**SPECIAL EDUCATION ADVISORY COUNCIL**

Minutes – November 8, 2019

9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

PRESENT: Brendelyn Ancheta, Antony Alexander (for Andrea Alexander), Virginia Beringer, Debbie Cheeseman, Rebecca Choi (for Mary Brogan), Mark Disher, Martha Guinan, Amanda Kaahanui (staff), Sheri Komatsu (temporary DVR Representative), Dale Matsuura, Danielle Mizuta (for James Street), Kaili Murbach, Carrie Pisciotto, Kau‘i Rezentes, Susan Rocco (staff), David Royer, Cara Tanimura (liaison to the Superintendent), Steven Vannatta, Jasmine Williams, Susan Wood

EXCUSED: Annette Cooper, Scott Hashimoto, Tina King, Bernadette Lane, Stacey Oshio, Rosie Rowe, Ivalee Sinclair

ABSENT: Bob Campbell, Cathy Kahoohanohano

GUESTS: Heidi Armstrong, Lori de Crinis, Kevin Bardsley-Marcial, Debbie Farmer, Patricia Sheehey

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| **TOPIC** | **DISCUSSION** | **ACTION** |
| **Call to Order/ Welcome** | Chair Martha Guinan called the meeting to order at 9:07 a.m. |  |
| **Introductions** | Martha asked members to introduce themselves to new DVR representative Sheri Komatsu, who is filling in for Motu Finau until his replacement is found, and guests. |  |
| **Input from the Public** | Martha read two emails from members of the public on the following issues:  Issue #1 – Proposed change in funding for special education teachers  A teacher who has been in the field of special education for 21 years expressed frustration over the lack of information about the status of the proposed funding methodology for special education positions and asked SEAC for clarification. From the information she has heard so far, she fears significant cuts to special education staffing that will hurt students with special needs. As an advocate for these students and their families, she is so disheartened that she is considering leaving the Department.  Discussion - AS Armstrong began the discussion by restating that the amount of funding is the same; what is different is the distribution methodology. This year will show whether a foundation based on equity is enough to address the main staffing distribution issues. Despite the Department’s efforts at effective dissemination of information about the methodology, including training the proper people to share the message and providing scripts, there have still been misunderstandings in the field. Debbie Farmer added that they has also created a one page flyer and posted it on the intranet and internet. They have been providing presentations at the Complex Area Superintendent’s (CAS) and school’s request and have met with the Charter School Commission. David Royer said he had shared additional information with the teacher that provided |  |

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| **Input from the Public (cont.)** | input, and she was relieved to have a better understanding of the proposed process. Her principal had told her that their school would only get one position.  Proposed Actions - Member generated suggestions included advising the teacher to go to her CAS for the most current information. SEAC will also post the staffing methodology Powerpoint presented to SEAC alongside the October 11th minutes on the SEAC website.  Issue # 2 – Parent feels pressured to hold IEP meeting prior to anniversary date  A parent of a student in high school shared several issues that troubled her regarding her child’s recent IEP meeting:   * Although the meeting was scheduled at the beginning of the school year, she did not receive a copy of the IEP draft until 15 minutes into the meeting; * The meeting was scheduled for one hour only, and the team was unable to get through the draft in that timeframe, so another meeting to continue the discussion was proposed; however, the parent and her advocate could not make the dates offered prior to the anniversary date, and offered alternate dates in December; * The parent was told that if the IEP was not completed by the anniversary date, the school will lose money per the state’s direction. The school will be “dinged, and they are already in the red.” * The parent was asked to meet without the advocate prior to the deadline, and then schedule another meeting to finish up any other concerns. She was not comfortable with this option.   Discussion - Debbie F. explained that the Department offers a monetary incentive to schools ranging from $150 - $1,000 to close out old IEPs and initiate new ones prior to their anniversary date. Data is frozen on Child Count Day in December. If a school’s data is correct and all IEPs are current, they get an incentive which can be used for substitutes, training, equipment, etc. Dale Matsuura added that after the IEP meeting is held, schools have five days to make it current. Should they lose out on the incentive, the school can appeal to the CAS. Jasmine Williams stated her belief that the school should not be |  |

