**SPECIAL EDUCATION ADVISORY COUNCIL (SEAC)**

Minutes – August 9, 2019

9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

PRESENT: Andrea Alexander, Virginia Beringer, Mary Brogan, Debbie Cheeseman, Mark Disher, Annelise Goldman (for Rosie Rowe), Martha Guinan, Scott Hashimoto (for Kurt Humphrey), Amanda Kaahanui (staff), Tina King, Kaili Murbach, Susan Rocco (staff), Drew Saranillio (Liaison to the Superintendent), James Street, Francis Taele, Susan Wood

EXCUSED: Brendelyn Ancheta, Annette Cooper, Bernadette Lane, Dale Matsuura, Stacey Oshio, Carrie Pisciotto, Kau‘i Rezentes, Tricia Sheehey, Ivalee Sinclair, Steven Vannatta, Jasmine Williams

ABSENT: Bob Campbell, Motu Finau, Cathy Kahoohanohano, Amy Wiech

GUESTS: Raj Kumar, Vanessa Ott

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **TOPIC** | **DISCUSSION** | **ACTION** |
| **Call to Order/Welcome** | Chair Martha Guinan called the meeting to order at 9:10 a.m. |  |
| **Introductions and Member Reflection** | Members introduced themselves to guests and newly appointed members Andrea Alexander, Mary Brogan and Mark Disher. Each person offered a word or short phrase that described “why I serve on SEAC.” | Amanda Kaahanui organized the reflections into a word cloud (see attached). |
| **Announcements** | Amanda reminded members of the Footsteps to Transition Fair on November 2nd at Kapolei Middle. Speakers include Leolinda Parlin and a student panel describing their transition experiences. While the Fair is targeted to middle and high schoolers with disabilities, planners of the event are hoping to also draw in families of younger students. |  |
| **Review of May 17, 2019 Minutes** | No changes were made to the draft minutes. | The minutes were accepted as written. |
| **Review of SEAC Member Responsibilities** | Members reviewed an infographic developed by Amanda outlining key member responsibilities and Leading by Convening principles. Amanda is also working on a video describing key responsibilities using the video editor Moovly. Martha impressed on members the importance of hearing from each stakeholder, so that the voice of the special education community is captured. She encouraged members to send a designee when they are unable to attend. |  |

SEAC Minutes

August 9, 2019

Page 2

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Feedback on July 2019 Special Education Conference** | Martha shared that the Special Education Section extended an invitation for four SEAC members to attend their conference which was held on different islands. Feedback from members included the following:   * Martha went to the Oahu conference and found Dr. Rios’ keynote and message about cultural responsibility very engaging. * Susan Wood attended the conference in Waikoloa where she learned about the power of one message, horizontal and vertical transitions and engaging with families. Most of the presentations were at an introductory level, although she was thankful for being included. She suggested that DOE partner with SEAC in putting on workshops. * Kaili Murbach attended the Maui conference. The workshop on evaluation summary reports helped her to understand how reports are created. She had questions about kids with medical and/or self-help needs and how targeted data is used to set goals that support achievement. In the workshop on Prior Written Notice (PWN) there was a lot of legal jargon. She expressed her hope that DOE will open up access to the conference for more parents and community members. * Debbie Cheeseman, who is serving as Jefferson’s Student Services Coordinator this year, reflected that she learned about changes to the PWN and Evaluation Summary and believes these changes need to get down to the school level. She would like the training to be mandatory for all special education teachers, and open to general education teachers so that they hear the message of inclusion. * Drew Saranillio found the conference gave him an opportunity to talk story with teachers to learn their perspectives. He also asked district resource teachers how they were going to share   conference information with others in the field. |  |

