**SPECIAL EDUCATION ADVISORY COUNCIL**

**Minutes – October 8, 2021**

**9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.**

**PRESENT:** Virginia Beringer, Rebecca Choi (for Mary Brogan), Mark Disher, Martha Guinan, Kerry Iwashita, Amanda Kaahanui (staff), Annie Kalama (liaison to the Superintendent), Tina King, Dale Matsuura, Cheryl Matthews, Kiele Pennington, Carrie Pisciotto, Kau‘i Rezentes, Susan Rocco (staff), Steven Vannatta, Lisa Vegas, Jasmine Williams, Susan Wood

**EXCUSED:** Annette Cooper, Shana Cruz, Jennifer Leoiki-Drino, Mai Hall, Melissa Harper Osai, Scott Hashimoto, Melissa Johnson, Paul Meng, Ivalee Sinclair, Paula Whitaker

**ABSENT:** Sara Alimoot, Debbie Cheeseman, Rosie Rowe

**GUESTS:** Heidi Armstrong, John Baranello, Daintry Bartoldus, Willie Cadena, Will Carson, Patty Dong, Sue Forbes, Sandy Jessmon, Lori Morimoto, Merci Watanabe, Brikena White, Jacy Yamamoto

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| **TOPIC** | **DISCUSSION/ACTION** |
| **Call to Order/ Roll Call** | Chair Martha Guinan called the Zoom meeting to order at 9:03 a.m. and had members and guests identify themselves. |
| **Input from the Public** | Jasmine Williams posed several question to the Department from a family perspective:   1. Does HIDOE have any written protocol on how to maintain confidentiality during online IEP meetings? 2. Is there a written protocol/set of guidelines regarding the use of emails when communicating confidential (personally identifiable) information? If so, is the protocol shared with all school personnel consistently?   **Action: AS Armstrong offered to pull together what HIDOE protocols are and share with members.** |
| **SPP/APR Indicator 3 Discussion** | Jacy Yamamoto opened the discussion regarding Indicator 3 – participation and performance of students on statewide assessments. The presentation included changes to the reporting requirements for FFY 2020-2025, a description of what is measured, and longitudinal data from Hawaii to determine trends and areas of improvement. Jacy also offered a list of resources for more information.  IDEA Monitoring and Reporting  Brikena White reviewed the two main purposes of monitoring and reporting: 1) improving educational results and functional outcomes for students with disabilities, and 2) making sure that states comply with the program requirements. The Part B Tree of Influence was shared showing the correlation between each of the 17 indicators.  Assessment Results  Patty Dong reminded members that no assessment data on participation or performance was collected in SY 19-20 and data for SY 20-21 is not yet ready for distribution. That data will reflect a new requirement to provide separate participation rates for the reading and math assessment in 4th grade, 8th grade, and high school, rather than the old requirement of grades 3through 8 and high school. |

