**SPECIAL EDUCATION ADVISORY COUNCIL**

**Minutes – April 24, 2020**

**9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.**

PRESENT: Andrea Alexander, Virginia Beringer, Wendy Nakasone-Kalani (for Bob Campbell), Rebecca Choi (for Mary Brogan), Annette Cooper, Mark Disher, Martha Guinan, Scott Hashimoto, Amanda Kaahanui (staff), Tina King, Bernadette Lane, Dale Matsuura, Cheryl Matthews, Kau‘i Rezentes, C. J Rice (for Annie Kalama), Susan Rocco (staff), Rosie Rowe, David Royer, Steven Vannatta, Lisa Vegas, Jasmine Williams, Susan Wood

EXCUSED: Brendelyn Ancheta, Debbie Cheeseman, Kaili Murbach, Carrie Pisciotto, Ivalee Sinclair, James Street, Francis Taele

ABSENT: Cathy Kahoohanohano

GUESTS: Heidi Armstrong, Ayada Bania, Kevin Bardsley-Marcial, Daintry Bartoldus, Sara Cook, Sandra Jesmon, Alysha Kim, Roxanne Rokero, Frances Stetson, Aldrec Ulep, Patricia Williams

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| **TOPIC** | **DISCUSSION/ACTION** |
| **Call to Order/ Welcome** | Chair Martha Guinan called the Zoom meeting to order at 9:10 a.m. Amanda Kaahanui who hosted the meeting thanked the State Council on Developmental Disabilities for the use of their Zoom account. |
| **Introductions** | Martha invited members and guests to introduce themselves and, optionally, a child or pet who may be at home with them. |
| **Input from the Public** | 1) Jeff Krepps from Bayada gave a short presentation on the newly formed Special Education Provider Alliance consisting of a dozen contract agencies that provide ABA and BISS services representing 1500 providers. The Alliance goals include protecting the skilled workforce from unemployment, and working with HIDOE to assure provider resources to mitigate student regression. Jeff thanked AS Armstrong for offering to meet with the group.  **Action: Jeff will share his** [**Powerpoint presentation**](http://seac-hawaii.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/SEPAH-Slides-2.0.pdf)**.**  2) The Hawaii Autism Foundation is holding weekly Zoom meetings on Mondays on topics of interest to parents and a social group on Fridays for students with autism or other developmental disabilities and their parents. |
| **Dialogue with Frances Stetson** | AS Armstrong introduced Frances Stetson as a partner with the Department for many years, as well as a leader and subject matter expert in inclusion. Her company has been providing training and technical assistance to the Department’s inclusion initiative that has produced 5 cohorts and a scale up model. The overall inclusion rate has risen to 47-49%, just shy of the 51% target, attributed to Frances’ leadership and participating schools’ commitment to have inclusion be the norm for students in our public schools.  Ms. Stetson shared her intention to give a [quick overview](http://seac-hawaii.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/SEAC-Session-2020-FS-FINAL-FINAL-for-SEAC-to-share.pdf) of the work that has been done and future endeavors, as well as to establish common terminology.  Overview of inclusion proposal  The 2017 contract proposal entitled Inclusive Education Supports encompassed two main goals: |

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| **Dialogue with Frances Stetson (cont,)** | Overview of inclusion proposal (cont)  1) close the achievement gap for students with disabilities, and 2) increase the time kids spend in the general education classroom. At the time the contracted was awarded Hawaii ranked 53rd amongst states and territories in including students with disabilities 80% or more of the school day.  Three phases of the inclusion initiative  The three phases aimed at changing practice and improving outcomes for students are: Hui Pu (2017), Scale Up (2019) and Sustaining Change (2021).  Hui Pu initially involved 3 cohorts of 10 schools each. Two more cohorts were added totaling 50 schools. The Hui Pu Framework for Change included 1) data profiles and learning walks, 2) intensive professional development (step by step training), 3) personalized online coaching & technical assistance, and 4) capacity building for sustained statewide change. All training included the administrator along with teachers. Learning Walk post tests showed significant changes in teacher practices.  Scale Up has focused on sustaining change by increasing each complex area’s capacity for providing inclusive education training and supports to its schools. This phase also includes principal learning communities as principals are often the most critical component for successful inclusion. DOE’s website resources are being enhanced, and there is a plan in place to showcase 5-7 demonstration schools that others can visit to see inclusive practices in action. When Stetson leaves, they will have given Hawaii all their tools and resources.  Outcomes  The inclusion rate (the % of students who spend 80% or more of the school day in a general education classroom) increased statewide from 36.8% in 2017 to 47.94% in 2020. For Hui Pu students, the average inclusion rate is 66.92%. Ms. Stetson also cited Strive Hi data for 2019 that showed a narrowing of the achievement gap between high needs students (including students with disabilities) and non-high needs students.  Parent Engagement  Ms. Stetson stressed the need to work hand in hand with parents to find out what parents want to know about inclusion and what resources are needed. She promised to come up with a process for SEAC to share information with her organization.  A common vocabulary  The Hui Pu project defines inclusion as “a philosophy and a practice that ensures that every student is a full and accepted member of the school community and that their individual needs are not the only ones considered.” Inclusion is NOT about labels, places, ratios and convenience. Some of the guiding principles include: |

