

**SPECIAL EDUCATION ADVISORY COUNCIL
Draft Minutes – January 14, 2022
9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.**

PRESENT: Virginia Beringer, Mark Disher, Martha Guinan, Melissa Harper Osai, Scott Hashimoto, Melissa Johnson, Amanda Kaahanui (staff), Sandy Kakugawa (for Mary Brogan), Annie Kalama (liaison to the Superintendent), Tina King, Bernadette Lane, Jennifer Leoiki-Drino, Dale Matsuura, Cheryl Matthews, Paul Meng, Kiele Pennington, Carrie Pisciotto, Kau’i Rezentes, Susan Rocco (staff), Rosie Rowe, Steven Vannatta, Lisa Vegas, Jasmine Williams

EXCUSED: Annette Cooper, Ivalee Sinclair, Susan Wood

ABSENT: Sara Alimoot, Debbie Cheeseman, Shana Cruz, Mai Hall, Kerry Iwashita, Wendy Nakasone-Kalani, Paula Whitaker

GUESTS: Heidi Armstrong, Katherine Bui, Will Carson, Heather Chapman, Verna Chinen, Patty Dong, Linda Elento, Jason Gilkas, Amanda Hawkins, Sandy Jessmon, Janel Kamahale, Stacy Kong, Mandi Morgan, Cynthia Mew, Roxanne Rokero, Jennifer Ryan, Randy Scoville, Katherine Taylor, Merci Watanabe, Brikena White, Sara Wolf, Jacy Yamamoto

TOPIC	DISCUSSION/ACTION
Call to Order/	Chair Martha Guinan called the Zoom meeting to order at 9:03 a.m.
Introductions	Amanda Kaahanui took a roll call of SEAC members, and guests introduced themselves.
Input from the Public	Amanda expressed concern that some schools are not reporting their COVID numbers when they are sending out their letters to parents, and some schools are not reporting COVID case totals at all. Martha said she is concerned as well, after reading an article in the paper.
Announcements	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Susan Rocco notified members of a recent change to the Sunshine Law rules requiring a physical location for members of the public to go, if they want to provide testimony at a virtual public meeting. SPIN will offer the DCAB Conference Room beginning in March 2022. This option will be noted on future agendas. 2. Martha called attention to the December 2021 issue of the <i>SAP and SICC Newsletter</i>. The newsletter offers some great resources for State Advisory Panels (like SEAC) and State Interagency Coordinating Councils (the early intervention counterpart to SEAC). 3. Amanda made two announcements: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. The 2022 Annual Footsteps to Transition Fair is going to be held virtually via Zoom on Saturday, February 5, 2022. This year’s co-hosts are Honolulu and Windward districts, and the fair is open to everyone across the state. Interested persons are encouraged to sign up on the fair’s website: https://footstepstotransition.weebly.com. b. All but one of the SPIN Conference workshops from October 27th are captioned and ready to view at https://spinconference.org.
Follow-up Discussion to the SPP/APR Discussion on January 14, 2022	Martha explained that the stakeholder meeting was designed to promote authentic engagement with everyone, especially the community. The meeting was divided into five discussion groups to review APR data and proposed targets and to make suggestions regarding improvement activities.