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| **SPP/APR Indicator 3 Discussion (cont.)** | Indicator 3A: Longitudinal Data from SY 15-16 to SY 18-19  Patty shared four years of 4th and 8th grade participation data for students with IEPs, students without IEPs, and all students combined. Students who take the alternate assessment are included within the special education data. The data shows participation for both reading and math decreasing over time with the lowest rate in 2018-19. The lower rate for 4th grade was still above the required threshold of 95% set by OSEP, but it dipped to 94% in 8th grade and averaged about 85% in 11th grade.  Indicator 3B: Proficiency Rate Against Grade Level Standards  This indicator measures performance. Like 3A, the new requirement for SY 20-21 reporting is to provide separate proficiency rates in reading and math for grades 4, 8, and high school. The results do not include students taking the HSA-Alt. Non-sped students showed an improvement over time in both reading and math proficiency, while sped students showed a small gain in math scores for 4th grade. 11th grade proficiency showed a higher increase in reading proficiency (to 12.6%), but math scores were very poor.  Indicator 3C: Proficiency Rate Against Alternate Academic Achievement Standards  This is a new indicator. Like 3A and 3B it applies to grades 4, 8 and high school. Sue Forbes from the Assessment and Accountability Branch asked members to look at the data trend over time. It shows a drop in proficiency in math and reading for all grades after a grade level metric was introduced in 2016-17. There was also a new metric introduced in 2018-19 called a *range performance level descriptor* that was more rigorous. When the metric and the assessment are changed, it can create very different results from one year to the next, making it difficult to make comparisons.  Updates and notices for the Alternate Assessment (HSA-Alt) in SY 21-22   * HIDOE is rolling out a Grade 5 HSA-Alt Interim Pilot to increase teacher and student familiarity with the test expectations. It will select one standard each from math, reading and science. The teacher will be provided ways to increase student access. Sue invited Martha and other interested members to attend the interim pilot training. * The HSA-Alt Code of Ethics has been updated to ensure that students have full access to the test materials and are provided sufficient time to respond. * HIDOE continuously monitors test participation to stay under the 1% federal cap. * Members are invited to the 2021 Stakeholder Meeting on Thursday, December 9th from 9 a.m. -12 p.m. Register at <https://bit.ly/AltStakeholder2021>.   Indicator 3D: Gap in Proficiency Rates for Children with IEPs and All Children  Brikena White reported that this is a new OSEP requirement for reporting proficiency rates for students with disabilities in grades 4, 8 and high school as compared to rates for all students. The gap will be reported for the first time for SY 20-21. A large performance gap is present for all three grades and subjects, posing a |

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| **SPP/APR Indicator 3 Discussion (cont.)** | Indicator 3D: Gap in Proficiency Rates for Children with IEPs and All Children (cont.)  serious concern and a call for more effective improvement strategies, both in Hawaii and nationally.  Plans for Setting Indicator 3 Baselines and Targets  At the meeting on December 10th, decisions will be made on targets and baselines for this indicator and others. OSEP sets the target for participation rates at 95% or above, but stakeholders will help set proficiency rates based on the longitudinal data.  Review of Improvement Activities for Indicator 3  Annie Kalama shared activities to improve student proficiency that HIDOE already has in place or is beginning to put in place. Annie expressed her appreciation for having both internal support plus the support of external stakeholders to help move through this process. She is also excited that the USDOE is focusing on vulnerable populations and addressing learning loss, because it provides more leverage to get the necessary supports for students with disabilities. Two of the initiatives targeting performance include:   1. The *Early Language and Literacy Initiative* will be rolled out to the Complex Areas in the near future. The Exceptional Support Branch hopes to use ESSER III funds to train Complex Area level literacy coaches with fidelity and coaching strategies. Only 50% or less of teachers in the field have received this kind of training. The two-year project training will demonstrate going into the classroom, looking for fidelity of instruction, reinforcing evidence-based practices and following up with progress monitoring and program evaluation. ESB is targeting six Complex Areas for Year 1. 2. *Professional Learning Communities with Complex Area special education teams* were begun by the MAC Branch last year, talking with each complex area about data for each school, and determining which grade levels have been impacted more than others. This year the PLCs will be drilling down to find the root causes of student data. MAC and ESB will also be helping them look at policy and practice, how staff is assigned, and how HMTSS and inclusion are implemented. The PLCs are creating intervention plans that could include working with the Office of Talent Management to recruit qualified folks or train teachers in literacy.   Universal supports will be offered to all schools including training on high level practices in the classroom. With supplemental IDEA funds, ESB is establishing priority areas for funding including 1) literacy & language, and 2) evidence-based practices in math.  Questions/comments from members and guests:  Q. You have presented four years of data. At any time do you look at a 5-year span? If students were in 4th grade and you get a score, 4-5 years later, you would see the same kids in 8th grade. A. We would have to see if earlier data is set for the same parameters, so that we are comparing apples to apples. |