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| **Input from the Public (cont.)** | Issue # 2 Discussion (cont.)  sharing information about the incentive with the parent. It also must follow the Doug C. decision that stated that when scheduling is an issue, the parent’s participation in the IEP is more critical than meeting an arbitrary deadline for completion of the IEP.  Proposed actions - AS Armstrong asked Martha to check if the parent is willing to identify her child’s school and/or talk to her District Educational Specialist. General guidelines could be sent to all schools; however, they may not ensure that the school in question corrects its procedures without some oversight by the state office or complex area. |  |
| **Discussion of the Superintendent’s Memo re: Determining the Need**  **for Individualized Instructional Support** | Mark Disher began the discussion by stating that his primary concern is that the memo focuses on challenging behavior and yet many students currently receive 1:1 instructional support for issues like communication. He asserted that IEP teams must look at the needs of the student and not of adult staff when determining the need for individualized support. Debbie F. clarified that the September 6, 2019 memo was approved by the Attorney General’s Office. She then gave a short history of 1:1 support which dated back to the Felix Consent Decree when skills trainers were assigned to students with complex behaviors. The use of this support exploded to the degree that DOE did not expect with thousands of students receiving 1:1. In some classrooms there are more adults than students. It is apparent that these supports may be making some students too dependent upon adults. In talking to the union and DESs, DOE heard that 1:1 support is often needed only intermittently--for walking to the bus, toileting, etc.  Questions/comments from members and staff  Q. Do you have a list of instructional supports and when they are appropriate? A. No. Personnel may have different responsibilities in varied situations.  C. If the goal is to reduce 1:1 instructional support over time, there should be measurable goals and demonstrated progress. The IEP team should determine whether the support is still required. This is not clear in the memo.  C. Often once a student receives a 1:1 support, it is difficult to reduce minutes, because parents don’t want to decrease minutes—even at lunchtime. |  |

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| **Discussion of the Superintendent’s ISS Memo (cont.)** | Questions/comments from members and staff (cont.)  C. If, in one of the student’s first IEPs, we could educate the parent that the goal for their child is independence, we might not get as much pushback.  C. I was told in an IEP last week that the 1:1 has basically become my son’s teacher. I had been advocating for a 1:1 and now I’m concerned, because he needs someone with more than one week of training to facilitate his learning. A. When there is overreliance on a 1:1, there is often a backup in teaching.  C. The memo from the Superintendent is somewhat vague leaving each school to interpret what it means and potentially take it in different directions. I have heard that concern echoed in the community. A. Send us some language that would make the intent of the memo clearer.  C. As it is currently written, the memo sounds like we’re taking supports away from students. We should emphasize up front that there are other methods to assist students.  C. Start off with ‘yes.’  C. It is important to get information to parents for them to understand. Most parents are not aware of the array of supports available. It would be helpful if you had information explaining “what does an EA do”? and “what does an RBT do”?, etc. A. Parents don’t necessarily need to know what each position does.  C. As a parent, I don’t know your DOE lingo. I want to be able to visualize the support.  C. We have a deeper problem related to training of paraprofessionals. My colleague and I published an article on training received by PPTs in Hawaii. It was interesting to hear the range of training, from normal school practice to ABA. Parents want to know the background of the PPTs. What is their training level? On the big island, there was no training. PPTs raised their own children and that was it. They disciplined students as a parent would.  C. The responsibility of the teacher is to ensure that the PPT is following the plan, but with lots of different people, it is hard for a teacher to be a manager.  C. My son has Down Syndrome, and I thought we had an RBT providing support. I asked who provided monitoring and was told “he is not autistic, so |  |

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| **Discussion of the Superintendent’s Memo (cont.)** | Questions/comments from members and staff (cont.)  he doesn’t have the same monitoring.” A. ABA is not just for students with autism.  C. (Debbie F.) Because of legislation teachers can neither design or implement ABA. If a student needs a Functional Behavioral Assessment, and it is determined that he needs ABA, then a Behavior Intervention Plan (BIP) is implemented by a BCBA or psychologist, and a RBT. If the FBA determines that the student only needs a Behavior Support Plan, then the teacher and EA can implement it.  C. I’m confused about how the DOE contracts out for RBT services. A. We have nine provider agencies on contract who can develop the BIP. If any agency is not providing adequate supervision, we would like to know that. We are also building capacity to have more DOE employees who are Licensed Behavior Analysts (LBAs) and RBTs.  C. In our handouts is a research brief that shows some detrimental effects of individualized student supports (ISS). Do you have a brief on the benefits of ISS? You need to balance the two. A. The benefit of ISS is that it is needed for the student to access the school day.  Q. Is there a memo that explains ABA versus behavioral supports? The Behavior Support Plan is going to include some behavior analysis. The teachers that I am training at UH are scared to do positive support in their classroom, for fear of being reported in violation of the ABA licensing law.  C. (Annie Kalama) We have a Frequently Asked Questions document that talks about behavior analysis and the teacher’s role.  C. SEAC is trying to do an infographic on this issue.  C. One way to help families would be to come up with a fact sheet showing the continuum of support options (LBA, RBT, EA, etc.) and each position’s role and responsibilities. This information would provide both transparency and guidance to the IEP team. A. That’s a great idea, but I fear that schools won’t talk about the needs of student but go straight to the diagram.  Q. Are there going to be guidelines coming out? More education about what paraprofessionals do? A. That would come after the individual support is | Note: This FAQ is Attachment C of the September 6, 2019 memo on ISS that was emailed to members by Mark Disher on October 10, 2019. |

