

SPECIAL EDUCATION ADVISORY COUNCIL
Minutes – September 8, 2017
 9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

PRESENT: Brendelyn Ancheta, Debbie Cheeseman, Gabriele Finn, Martha Guinan, Amanda Kaahanui (staff), Cathy Kahoohanohano, Dale Matsuura, Thomas Moon (for), Kaili Murbach, Kauai Rezendes, Carrie Pisciotto (for Charlene Robles), Rosie Rowe, Amy Ruhaak (for Tricia Sheehey), Susan Rocco (staff), James Street, Todd Takahashi, Christina Tydeman (liaison to the Superintendent), Steven Vannatta, Gavin Villar, Jasmine Williams, Susan Wood

EXCUSED: Annette Cooper, Sage Goto, Bernadette Lane, Stacey Oshio, Ivalee Sinclair, Amy Wiech

ABSENT: Bob Campbell

GUESTS: Debbie Farmer, Justin Hughey, Janet Kim, Jeff Krepps, Corey Rosenlee

TOPIC	DISCUSSION	ACTION
Call to Order	Chair Martha Guinan called the meeting to order at 9:14 a.m.	
Introductions	Members introduced themselves to Motu Finau, the new representative from the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, and his colleague Pina Lemusu.	
Announcements	Amanda Kaahanui made the following announcements: 1) A get well card is circulating for long time member Ivalee Sinclair who is recovering from hip replacement surgery. 2) The Olelo taping of key sections of the April 2017 SPIN Conference is now available on the SPIN website (http://spinhawaii.org/2015-spin-conference/2017-spin-conference-superheroes-of-spin/). Martha made the following announcements: 1) The Hawaii KidsCAN Equity Symposium will be held Saturday, September 16 th from 8:30 to noon at the Impact Hub. 2) The new Superintendent, Dr. Christina Kishimoto, is planning to meet with SEAC members at the December 1 st meeting.	Members wishing to sign up for the symposium will contact Martha for a link.
New Member Nomination	The Membership Committee has reviewed the application of Daniel Santos, a parent of a 12 year old daughter receiving services in the Windward District, and recommends that the full Council advance his nomination to the Superintendent.	Members unanimously agreed to forward Daniel’s nomination to the Superintendent for approval.
Review of the Minutes of the August 11th Meeting	There were no corrections or additions made to the draft minutes.	The minutes were approved as circulated.
Inclusion Update	Debra Farmer, Director of the Exceptional Support Branch in the Office of Curriculum, Instruction and Student Support (OCISS), updated members	