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| **SPP/APR Indicator 3 Discussion (cont.)** | Questions/comments from members and guests (cont.):  Q. Does the lower participation rate for special education students in 8th grade math and reading, minimally affect the overall participation rate for all students, because SPED makes up only about 10% of the student population? A. Yes. We calculate the percentages by using the whole numbers of student groupings.  Q. Is the decrease of participation for students with IEPs in 11th grade proportionate to the decrease for general ed students? A. Yes, there is less participation as the grades progress for both sped and gen ed students.  C. I know that the federal government dings you on the annual determination, if you don’t maintain a participation rate of 95%. Are we going to go into improvement strategies to bring up the participation rate? A. Yes.  Q. Is there a look at a specific cohort over time regarding participation rates and how they did in 4th grade, 8th grade and 11th grade? A. We can explore that further. Previously there was a look at cohorts. It is more tricky because kids move in and out over time.  Q. Do you look at how the students do by grades on the assessment in addition to participation? A. This data is shared and schools have the ability to drill down to look critically at how students are performing in the different grade levels.  Q. Does HIDOE get to choose which grade level in high school to report on? A. Yes, HIDOE has chosen grade 11.  C. When we look at Strive HI data, we are looking at both students with IEPs who take the Smarter Balanced Assessment and the HSA-Alt, and therefore Strive HI data looks different than 3B data.  Q. Do the proficiency results include students who take the Kaiapuni Assessment of Educational Outcomes, KAEO (Hawaiian language immersion) assessment? A. No.  Q. Does KAEO offer an alternative assessment? A. No.  C. There is a huge disparity between proficiency for special education students vs. non-sped students, and it hasn’t been getting smaller over time.  C. In elementary school special education students are learning the basics in math. In high school you have to pass algebra and geometry in order to graduate. The severe drop in math proficiency scores in high school reflects a failure to be able to do algebra and geometry. A. Are you discussing alternate diplomas?  C. The difficulty in math in high school relates to an inability to understand reading and foundational math concepts. Students have to have a solid foundation from the beginning. As the students are going through grade levels, something is getting lost in the process.  C. It could also be the way information is presented between elementary and high school. Algebra can be |

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| **SPP/APR Indicator 3 Discussion (cont.)**  **`** | Questions/comments from members and guests (cont.)  taught very abstractly in algorithms, or it can be taught more basically using manipulatives and arrays and  connecting it to the applications.  Q. Will you be able to look at 4th grade level kids and follow them through these different tests over time? Does elementary school instruction keep in mind the goal of proficiency in the more demanding math in higher grades (not just one grade to the next)? A. We will explore the issue of cohort performance. The standards for lower grades are preliminary algebra.  Q. Was the more rigorous metric for alternative assessments introduced so that Hawaii can be compared with other states? A. We don’t have the exact same standards across the states, but there was a push to try to increase the rigor of our standards to have the highest expectations possible. It was about changing expectations for those kids. As teachers become familiar with these new expectations, it is anticipated that scores will improve.  Q. With the big decrease in alternate assessment scores and the new ways of looking at the assessment itself, are there other ways of justifying a lower percentage than 95%? A. There’s no specific target regarding proficiency, but 95% is the minimum target for participation. The most recent proficiency rates for the alternate assessment are much closer to the rates for all students.  Q. Are the *performance level descriptors* we are using to assess our student considered to be the *alternate academic achievement standards*? A. Almost. The *alternate academic achievement standards* are what are set in standard setting.  Q. Do we have a copy of those standards? A. The *range performance level descriptors* are the alternate academic performance expectations, and then the achievement standards are the cut scores—the difficulty of the items.  C. In the past, the positive performance on the alternate assessment has helped to bring up the overall special education proficiency rate. If these scores are starting to go down, they will bring down overall sped scores.  Q. What is the percentage of students participating in the alternate assessment compared to the percentage that opt out of taking the test? A. We have to keep the population of students taking the alternative assessment to 1% of the overall school population, and that represents about 10% of all special education students. There is no opt out policy, but there is parent refusal. We have been able to increase participation by developing an *early stopping* rule for non-responsive students.  Q. Will you be able to spread your literacy training to include all islands and districts? Yes. We plan to save training slots for neighbor island folks.  Q. Should we prepare folks to expect lower Smarter Balanced Assessment scores in December? A. Some of the data will be shared with the Board of Education in mid-October. The expectation is for a reduction in |

