested broadening transition to all transitions from age 3 to 22, so that transition from early intervention to preschool could be part of the focus. She also asked if these proposed buckets are in sync with the national priorities for special education (Part B). Rosie Rowe, who just returned from a national conference organized by the Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP), said the focus was on the achievement gap/opportunity gap, transition and inclusion. The term ‘opportunity gap’ is gaining national traction as a way to explain why some subgroups are experiencing poor academic outcomes—for example, they may lack the opportunity of having attended preschool or of spending time in a resource-rich general education classroom. Members voted to address the following main |  |

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| **Selection of Priority Areas** | issues or buckets—**staff** **shortages, transition, inclusion and discipline/suspensions**—in that order, and to include the components of professional development, opportunity gap and parent support within each bucket.  Additional topic components  Members then indicated their priorities for the top four components under each bucket area by placing stickers next to their choices (see attached priority areas and components). |  |
| **Input from the Public** | Input from the public included a discussion around how schools are interpreting their need to include more students in the general clasroom, a letter from a parent who has sought and not received information from the school regarding the requirements of schools related to the restraints and seclusion legislation of 2014.  Inclusion discussion  Justin Hughey, HSTA Vice President and special education teacher on Maui, shared that in response to schools trying to reach a higher percentage of the inclusion metric in the new Strategic Plan, some schools are telling staff they will convert to ‘full inclusion’ and have been changing IEP placements over the summer. Pressure is being put on the teaching staff, even when placement in a general education classsroom is not in the best interest of the student, due to a lack of supports or teacher training. He stressed that HSTA has been working for two years to get more money for special education, and was told initially that it was a matter of negotiation. During the latest teacher contract talks, however, HSTA was told that the Department would not allow any of their special education negotiation requests. Steven added that many schools don’t know how to provide related services in a general education classroom setting. Tricia Sheehey responded that excellent resources that provide inclusive strategies for OTs, PTs and speech pathologists have been available for twenty years. However, if personnel don’t know how to provide support and are forced into situations where they are not confident, the outcomes for the student are negatively impacted. |  |

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| **Input from the Public**  **(cont.)** | Other inclusion comments included:   * Teachers need preparation time to successful include students; * The problem at my school is just the opposite—inclusion is only available if the general education teacher is willing. The SSC told a parent “this is not an inclusion school.” * Are therapists being trained to work in inclusive environments during their university coursework? * The UH dual prep/merge program (special ed and general ed early education) students get it all and are co-taught their courses; the problem is finding inclusive sites to do their practicum. * The UH post baccalaureate students also learn about inclusion but are rarely placed in an inclusive setting. * Sometimes the term ‘inclusion’ turns people off. Honokaa used a different train of though by starting a 9th Grade Academy where all teachers have time to collaborate. * DOE has never taken a comprehensive view of implementing inclusion. Infrastructure at the school, including time to plan, and professional development have to be implemented at the same time. At Olomana we are a full inclusion school using a project based learning curriculum. Even though we struggle, we are closer to true inclusion than at any other school where I’ve taught or been an administrator. * A lot of teachers don’t know how to provide accommodations and modifications. The IEP team has to compromise with placement in a resource room, because the general education teachers don’t have the necessary skills. Every teacher should have the requirement to know how to diversify instruction. * 34% of HSTA sped teachers surveyed say they can’t cover the minutes of specially designed instruction required by their students which gives the impression that inclusion will cost more money. * My husband and I taught for DOE in Hawaiian immersion. We took all our skills and experience and worked with our |  |

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| **Input from the Public (cont.)** | * (cont.) daughter’s IEP team for years, building culture-based manao—relationships. Our transition planning for middle school has been ongoing for the last two and a half years, and we believe we have created a model of inclusion—kako--that works. * We need to implement SEAC’s Vision for Inclusion—to figure out how to share it and go to the macro level   Notification to parents regarding use of restraints  Martha read a letter from a parent who has asked for but never received information about how her daughter’s school will be implementing the requirements of the restraints and seclusion legislation passed in 2014 and required to be implemented by August 2016. The parent cited SEAC minutes where the topic was discussed several times and members were told that parent notification would be provided by the end of 2016. Additionally, the parent requested to receive specific information about the Quality Behavioral Supports training that DOE contracted, so that she could be reassured that her daughter’s unique behavioral support needs would be provided. The information was not provided. | Martha and Susan will draft a letter to the Superintendent requesting clarification of when/whether the notice to parents has been disseminated, and whether the Department will reconsider SEAC’s request to include parents in the QBS training. |
| **Updates from Previous Public Input** | Maui’s funding and placement of Itinerant Teachers for students with vision disabilities  Kaili shared the good news that her son’s vision teacher from last year has been allowed to remain in place and service the students with whom she had developed rapport and expertise. Kaili felt that SEAC’s advocacy had contributed to a positive solution to the problem of Maui’s two complex areas deciding how to fund and staff the positions.  Blind teacher who was seeking a placement for practice teacher  Todd also reported a positive outcome for Jensen Rabacal, who had approached Todd with the problem that he had been unable to secure a DOE placement to conduct his practice teaching. After talking to SEAC’s DVR rep, Valerie Johnson, Jensen |  |
| **Agenda Setting for September 8, 2017** | In keeping with the selection of Staffing Shortages as the first priority topic to discuss, members requested information on 1) the staffing allocation formula, and 2) recruitment efforts. |  |