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| **Dialogue with Frances Stetson (cont.)** | A common vocabulary (cont.)  • Every student is a general education student.  • Inclusion is not a ‘special education issue’—it’s everyone’s issue!  • There is good inclusion and there is bad inclusion.  • Never forget the “I” word—INDIVIDUALIZATION!  • Inclusion requires a change in how we teach and how we work together.  • There is no such thing as excellence without equity.  Low expectations  One of the biggest challenges to inclusion is low expectations, for example, when a student has the same IEP goals for 2 or 3 years. Stetson works on quality standards for self-contained classrooms as well. If what a student receives wastes time (like movies, work sheets, etc.), he or she will regress. When kids are without technology or accommodations, they can’t achieve. The Hechinger Report (2017) suggests that at least 90% of all students should be able to master on-grade curriculum content.  Adequate staffing for inclusion  No matter where Stetson goes, schools say they are understaffed. In the Hawaii cohorts of Hui Pu, the staffing ratio is actually 1 adult to 5 kids. Compared to national standards, Hawaii staffing is incredibly rich. This presents an exciting opportunity to expand inclusive instruction once there is adequate teacher training in instructional strategies.  Questions/comments from members and guests  Q. In addition to the data collected in the learning walk, what other student data are you collecting? A. Mastery in ELA and math, grade level learning, percentages of students who are spending time in self-contained classrooms (more than 40% of school day). We collect the most current data on a plot chart. The exciting thing for Hawaii is to refine the transition skills when students transition to a new level, and see that they are able to enter a school with inclusive practices.  C. SEAC has long taken issue with the Strive HI indicator regarding the achievement gap, because it uses a High-needs Group to compare to students who do not have high needs. Special education students make up about one-fifth of this high needs subgroup and score significantly below students who are English Learners and students with an economic disadvantage on most academic assessments. Improved scores in the latter two groups can mask poor performance of special education students. A. I agree with the point you made. When we look at student performance, we look at disaggregated data. We believe inclusive practices help boost the achievement of every student in the school.  Q. What is the grade range of the schools you have worked with? Is it harder to include students in high |

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| **Dialogue with Frances Stetson (cont.)** | Questions/comments from members and guests (cont.)  school? A. That used to be the issue, but we have insisted that we will not train secondary schools separately. In Hawaii we have seen high schools that are doing exemplary work. Nationally, we sometimes see more exclusion in the elementary grades where they tend to pull kids apart more than in high school. Schools still need to maintain the full continuum of placement options for students who cannot benefit from being in the general education classroom with supports.  Q. Can you speak to the types of professional development and evidence-based practices that teachers receive through your technical assistance? A. We always need to look at individualized decisions around training rather than whole school instruction. Two of my favorite skills to teach are *multi-level instruction* and *instructional accommodations*. *Multi-level instruction* means that you plan a lesson around a subject on grade level, and then ask whether a particular student can participate as designed. If not, what Tier 1 strategies are missing? Would an accommodation make a difference? *Instructional accommodations* involve the use of technology and Universal Design for Learning, like providing a graphic organizer for a student. Hawaii students are way more behaved than on the Mainland, yet some may need Positive Behavior Supports.  Q. Have your services altered due to the COVID crisis? A. Yes! We closed our offices weeks ago, and there are now 18 staff who can’t get on airplanes. At the same time, it’s given us an opportunity to get excited about virtual learning, as well as small group and 1:1 training.  C. Kids with emotional/behavioral issues are not always successful in large general education classrooms, especially when teachers are not trained in how to structure a positive learning environment and how to de-escalate behavior. The more typical reason for referring a student out of the classroom is behavior. We have to individualize our decisions and recognize that some students may have a good FBA and BSP but still need an alternate setting or more therapeutic learning environment. |
| **Overview of Positive Behavioral Supports and Applied Behavior Analysis** | Alysha Kim, an Educational Specialist in Behavior Intervention in the Special Needs Section, provided a presentation on the “[Continuum of Behavior Supports and Applied Behavior Analysis](http://seac-hawaii.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/Continuum-of-Behavior-Supports-and-ABA-Presentation.pdf).”  HMTSS Tiers of Support  She explained that behavioral supports fall under the Hawaii Multi-Tiered System of Support with three tiers of interventions provided through a data driven decision framework.   * Tier 1 (Primary) consists of core classroom instruction and positive school culture and climate applicable to all students. * Tier 2 (Secondary) offers targeted and supplemental intervention to some students who benefit from small group interventions and more adult attention. |