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| **SPP/APR Indicator 3 Discussion (cont.)** | Questions/comments from members and guests (cont.)  performance, due to the fact that many students were not in school part of the last two school years. SY 20-21 may be an outlier year, and we know we may have to do a whole lot more for our students.  Q. Did you develop the literacy training, or is it something you have acquired? A. We are utilizing the LETRS Program which is nationally vetted. General education teachers are using this program, too. We will be modifying and adapting it for students with disabilities. ESB has also been in discussion with UH regarding their literacy specialist program.  Q. Is there a parent component to this where once teachers are trained in literacy, they can have a workshop with parents to determine how they can help at home? A. We do need to revisit the parent component, and we would appreciate any ideas from our parent partners. |
| **Review of ESY Guidelines** | Annie Kalama introduced John Baranello from the Exceptional Support Branch to narrate a short presentation on the Extended School Year Guidelines. Annie also announced that her clerical staff are preparing the final ESY Guidelines for distribution and will try to send them to SEAC members before the end of the day. She also offered “office hours” for SEAC members the week of October 11th, should they have questions once they review the guidelines.  Parent-friendly version of the Guidelines  John Baranello reported that ESB put together updated guidelines for ESY services under IDEA. Input on the draft was received from SPIN, and the guidelines were vetted by the Attorney General’s Office. A parent-friendly presentation (posted on the SEAC website) was developed for discussion in a networking session at the SPIN Conference, as well as for posting on SPIN’s and HIDOE’s website. SEAC members reviewed the slides with John that covered an ESY definition, factors used in determining ESY eligibility, when decision-making for ESY occurs, data collection, and special circumstances. Parents and other IEP team members determine ESY goals and which services will be provided during ESY.  Roll-out for the field  Annie thanked SEAC for making ESY a priority for the school year. The concerns presented by SEAC last spring, including consideration of all five factors and the use of predictive data when determining ESY, were incorporated into the guidelines. A memo by AS Armstrong announcing the new guidelines will be going out October 8th, and ESB will be holding office hours for the District Educational Specialists. Training on ESY is a mandatory special education module that is currently being modified by Stetson & Associates to incorporate the new guidelines.  Questions/comments from members and guests  Q. In your training to the actual individuals who sit in the IEP meeting and help to implement it, do you |

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| **Review of ESY Guidelines (cont.)** | Questions/comments from members and guests (cont.)  offer any suggestions on how to think about this new information? It may not be the way they have been taught to think about this process and the traditional resources, so strategies are needed to reverse the mindset. A. This is the first step. It will be a systems change. Some folks in the field are already on board, but many do not share this understanding. Efforts to reinforce the change will include creating an infographic that both teachers and parents can access, so that they receive the same information.  C. For many years the district coordinates ESY services, not the schools. Someone will be assigned at the district who will review IEPs and put out a call to fill the teaching position. School level folks often don’t want to work over the summer, so other folks without experience are brought in to teach the students. A. There are a lot of logistical problems, including finding qualified persons to teach ESY. Exceptions can be made for qualified folks, but we may not want to use them too much. Some Complex Areas have moved to the model where every school is arranging for their own ESY services. I hope we can brainstorm different instructional models for ESY, so that we have more options to choose from.  Q. Have tools been developed to assist parents with the assessment components to determine the level of regression that MAY occur? Parents may have their own impression of what regression looks like while HIDOE may have a different standard. A. We haven’t considered a specific tool to monitor regression. What we can do is to include in the dialogue guide that will go along with the ESY infographic ideas about questions or pieces of evidence parents or teachers can bring to the IEP team discussion.  C. I commend the idea and effort intentions, but after having 2 IEP meetings in just these past 2 weeks, the mindset of teachers in my experience were not open to thinking differently, and specifically, proactively. A. This relates to the idea of re-learning—taking a different and fresh way of looking at things.  Q. Sometimes kids have a crisis right before school lets out. For example, they are diagnosed with a mental health disorder and may need counseling supports on an ongoing basis, but the team is unlikely to change an IEP that was developed months before to now include ESY services. Is this scenario addressed in the Guidelines? A. You can have an IEP any time during the year, and quarterly reports are offered every three months. If team members are seeing a new need, they should convene a meeting to discuss it.  Q. Is ESY being used to provide mental health or emotional health services? A. We have been reminded by OSEP that we need to consider mental health services for eligible students.  C. I've had students use ESY just for counseling, because it was a need.  Q. While going through this "change of mindset," from whom can a parent seek assistance, if the school is not changing their position? A. We always say to go through the chain of communication. If a parent thinks the team hasn’t considered all the ESY factors, s/he can to the District Educational Specialist and/or the Complex Area support team. |