SEAC Minutes

August 9, 2019

Page 3

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Feedback on July 2019 Special Education Conference** **(cont.)** | Heidi Armstrong thanked SEAC members for their feedback. The conference planners tried to cover beginning and advanced topics and invited content specialists to support the general education teachers. They are considering making future conferences larger, although professional development is designed for teachers and there are limitations in space and numbers of presenters. 1400 individuals attended the July conferences. Next summer they are considering supporting neighbor island teachers to come to Oahu for training, so that they have a wider range of topics from which to choose.  Additional questions/comments from SEAC members:  C: SEAC members weren’t warned in advance that they couldn’t attend the workshop with the staff from the Attorney General’s Office. It was awkward to be told they had to leave the room.  Q. Annie Kalama shared that there will be another special education conference in October. Will SEAC members have more opportunities to attend?  C. Several of our Parent Training and Information Center staff were invited to attend the conference this year. Although the information was geared to educators, it was definitely a benefit to be there. Perhaps DOE could consider having one conference day open to parents and a second day just for educators.  C. It was useful to hear what teachers are being told. Our work is about translating new procedures, acronyms and forms to parents so that they are on the same page and not viewing school personnel as adversaries. |  |
| **OSEP Determination Based on APR/SSIP (SY 17-18) Submission** | Drew reported that Hawaii has been determined by OSEP to remain in the category of “needs assistance” after its review of key compliance and results data that were part of the SY 17-18 APR and SSIP. OSEP uses a scoring mechanism that is split evenly between compliance and results. |  |

SEAC Minutes

August 9, 2019

Page 4

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **OSEP Determination Based on APR/SSIP (SY 17-18) Submission**  **(cont.)** | Hawaii’s compliance score was negatively affected by the data from Indicator 13 – secondary transition. Hawaii’s results score was lowered due primarily to poor academic performance of 4th and 8th graders with disabilities on the National Assessment of Educational Performance (NAEP) and the Smarter Balanced Assessment.  Feedback to OSEP on Proposed Changes to Determination  Drew attended a session at the recent OSEP Leadership Conference that was soliciting input from states on potential changes to the scoring matrix OSEP uses for determinations. Several options that were mentioned included:   * Allowing states to earn bonus points for their SSIP; * Looking at the representativeness of family outcome data under Part C; * Adding preschool outcomes results; * Looking for new ways to measure improvements in graduation rates; * Giving greater weights to certain compliance indicators; and * Creating new options for measuring statewide assessment results.   OSEP is extending the deadline for feedback to August 30, 2019, and Drew asked members if they would like to submit feedback to him to include with the Department’s response. He shared that SEAC would be unlikely to review DOE’s comments prior to submission because the steps in the approval process would butt up to the deadline. Susan R. suggested submitting separate SEAC feedback to reflect the consensus on the group.  Questions and comments from members and guests  C. I’m strongly opposed to removing NAEP scores as a results indicator. It’s the only assessment that is given to students in all 50 states, and it allows us to compare the achievement of Hawaii students to their Mainland counterparts. | Members were given copies of *How the Department Made Determinations* (rev. 6/20.19), the OSEP letter re: Hawaii’s 2019 Determination, *Hawaii’s 2019 Part B Results-Driven Accountability Matrix*, and *OSEP Feedback Sessions: Determinations*. |

SEAC Minutes

August 9, 2019

Page 5

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **OSEP Determination Based on APR/SSIP (SY 17-18) Submission (cont.)** | Q. Does OSEP want feedback to change the determination results? A. They are taking the focus away from compliance to results.  C. LDAH, Hawaii’s Parent Training and Information Center did not have an opportunity to provide comments at the OSEP Leadership Conference.  Q. Is there a social media forum where people can share ideas? If you hadn’t talked about NAEP, I wouldn’t have had an opinion about its significance.  Q. What is the purpose and the framework for gathering the feedback. Is the task about how to move to results? Changing the measurement system? Something else? A. The handout that you have is what we were using at the Leadership Conference where we went through the questions in small groups. It offers some explanation of OSEP’s rationale.  Q. Is there a way to track progress on IEP goals? Are they being repeated year to year? A. Not all states require IEP objectives.  C. Everything is only as good as the IEP. It involves engagement of the parent, adjusting to a different team every year and meeting the challenge of having uniform measures. I put a lot of things in my son’s IEP, and I am confident that they will make a difference. There are so many variables that make the process stressful and sometimes overwhelming for parents. C. One of the concerns I have about measuring IEP goals for progress is that it could put pressure on teachers to set less ambitious goals. We wouldn’t want outside forces to influence the IEP. It is better to set ambitious goals for students, even though they may not always master them.  C. I agree wholeheartedly.  Q. If there is a group that tracks student regression, how does it get back to the student level, and how is the parent pulled in to try to change this? A. A team at school analyzes the data. If students regress, they ask why? What supports did we use? How can we make for better results? |  |