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| **Overview of Positive Behavioral Supports and Applied Behavior Analysis (cont.)** | HMTSS Tiers of Support (cont.)   * Tier 3 (Tertiary) addresses the needs of relatively few students who need an individualized and intensive support process.   Behavior Support Plan (BSP)  A BSP identifies specific problem behaviors and supports, along with measurable goals to monitor progress. The BSP is typically implemented by the teacher and support staff.  Functional Behavior Assessment (FBA)  If behavior of concern persists, the team may want to consider an FBA that looks at functional relationships between behavior and environment. By law, the FBA must be conducted by a psychologist or Licensed Behavior Analyst (LBA) and parent consent is needed. Recommendations of FBAs may include additional developmental or functional assessments, modifying the current behavior support plan, or writing a Behavior Intervention Plan.  Behavior Intervention Plan (BIP)  A BIP can only be written by an LBA or psychologist and implemented by an ABA paraprofessional. It changes the behavior of the student by using antecedent and consequence interventions, and reinforcement of replacement behaviors. The BIP means that ABA Services are provided.  Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA)  ABA programs are prescriptive, comprehensive, intensive, and individualized. They require specially trained individuals to design, implement and monitor the behavior plan. All ABA programs must align with 7 dimensions—generalized, effective, technological, applied, conceptually systematic, analytical, and behavioral.  Purpose of ABA  ABA is intended to address severe behaviors and/or significant social-communication deficits that are getting in the way of a student’s learning or that of other students. Services are provided by a variety of providers including LBAs and psychologists and their graduate level supervisees, as well as Registered Behavior Technicians and paraprofessionals working under the supervision of a psychologist. The main thing that ABA paraprofessionals do is to collect data and provide supports.  Questions and comments by members and guests  Q. How do you rule out whether the behavior of a non-verbal student may be in response to a physical issue? A. If the cause of a behavior is hard to pinpoint, it may be something internal. That’s where a school will work with parents to rule out a medical issue. Data collection will be critical for that. The school should be working on communication deficits to help the student indicate some level of pain or discomfort. |

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| **Overview of Positive Behavioral Supports and Applied Behavior Analysis (cont.)** | Questions and comments by members and guests (cont.)  C. A recent memo regarding the determination of 1:1 support for a student seemed to focus on behavior only and not communication. A. Social needs and communication also should be considered. The memo was intended to have school teams look at whether supports were most appropriate. Sometimes a 1:1 is assigned all day for feeding or toileting but is not helping with social or behavioral issues. It may be more appropriate to provide intermittent support with a paraprofessional.  Q. So when a school writes 1:1 intensive instructional support, are they talking about an ABA professional? A. Yes, moving forward, when an IEP indicates IIS, it refers to an ABA paraprofessional. Adult support (for toileting, etc.) would be added as individual adult support.  Q. Does that limit the role to an RBT? A. The type of paraprofessional support should be in the listed in the clarification section of the IEP. Individualized support will be provided by an ABA paraprofessional. That was not the norm in the past.  Q. What would you suggest for a non-verbal child with autism with 1:1 support but no FBA or BIP? A. I would suggest that the IEP team look at his/her needs. What is the 1:1 doing with the student? Is the service effective and ethical? The school may want to do an FBA to see if the student needs ABA or other services.  Q. If you have an RBT, should there be identified goals and objectives in the IEP? A. Yes, there should be behavioral goals and objectives reflected in the Behavior Intervention Plan.  **Action: Alysha invited members to email her (**[**alysha.kim@k12.hi.us**](mailto:alysha.kim@k12.hi.us)**) with additional questions.** |
| **COVID-19 Updates** | C.J. Rice, the new Administrator of the Special Needs Section, provided an update on the following:  Supports to students with disabilities during school closures  C.J shared elements of a presentation that Annie Kalama, the Director of the Exceptional Support Branch, recently gave to HSTA members. Annie highlighted the four priorities of the Department in providing services to students with disabilities:   * *Staying healthy* – This includes no face-to-face instruction and allowing teachers and related service personnel to work from home when appropriate. * *Providing services* – Special education teachers and related services professionals have been told to implement the student’s IEP to the greatest extent possible in the context of enrichment learning which looks different than traditional school. * *Document your efforts* – Staff have been asked to keep records of parent communication and participation, accommodations and modifications to the student’s program, specific services provided, and feedback on how the student is progressing. |