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| **Review of ESY Guidelines (cont.)** | Questions/comments from members and guests (cont.)  C. My son has ADHD and the teacher is not receptive to addressing his learning skills with and without medications. I cannot see mental health being addressed any differently. A. For unique cases like this we encourage parents to please work with your child’s principal and DES who can reach out to my office, if additional support is needed.  Q. When do the Guidelines go live? A. Hopefully today.  C. SEAC can help the process of systems change move faster, if we get parents and folks we work with to understand the issues. |
| **ESY Infographic** | Martha introduced a new infographic that she, Annie, John Baranello and Amanda worked on as the ESY Guidelines were being finalized (see attached). Amanda reported that the group decided to highlight the six factors that should be considered every year, and is planning for a Q & A or companion document that goes into greater detail. Martha explained that the language used in IDEA--for example, “nature of the disabling condition”--is formal, but was retained in order to have the teacher and the parent use the same terminology.  Questions/comments by members and guests  C. I agree with keeping the same language for the six factors. I was recently reminded of the importance of “plain speak” to break down the phrasing, so maybe in the dialogue guide we can explain these factors in more family-friendly language. A. Yes, we agree. We have also talked about having examples.  C. I like that the language is close to IDEA, and then you simplify the terminology. When you say “there are 6 factors IEP teams consider annually for ESY eligibility,” will some parents assume that all six factors are needed? We should clarify that any one factor can enable eligibility, and it is not necessary to have a combination--like regression and recoupment. A. Hopefully, with the training that goes out to the field, that point can be reinforced. |
| **Announcements** | 1. Martha announced that Bernadette Lane has retired from the Department of Human Services, so SEAC is looking for a replacement for her from that agency to represent foster children who are IDEA eligible. 2. Amanda made an announcement regarding the SPIN Conference on October 23rd from 9:00 – 1:30 p.m. on Zoom. Interested members can go to spinconference.org to register for nine live workshops, two recorded workshops and three networking rooms. 3. Susan Wood announced three workshops sponsored by Parents for Public Schools Hawaii and the Department of Education. Susan will send out a flyer next week.    1. October 27th – Introducing Learning Styles    2. November 30th – Barriers to Learning and Learning Supports at Home    3. December 15th – Parent Engagement and Leadership in Advocacy. |

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| **Announcements (cont.)** | 1. Tina King from Leadership in Disabilities and Achievement of Hawaii (LDAH) announced the following events. Anyone can register to attend on Zoom.    1. The Parent Talk Café for October 8 will feature an hour of discussion with parents at 1:00 p.m. and a presentation by Verna Chinen covering academic assessments at 2:00 p.m.    2. The Parent Talk Café for October 15th will cover highlighting tools for assessments.    3. Three Family Focus Groups (October 15th, November 18th, and December 2nd) have been planned for parents of children 0-5 who are receiving or have recently utilized early intervention services. Interested families can attend the zoom meetings, fill out a survey or call LDAH for a conversation about their early intervention services. |
| **Review of Minutes for September 10, 2021** | Martha displayed a copy of the minutes with several minor corrections in red that were offered by Susan W. Lisa Vegas asked to have her name corrected in the Infographic Work Group section. Susan R. also shared that Carrie Pisciotto from the Early Intervention Section offered the following clarification in writing regarding the information shared by the MAC Branch on the use of the DAYC assessment: “I would like to clarify the statement that DOH is moving away from using the DAYC.  The DAYC is currently being used due to safe practices (it can be administered remotely through parent interview and standardized scores can be obtained).  A date to transition back to the Battelle has not yet been determined.”  **Action: The minutes were approved as corrected.** |
| **Agenda Setting for the November 12, 2021 Meeting** | The following items were suggested by members for inclusion in the agenda for the November meeting:   * A discussion led by the MAC and ESB Branches on Secondary Transition (Indicator 13) and Post-School Outcomes (Indicator 14), * A presentation on DVR services as they relate to Indicators 13 & 14, * Preparations for the December 10th SPP/APR meeting, * Progress report on literacy initiatives (including LETRS), * Update on COVID-19 Impact Services Plans, and * Infographic work.   Steven added that the preliminary planning for the December 10th meeting is to hold the meeting virtually during regular SEAC hours (9:00 a.m. to noon), and to have breakout rooms for the indicator discussions. |
| **Infographic Work Groups** | Certificate of Completion Guidelines  Susan W. began the discussion by reminding members that a two-page infographic, Diploma vs. Certificate of Completion, was drafted by Lisa Vega and Andrea Alexander and vetted by SEAC last school year. At the point that the infographic was sent to the Department of Education for review, the final release of the infographic was postponed until corresponding HIDOE guidance could be provided. A work group including Susan W. developed this guidance over the past few months and sent it to the AG’s Office for |