SEAC Minutes

August 9, 2019

Page 6

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **OSEP Determination Based on APR/SSIP (SY 17-18) Submission (cont.)** | Q. How often does this happen? A. It is dependent on the complex. Some use different measures--RTI, assessments, progress monitors—to see if they are doing the right thing.  Q. The OSEP document has lots of questions. Could we prioritize what to focus on in the short amount of time we have today? A. (Martha) We are going to form a subcommittee to determine what input we want to provide OSEP. Some of us who have more of a historical perspective can catch up other group members.  C. I find DOE to be great on compliance but not results.  C. Dr. Mapps was recently in Hawaii to talk about family engagement. She talks about the importance teaching families about goals and how to support their child at home. Instead of holding parent-teacher conference, you teach how instruction works.  Q. What impact will stakeholder input have with OSEP? What is their goal? A. It is to hone in on indicators that reveal meaningful information about how the state is meeting the needs of students.  Q. If you had to get creative, do you roll with what you have? A. We do have a SPP/APR and general supervision support component. | Ivalee Sinclair, Virginia Beringer, James Street, Steven Vannatta, and Kaili Murbach volunteered to serve on the subcommittee with Martha and Susan R. |
| **Feedback on ESSA Plan Proposed Amendment** | Susan R. provided a brief overview of how the Every Student Succeeds Act requires tracking of the academic performance of a number of subgroups, including students with disabilities, and provides a process for identifying schools that have subgroups most in need of Targeted Support and Intervention (TSI). Hawaii was recently notified that its methodology for identifying schools’ student subgroups for TSI did not meet federal requirements. The Department is therefore submitting an ESSA Amendment and inviting the public to provide feedback by August 16th. Since the proposed ESSA amendment is adopting the US DOE’s accepted methodology, SEAC does not currently see the need to provide feedback. However, SEAC is hoping that AS Armstrong can provide data at a future | AS Armstrong will supply SEAC with more information about ESSA Targeted Support and Intervention. If members wish to comment individually on the proposed state amendment to its ESSA plan they can access information at this [link](http://www.hawaiipublicschools.org/VisionForSuccess/AdvancingEducation/StriveHIPerformanceSystem/Pages/ESSA-Amendment-0719.aspx). |

SEAC Minutes

August 9, 2019

Page 7

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Feedback on ESSA Plan Proposed Amendment (cont.)** | meeting that is more transparent. For example, the ESSA plan originally identified 11 schools for TSI, but there is no information to indicate if SPED kids are the subgroup receiving the additional supports at those schools, since they are generally the lowest-performing subgroup.  Additionally SEAC would appreciate clarification on whether DOE is only looking at Title I schools when identifying schools for targeted support, rather than all public schools. |  |
| **OCR Finding Regarding Suspensions and Missed Instructional Time** | Martha informed members about recent news coverage of SY 15-16 discipline data showing Hawaii students with disabilities missed more instructional time due to suspensions than students in any other state. The Hawaii Disability Rights Center has filed a complaint to the Office for Civil Rights asking them to investigate further. However, AS Armstrong explained that the Hawaii data in question was submitted erroneously. They are looking into the root causes for the misleading data and believe it is a result of schools double- or triple-counting days of suspension when more than one reason for suspending an individual student was reported. In reality, corrected data should show that Hawaii is about average in the number of days of missed instructional time per 100 students with IEPs.  Questions/comments from members and guests  Q. Do you look at the bottom line of who got suspended vs. what might be contributing to those patterns? Will you talk to the family and student for context on the behavior that resulted in a suspension? Any child may have drugs or be disrespectful, but there may be antecedents for kids with disabilities. A. Our investigation involves talking to schools about specific details. We did the same thing with chronic absenteeism to tease out the underlying factors contributing to the issue.  Q. When you talk about gathering information to make a change, are you willing to consider the family component? If you talk to the teachers, they |  |

SEAC Minutes

August 9, 2019

Page 8

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **OCR Finding Regarding Suspensions and Missed Instructional Time (cont.)** | Questions/comments from members and guests (cont.)  may have an opinion, but not know what is going on at home. If you connect with parents, they are a fount of knowledge about their children’s behavior. Early discussions and greater understanding about what is going on could prevent some of these suspensions. A. Yes, I agree. If you pull ethnicity, but not the other data points, it may not give an accurate picture. Was there trauma? Where is the student living? We need multiple data points.  Q. Do you keep track of why students are suspended? A. Yes.  C. Some schools who want to do better on suspensions pull the student out of class; however, he or she may still be missing instructional time.  Q. Is there compensatory time to make up for lost instruction? A. Students will not get compensatory time for the first 10 days of suspension in a school year, but will receive services in an alternate setting on the eleventh day of suspension and beyond.  Q. If a student is out of school for 5 days for an illness, and they miss therapy, are there compensatory services? A. Yes, related services are not specific to a particular week.  C. In my experience, if a schedule is made out for a therapist and a student is sick, there is no make-up therapy.  C. Also, if a related service is missed because of a field trip, it is not made up. | AS Armstrong will bring the guidelines for compensatory services to the next SEAC meeting. |
| **Agenda Setting for the September 13, 2019 Meeting** | Members identified the following five big agenda items for the September discussion:   * DOE’s IDEA Improvement Priorities for SY 19-20 – Heidi Armstrong * Dialogue on the 5 promises in the 10 year Strategic Plan – Heidi Armstrong |  |