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| **COVID-19 Updates (cont.)** | Supports to students with disabilities during school closures (cont.)   * *Comply* – IEP teams have been advised to do as much as can be done virtually regarding determining student eligibility, evaluations and holding IEP meetings. When it is not possible to complete an evaluation virtually or to hold an IEP meeting, parents and schools are asked to come to a mutual agreement to extend the timelines and document it through a Prior Written Notice.   Graduation Waiver and its impact on students with disabilities  The Board of Education granted the Department a waiver on graduation requirements for the 2020 graduating class in light of the COVID-19 pandemic and need to close schools for the 4th quarter. A memo is due out on Monday that will clarify understandings and supports regarding graduation.  Grades for all students for SY 19-20 will be determined through the 3rd Quarter. Seniors will have the 4th Quarter to try to improve a grade or earn credits needed for graduation. May 28th is final day to submit grades. If a student still has an incomplete grade, he or she will be given 10 extra days to try to meet course requirements. Students who need additional time to meet graduation requirements may be able to access virtual on-line summer school.  Compensatory services  Students on a certificate route who may be aging out due to their 22nd birthday will need for their IEP teams to meet prior to the birthday to determine if compensatory services are warranted. Extended School Year and compensatory services may be provided over the summer. The USDOE has not provided any clear direction regarding compensatory services.  Progress reports  4th quarter progress reports (final progress reports) will be submitted when final grades are due on May 29th. They will document what communication has taken place and what supports have been provided. When school resumes, teams will have an idea of where the student was at the end of May.  Website Resources  CJ encouraged parents to visit the Department’s COVID-19 information page that lists up-to-date announcements and documents as well as the Continuity of Education page that includes information for special populations.  Questions and comments by members and guests  Q. Has leadership been discussing the change of a student’s LRE while at home? A. We are waiting for a national response and guidance.  C. Windward District has been sending a blanket PWN to parents extending timelines and documenting parent input, before actually receiving parent input. |

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| **COVID-19 Updates (cont.)** | Questions and comments by members and guests (cont.)  C. Parents don’t have access to many of the documents and memos that teachers and other staff are receiving regarding service provision during school closures. A. I will ask if we can share some of these documents with parents and the public. Communication is very important.  Q. What is the Department doing for parents whose primary language is not English? A. The EL program has been working diligently to provide documents and information in different languages. They are working with partners and liaisons. |
| **SEAC Position on IDEA Waiver Options in CARES Act** | Susan Rocco shared an infographic she prepared entitled “No Additional Waivers Necessary Under IDEA” to inform members of a potential threat to IDEA. The CARES Act recently gave emergency relief funding to the USDOE for emergency responses to the COVID-19 pandemic. The Act contained an option for Secretary of Education Betsy DeVos to request a waiver from requirements of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. Numerous disability organizations including the Consortium for Citizens with Disabilities (CCD) have asked special education advocates to join them in urging no action on a waiver. SEAC members agreed to send a message to the USDOE endorsing the five recommendations from CCD specific to protecting student rights during emergency responses to the pandemic:   1. Continue FAPE for all students with disabilities, 2. Involve parents in all IEP team decisions, 3. Keep parents’ due process rights intact, 4. Ensure spending of federal funds adheres to IDEA requirements, and 5. Ask Congress for more funding for states and districts.   **Action: Susan R. will draft a letter to the USDOE citing SEAC’s support of the CCD position.** |
| **Review of March 13, 2020 Minutes** | Susan Wood suggested several minor corrections to minutes for typographical errors.  **Action: The minutes were approved as corrected.** |
| **Agenda Setting for May 22, 2020 Meeting** | Consensus on tentative agenda items included the following:   * Renewal requests for members with expiring terms, * Nomination and election of SEAC Officers for SY 20-21 * Due process update * Tentative schedule for SY 20-21 * Annual report discussion * Legislative update * Budget update (how money from the CARES Act will be spent) * Update on UH Recruitment efforts by Janet Kim. |

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| **Agenda Setting for May 22, 2020 Meeting (cont.)** | Members who are interested in serving on the Membership Committee are asked to get in touch with Susan or Amanda |
| **Infographic Work Groups** | Martha urged members to communicate with partners on their Infographic work group. By next meeting she will try to schedule a little bit of time for work group discussions. Amanda offered teams Zoom support for virtual meetings.  **Action: Members will email Amanda if they require Zoom support.** |