<p>Inclusion Update (cont.)</p>	<p>on the LRE data from the Annual Performance Report submitted in February 2017. She also shared information about the Department’s contract with Stetson to provide training to schools and various personnel on strategies for effective inclusion of students with disabilities in general education classrooms. Stetson will be mentoring Debbie’s staff for sustainability after the contract expires and offering approximately 20 schools the opportunity for a whole-school focused support that would be individualized for each school’s needs. School walk-throughs will begin in October. In addition, schools not participating in the concentrated support will be able to select ‘a la carte’ from a menu of professional development courses.</p> <p><u>Questions and comments from members</u></p> <p>C. The LRE percentages from the district chart is misleading, because it appears that only a small percentage of students in each district are spending most of the day in the general education classroom, when the state average is around 37%.</p> <p>C. The reasons that students with disabilities are not included in the general education classroom more have been well documented and include a lack of training and resources, as well as reluctance on the part of the general education teacher.</p> <p>Q. How are schools making the decision about the Stetson options? A. It is up to the principal. The Complex Area Superintendents (CAS) are talking to the principals.</p> <p>Q. Will you be tracking how schools utilize the contract services? A. Sure, we will be checking data all the time.</p> <p>Q. How is this initiative different from Po’okela? A. Po’okela didn’t have the commitment from the schools for sustainability.</p> <p>C. I have had experience with inclusion at Campbell High School. The staff and administration supported inclusion, but the school struggled—not because of training, but because of limits to their human resources. We need enough special education teachers with appropriate training to make it work. A. We have brought up some of the barriers to Stetson. They were involved in a consent decree reform in Connecticut and have</p>	
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<p>Inclusion Update (cont.)</p>	<p>confidence in being able to fix problems.</p> <p>C. Schools often put an overwhelming number of kids with IEPs in one classroom.</p> <p>C. When Po’okela came to King Kamehameha, we had 12 special education teachers for inclusion. Now we only have 7 teachers, and we are unable to fill the minutes in the students’ IEPs. We weren’t able to negotiate with the Department for more special education resources or planning time.</p> <p>C. It’s important that we start with the data that says we’re not doing well. I sat in a meeting with the Governor and the Superintendent to review the data and it was refreshing to hear them say that we need a programmatic change. That’s why the Superintendent is doing a deep dive into special education and English Learners. The Strategic Plan supports the mentality that every school must do an inclusion program. Although the Superintendent has said she will empower principals to make their own decisions, there are times when there are top down directives—especially with special education and English learners.</p> <p>C. I think SEAC can be critical in a constructive way by pointing out deficiencies in staffing and funding. If you want higher student achievement, you can’t just say “more money”; you need to say where specifically the funding should be directed.</p> <p>C. Rather than look at individual schools, we should look at the efforts of the whole complex. Now, as kids are coming up from elementary schools where they were exposed to inclusion, the middle schools stop it.</p> <p>C. I have 12-13 students at different grade levels and am working with 7 different general education teachers. I know that some schools have more favor with their CAS and get more personnel. The poorer schools are left without the manpower to make it work. Q. How do we level the playing field? A. One thing is to look at the bell schedule.</p> <p>Q. With only 20 schools targeted for the whole-school reform package with Stetson, how will we scale up quickly to 254 schools?</p> <p>Q. How can families access the Stetson training? A. I think they have a contract component to do parent training.</p>	
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<p>Report from the Monitoring and Compliance Office Director</p>	<p>Christina Tydeman reported on the following issues:</p> <p><u>Leadership Team</u> Phyllis Unebesami is the new Deputy Superintendent as of September 5th. Her transfer leaves an opening in the Office of Strategy, Innovation and Performance for an Assistant Superintendent (AS). David Brook Connor is the new AS for the Office of Information Technology Services, and Barbara Krieg will create an opening for AS of the Office of Human Resources when she leaves in October. Additionally, Maui has a new Complex Area Superintendent—Kathleen Dimino for Baldwin, Kekaulike, and Maui Complexes. As folks in the Department wait for the new leaders to define a direction, they are somewhat in a state of suspended animation.</p> <p><u>Staffing methodology, special education and related services recruitment</u> The staffing methodology options developed by Suzanne Mulcahy and her team received feedback from a number of stakeholder groups (including SEAC). The goal was to select a methodology for implementation in SY 18-19, but the process was suspended after Deputy Superintendent Schatz left, leaving a status quo for this school year. The staffing methodology is likely to be part of Superintendent Kishimoto’s program review of special education. The recruitment processes for teachers and related services personnel are utilizing existing practices. Due to Hawaii’s geographic challenges, it has been difficult to recruit from out of state, and many potential candidates decline the offer once they become aware of the cost of living. For related services personnel, the determination of need is made at the district level through the District Educational Specialists (DES).</p> <p><u>Questions and comments from members and guests</u> Q. Is AS Mulcahy still meeting regularly with the DESs? A. Yes. Since the level of knowledge varies greatly, one-size-fits-all training has limited value. Addressing specific needs has required some differentiation for DESs and people providing training. Q. Are you part of the group that meets with the DESs? A. Yes, we’ve only met once this year.</p>	
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<p>Report from the Monitoring and Compliance Office Director (cont.)</p>	<p>Q. I see the DESs as a really important piece. Do you have a time frame for getting the DESs on the same page? A. I will be developing a timeline, and it will be complicated. I fully agree on the important role of DESs, and identifying how pieces come together is critical. Some positive feedback from OSEP on our last SSIP was regarding Hawaii’s effort to align multiple driving plans like the SSIP and the Strategic Plan.</p> <p>C. If we don’t build capacity at the state level, then the alignment of plans won’t filter down to the school level. It will be WestEd all over again. It shouldn’t be optional for schools to follow the regulations on LRE.</p> <p>C. I think it will be a lot different with new leadership. The person coming from IT wants to relocate his family here because of his passion for Hawaii. A new HR leader is good, because we haven’t made much progress. I’m hopeful, but we have to be vigilant to ensure that the people in charge are supportive of our efforts to improve special education.</p> <p>C. I’m not trying to be negative. I attend conferences and the vision sounds good, but I see it from the classroom and district level, and it’s not what they say it will be.</p> <p>C. With the new Strategic Plan, the primary focus is on special education (SPED) students. Resources, including the most effective teachers, should be committed to the most vulnerable students—English Learners and SPED.</p> <p>C. SEAC’s Legislative Committee found some disparities between the performance goals/targets for SPED students set in the ESSA State Plan and the Annual Performance Report sent to OSEP. We recommended that the targets align to avoid confusion.</p> <p>C. When we look at a sustainable train-the-trainer model, we need to pick people who are not retiring in the next year.</p> <p>Q. Do we know how much is spent on the proportional model? Do we know how many positions we have now?</p>	
<p>UH Special Education License Programs and Recruitment</p>	<p>Janet Kim, recruitment specialist for the UH Special Education Department, shared recruitment data from 2014-17. Her position was created in 2014 because the chronic shortage of SPED teachers was</p>	<p>Janet will send her powerpoint presentation to SPIN for distribution.</p>