SEAC Minutes

August 9, 2019

Page 9

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Agenda Setting for the September 13, 2019 Meeting** | Agenda items for the September discussion (cont.):   * Update on IDEA Services to Incarcerated Adults – Nancy Gorman & Francis Taele * Review of By-laws * Selection of SEAC’s Priorities for SY 19-20   Under the first agenda item, members would like to see the Department’s shared vision of inclusion, receive an update on the staffing allocation methodology and learn more about how parents are going to be included in professional development. AS Armstrong added that she would like to receive input from SEAC on the proposed five promises to students to be fulfilled by 2030 as part of the new strategic plan.  Additional comments from members regarding professional development and SEAC input on the proposed Strategic Plan  C. Dr. Karen Mapp has been part of a grant initiative between the Center on Disability Studies and the Department to focus on family engagement as a strategy to improve student academic performance. Related programs in other states have teachers co-teaching parents on the school campus to deliver instruction at home as well as making home visits.  C. I’m working on that project. Family engagement is not always that teachers have classes for parents. It is about welcoming parents and having conversations so that parents are empowered to be part of the solution. Often parents believe that school personnel are the experts when it comes to their child’s education, but children are not satellites. They are attached to families, and there must be more of a connection between home and school.  Q. If SEAC shares its priorities on the proposed strategic plan, where would the feedback go and how would the department use what this group does? A. (AS Armstrong) We would present it at leadership meetings.  A. (Martha) It depends on what the feedback is. For example, when we |  |

SEAC Minutes

August 9, 2019

Page 10

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Agenda Setting for the September 13, 2019 Meeting (cont.)** | make comments on OSEP reports we may not hear for months whether our recommendations were considered.  C. For the past several years, SEAC decides on its priorities early in the school year. We usually have 3-4 big items or “buckets”—like student assessments or staffing. We then try to partner with the Department to gain more expertise on the topics and to come up with shared goals and activities. |  |
| **Infographics Work Groups** | Martha conceded that there was not enough time left in the meeting to hold work group meetings. Instead, she polled groups to ask whether any group had an infographic product ready for final vetting. School health and inclusion groups indicated they were basically ready. The SSIP work group has a final draft of its infographic but is working on a dialogue guide with an additional data infographic. The significant disproportionality group stated it may need to regroup and come up with new strategies. AS Armstrong thanked the groups for their efforts and commented that the draft infographics she has reviewed are wonderful. |  |
| **Input from the Public** | A teacher and volunteer tutor for a student in elementary school, shared some recommendations she offered the student’s principal to improve the delivery of special education services to this student and others like him. She also sent a letter to the Complex Area Superintendent and to the Superintendent but has yet to receive a response. Her recommendations included the following:   * Require teachers to use professionally vetted curricula. * Start at the student’s level and move up. * Set higher standards for special education teachers. Currently they don’t have to have any training in special education to be a special education teacher. |  |

SEAC Minutes

August 9, 2019

Page 11

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Input from the Public (cont.)** | * Engage and welcome parents. Encourage them to meet with their child’s teacher as often as necessary to benefit the student. * Write IEPs more clearly so that the parent understands the goals and how to support them at home.   Several members offered comments regarding grade level standards as the basis of IEP goals, including the following:   * Goals and objectives are supposed to be based on present levels of performance; * When you develop an IEP for a 5th grader it populates grade-level goals. The IEP objectives will reflect where student is and how instruction will be tailored. * It’s an equity thing. Even though the child is receiving special education supports, he is held to same standards. The IEP is a way to reach an approximation, to make meaningful progress toward that goals like a bridge.   Martha thanked the teacher/tutor for her recommendations and stated that SEAC will keep them in mind for policies. |  |

**“Why I Serve on SEAC”**