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| **Infographic Work Groups (cont.)** | Certificate of Completion Guidelines (cont.)  review (see attached). Annie received several questions from the A.G. After HIDOE addresses these comments, Annie suggests that they may need to work with the Monitoring and Compliance Branch to determine what official format the guidance document should take (for example, a new Board policy or addendum to an existing policy, revision to Chapter 60 Guidelines, etc.). In the meantime this guidance can be shared as a draft. Susan R. repeated SEAC’s hope that SEAC’s two-part infographic can be revised and distributed in the very near future to help families who are facing the requirement to select a graduation track for their child in middle or high school without fully understanding the implications of their decision. Lisa V. agreed to work on the revisions to the infographic with her new work group partners to ensure synchronicity with the new guidelines.  Partnering Using the 5 “C”s  Tina King and Kau‘i Rezentes reported that their group that also includes Scott Hashimoto discussed how best to roll out a dialogue guide. The infographic targets two different parties--families and DOE & providers—so they suggest designing the format as a series of questions that could stir up discussion on how partnership can be better utilized. Kau‘i added that the questions they developed grew out of a process of looking at each line with a new perspective. Their intent is to keep the discussion open, where stakeholders can ask their own questions. Tina shared the draft reaction questions from each of the 5 “C”s (see attachment). Amanda Kaahanui responded that the group will ultimately need answers to these questions—representing what the field thinks--to include in the dialogue guide. Kau‘i also shared input from Scott that his mental health supervisors found the infographic very user-friendly, easy to understand and helpful to families, and the dialogue questions were considered thought-provoking.  Feedback from members on Partnering Using the 5 “C”s  C. Parents are at different levels in understanding IEP terms; I suggest adding a question such as “Do you understand the terminology and jargon?”  Q. Since you have questions but no answers, is it correct to assume that the questions alone wouldn’t go out to families? A. We are hoping to use this list of questions in focus groups as a way of striking up a conversation about the infographic content and finding out what is happening in the field.  C. My understanding is that the facilitator of a dialogue session/focus group asks the questions and takes the information in.  Q. Do you feel the infographic is understandable as a stand-alone? A. Yes, we have shared it with others who found it easy to read and useful.  C. It is already posted on SEAC’s website. |

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| **Infographic Work Groups (cont.)** | Feedback from members on Partnering Using the 5 “C” (cont.)  C. The infographic is useful as a supplemental handout in parent partnership meetings.  C. I used the five main areas of partnership in the infographic for a presentation to the Ohana Family-Engagement Conference on family-school partnerships, and the information was well-received.  Infographic Work Group Assignments and Priorities  Amanda reviewed the Infographic “To Do” list created for the September meeting. Members who are not currently assigned a work group are welcome to volunteer to join one. Susan W. suggested using one of the HMTSS infographics (for professionals or for parents) to gather student feedback on social emotional support. |