<p>UH Special Education License Programs and Recruitment (cont.)</p>	<p>getting worse. Her training as a dual certified elementary teacher helps her to sell a career in special education. Recruitment efforts cover the entire state with lots of events on neighbor islands. For students with no degree there is a Bachelor of Education in Early Childhood and an Exceptional Students and Elementary Education (ESEE) program that offers courses that are co-taught by SPED and general education. It is one of the few merge programs in the entire country. For students with a Bachelor’s degree there are two choices: a Post Baccalaureate in Special Education and a Master’s degree in Education. Programs are offered statewide utilizing virtual classrooms with discussions and small groups.</p> <p><u>Questions and comments from members and guests</u></p> <p>Q. What kind of student funding is provided? A. The special education stipend provided by DOE is renewed on a year to year basis. Students have to apply and then I can offer the stipend when it becomes available. The Post-Bac program is fully funded. Also, if you teach 5 years in a Title I school, you can get tuition reimbursement.</p> <p>C. We have been informed about poor retention issues with Post Bac students who are typically working full time in a classroom while taking coursework. A. That’s true, although many students can’t afford to attend a program without an income.</p> <p>C. Kauai has its own funding for teacher candidates.</p> <p>Q. Do you have any data on teacher retention? A. I’m doing my doctoral research on that topic but don’t have the data as yet.</p> <p>C. The issue is whether we aim for a short fix vs. a long fix. We need more SPED teachers now; however the undergraduate programs result in a greater likelihood of staying in the classroom.</p>	
<p>Parent Notification Regarding Staffing Shortages</p>	<p>Susan Rocco reported that one of the parent supports around staffing is the right to know the qualifications of individuals providing instruction. Under the Every Student Succeeds Act, all schools receiving Title I funds</p>	

<p>Parent Notification Regarding Staffing Shortages</p>	<p>must proactively notify a parent if their child is being taught by a non-qualified teacher for four weeks. She has heard tales of schools moving non-qualified personnel around, so that they don't quite reach the four-week mark, and therefore avoid having to notify the parent. Jasmine Williams said she asked for information on her grandson's teachers and learned that of his four teachers two are going through licensing, one has a Masters in SPED and one has no SPED degree. All are from out-of-state. She likes the Masters in SPED teacher the most, but he has to leave the classroom a lot to get training, and she wonders if her grandchild is getting the rigor of instruction that he needs. Corey Rosenlee shared that HSTA is unable to tell how many SPED students have a qualified teacher, a substitute teacher, a teacher out of his or her field, or an emergency hire. Gabriele Finn doesn't know if the letter went out in her Title I schools, but she is aware of licensed teachers in the classroom who have taken no coursework in special education. Amanda Kaahanui added that licensure is important, and mentoring is also important to ensure that students are moving forward. Members agreed that more data on the credentials of special education personnel is needed.</p>	
<p>Defining an Overarching Theme and Key Questions</p>	<p>Susan R. met with the Superintendent on SEAC's behalf and was asked about our top priorities for the year. When she learned that staffing shortages was the first topic to be discussed, she said that she won't be looking at staffing until the program review yields data and a direction for special education reforms. Until you know what your program and priorities will be, it is difficult to be specific about staffing needs. SEAC has been invited to send one member to the Superintendent's Steering Committee to help set those priorities over a six month period. In light of this new information, members were asked to consider whether to move from staffing to another 'bucket' and to think of how the buckets relate to a larger theme, such as the achievement gap or post-school outcomes.</p>	
<p>Draft Agenda Setting for October 13th Meeting</p>	<p>Members agreed to focus on transition, and specifically secondary transition for the October meeting. DVR representatives Pina Lemusu</p>	

Draft Agenda Setting for October 13th Meeting	and Motu Finau volunteered to make a presentation on how DVR and DOE are working together on pre-employment training. Pina said she would try to get a DOE partner to co-present with them. Martha and Susan R. will talk to Christina Tydeman about including transition data in the agenda. Members also expressed an interest in having a Complex Area Superintendent attend to share his or her perspective on SEAC's topical areas. Art Souza and Chad Farias from the Big Island were both suggested as possible guest speakers.	
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