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| **Discussion of the Superintendent’s ISS Memo (cont.)** | Questions/comments from members and staff (cont.)  selected, to help with the explanation. With skills trainers and RBTs, the roles are set, but with other PPTs, we write their description based on what we need.  Q. have you heard of HOT? It stands for Honest, Open and Transparent. It would be great if you put a parent section on the DOE website (which used to be so much easier to navigate). We need a parent-friendly section that teaches families your DOE language--acronyms and general descriptions.  C. It would be good for schools to have a welcoming committee and parent orientation. |  |
| **Inclusive Practices Framework** | Annie relayed that DOE is putting together an inclusion website with an area that parents can go. She thanked SEAC for its input on the draft framework which has been included in the final draft. On December 5th, DOE will present a draft of an expanded inclusion policy to the Board of Education. Annie acknowledged that this policy does not address all preschool issues, but the DOE has launched an initiative to look at ways to improve inclusive practices for preschool students with disabilities.  Questions and comments from members and guests  Q. How are you using the framework in the field? A. It is used for both assessment and progress monitoring. Schools can use it to create an action plan as DOE expands and scales up supports for Hui Pu.  Q. Is use of the framework mandatory? A. Yes, for Hui Pu schools.  C. I agree that preschool inclusion is more challenging. | Annie will share the finalized framework with members when it is available for distribution. |
| **Announcements** | * Amanda Kaahanui announced that parent airfare scholarship applications for the SPIN conference on April 18, 2020 are now being accepted. The selection of scholarship recipients will be made in February. * Martha announced that Amy Wiech has resigned her position as a parent representative and David Royer is replacing Tricia Sheehey as a representative from the UH Special Education Department. |  |

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| **Review of the Minutes of the October 11, 2019 Meeting** | Susan Wood offered several typographical edits and David Royer made a correction on page 5 to read “The HMTSS framework…. for providing academic, behavioral, social-emotional and physical support… | The minutes were approved as corrected. |
| **Agenda setting for December 13th meeting** | Suggested agenda items for December include the following:   * State Performance Plan/Annual Performance Report update by Cara Tanimura * HMTSS Framework by Fern Yoshida * Infographic Work Groups   + Vetting of Inclusion and Medicaid Claiming Infographics   + Work Group Meetings   Members also agreed on two topics for future meeting agendas:   1. a presentation by the Office of Talent Management regarding retention and recruitment, and 2. a presentation on socio-emotional learning by Joy and Robin, resource teachers serving West Hawaii.   AS Armstrong added that this year each Complex Area has been provided a special education mentor for new teachers. If there is a greater demand in any one area, the Complex Area Superintendent can buy additional mentors. Mark asked what action is taken when teachers violate IDEA. AS Armstrong replied that the principal is the supervisor of those teachers and can take appropriate action. | Martha thanked AS Armstrong for helping to set up presenters on selected topics |
| **Infographic Work Groups** | Members heard presentations from two work groups—School Health and SSIP/Reading. They then used the Hawaii SEAC Infographic Review Form to offer comments and suggestions. Both groups will take the following suggestions back to update their infographics for final approval by the full Council.  School Health Work Group (Kau‘i, Amanda and Christina)  Amanda and Kau‘i described their infographic “How to Obtain Medical Services for Non-Medically Fragile Children in the DOE.” They plan to develop a Dialogue Guide with links to other information. Suggestions from members included the following: |  |

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| **Infographic Work Groups (cont.)** | * Consider space in a corner for a standard logo, website and QR code that will be included with all SEAC infographics. * Consider translation into other languages (seek help from community partners, universities, the Office of Language Access, etc.) * Correct the typo: if the student has an~~d~~ IEP. * Take out the description of SEAC in the footer. * Retitle to “The Process to Get Medical Supports for Your Child at School.” * Replace “DOE” with “school.”   SSIP/Reading Work Group (Dale, Trisha, Steven and Susan R.)  Members described their infographic: “I Can Help My Child Learn to Read” which is tied to the goal of improving reading achievement for 3rd and 4th grade students with disabilities. The target of the infographic is parents.  Suggestions from members:   * List the numbers for the talking points all in the left column. * Have a photo of a young child reading in point #3. * Change the wording in point #1 to “Keep fun and interesting books around the house for your child to look at.” * Change the title to: “I Can Help My Keiki Learn to Read.” * Change the wording in point #3 to “Read ~~to~~ with your child nightly..” * Move your most important messages to the first and last points. * Find more photos of children reading and replace the parent photos. * Consider changing the graphics. |  |