<p>Follow-up Discussion to the SPP/APR Discussion on January 14, 2022 (cont.)</p>	<p>The discussion groups were as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• statewide assessment in English/Language Arts and Math,• preschool least restrictive environment (LRE) and outcomes,• parental involvement,• secondary transition and post-school outcomes, and• State Systemic improvement Plan (SSIP). <p>Many of the remaining 12 indicators were discussed in previous SEAC meetings.</p> <p><u>Focus on key indicators and building expertise</u></p> <p>Steven Vannatta explained that a key piece of engagement is not trying to take on the full array of 17 indicators, but rather concentrating on a few meaningful indicators that resonate with the community. The chosen indicators lead to improvement activities that will require further engagement with stakeholders, including families. Steven welcomed folks who were unable to attend the January 14th meeting to join in future discussions. Annie added that information was posted ahead of the meeting to further education on these topics. She thanked SEAC for creating a website with links to information and at-a-glance infographics on the indicators to be discussed, and emphasized the Department’s commitment to build stakeholder understanding and capacity to help solve challenges over time. She asked folks to remember that the APR Indicators are what OSEP uses to measure how successful we are in helping students succeed.</p> <p><u>Leading by Convening</u></p> <p>Steven shared the major components in the process of Leading by Convening that have been adopted by SEAC. At the beginning of each school year members identify several key topic areas to work on throughout the year, and then search for individuals and informational materials that would assist SEAC to grow its expertise in order to provide meaningful recommendations. At the same time, SEAC wants to invite more parents and community members into the conversation to explore improvements. “Doing the work together” is a sustained effort over the course of several years. The hope is that more stakeholders beyond SEAC and CCC members find the work relevant and want to participate in group problem-solving. SEAC members are encouraged to consider mentoring new participants regarding the SPP/APR process.</p> <p><u>Plans for moving forward</u></p> <p>Annie indicated that HIDEOE and SEAC began the process to develop champions for each program area including educators, parents and community members. The shared goal is that students will benefit from authentic engagement by networking, building knowledge, tracking progress, collaborating and celebrating. While HIDEOE regulations and procedures do not always allow great flexibility, the department does need other stakeholders to come with new ideas, thinking out-of-the-box, in order to reach the ultimate goal of transformation. One idea is to promote collaborative work groups like the Post-Secondary Work Group</p>
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<p>Follow-up Discussion to the SPP/APR Discussion on January 14, 2022 (cont.)</p>	<p><u>Plans for moving forward (cont.)</u> that has put together an action plan. Another is to create advisory groups, for example an advisory group to monitor the action plan developed by the Deaf and Hard of Hearing Task Force. A third idea is to have breakout sessions during SEAC agendas to discuss indicators, give updates and share ideas. A fourth idea is to build on the infographic practice SEAC has adopted by creating infographics and dialogue guides around key indicators.</p> <p><u>Questions/comments from members and guests:</u> C. The Monitoring and Compliance Branch (MAC) put a lot of work into developing presentations on all 17 indicators and soliciting stakeholder input on targets and improvement activities through surveys available on the HIDOE website. Q. How much input did you get from the public? Do you think parents and other stakeholders were aware of this opportunity to contribute to the development of the Annual Performance Report? A. (Brikena White) We have received some responses, and we are in the process of putting those together and reflecting them in the SPP/APR document. She will share with SEAC when it is completed.</p>
<p>Part C SPP/APR Highlights</p>	<p>Stacy Kong from the Early Intervention Section (EIS) shared a presentation of highlights from the Part C Annual Stakeholder meeting. The meeting began with EIS’s mission statement: “Part C early intervention builds upon and provides supports and resources to assist family members to enhance children’s learning and development through everyday learning opportunities.” They also have adopted the key principles of providing early intervention services in natural environments to guide the work that they do.</p> <p><u>Impact of COVID on the EIS system of care</u> EI services continued throughout the pandemic but shifted to telepractice. Initially, there was a 13% decrease in referrals. Evaluations were done by interview, and children were presumed eligible because EIS was unable to administer the Battelle Developmental Inventory. A COVID Task Force was formed to help develop in-person guidance, and as a result, Maui was able to provide in-person services in August 2019. On April 1, 2021, EIS moved to an array of in-person, telepractice or blended services. Referrals are now above the 2019 pre-pandemic level. Stacy invited members to access Part C data and reports by going to the EIS website.</p> <p><u>APR Determination</u> Hawaii Part C fell into the ‘needs assistance’ category which requires EIS to access technical assistance.</p> <p><u>Part C Indicators</u> These 11 indicators differ from Part B indicators and fall under either compliance or results. Indicator 8 is about complete and timely transition plans to the HIDOE preschool program that must be in place 90 days to 9 months prior to the child’s 3rd birthday. It measures three transition activities: transition planning for every ISFP, timely notification to HIDOE (unless the families opt out), and timely transition conferences (unless the families opt out). All three activities showed slippage related to COVID factors.</p>

<p>Part C SPP/APR Highlights (cont.)</p>	<p><u>Stakeholder input</u> In addition to holding two SPP/APR stakeholder meetings, a Padlet was posted publicly to allow for more input. EI is always looking to include more stakeholders in their SPP/APR process. LDAH partnered with EIS to do family focus groups, but the number of engaged families was very low. Next year, EIS will hold focused stakeholder meetings from August through October grouped by individual indicators, like transition. This will hopefully encourage community partner agencies and family members to attend those meetings in which they are most interested.</p> <p><u>Input from SEAC</u> Carrie Pisciotto, SEAC’s representative from the Early Intervention Section, said they would appreciate any ideas on how EIS might attract more families to the SPP/APR process. If SEAC members have ideas and/or would like to join a Part C work group, please email Stacy (stacy.kong@doh.hawaii.gov).</p> <p><u>Questions/comments from members and guests</u> C. HIDOE made a decision a year ago to bring kids with more significant needs back on campus for in-person learning. Q. Is the reason that EI didn’t move to in-person services sooner because you are serving infants and toddlers in the natural environment—in their homes or at daycare centers, etc.? A. It was because we were going into the family’s space, and we needed to guarantee that we could maintain the required 6-foot distance, and that the family had taken the necessary safety precautions in order to protect the health of both the family and the provider. We put safety guidance in place and opened up in-person services April 1, 2021. Now, while the Omicron surge is happening, families are more knowledgeable about telepractice when there is a need to isolate family members. If a child hasn’t been making progress with remote services, a provider should do an in-person observation to find out what is needed. The pandemic has taught EIS about the importance of proper coaching techniques, especially when communicating with families online. Overall, family feedback about their services has been very positive. C. I appreciate that you bring up the shift that needs to occur in COVID times of re-thinking interventions and alternative ways for assistance, and helping families do the work that as needed rather than doing it for them. We have always wondered why in high school, families sometimes don’t have a vision of their child contributing to the community. Building a foundation early and engaging families in doing the work together will have a positive impact on transition and parental expectations down the road.</p>
<p>COVID Policies Update</p>	<p>Annie Kalama reminded members that HIDOE is continuing to prioritize in-person learning. When families are requesting distance learning, it is an IEP team decision to determine if that is a viable model of instruction for the student. Staffing and bussing have been issues, sometimes resulting in closures. Schools have contingency plans they can fall back on.</p> <p><u>ESSER III Budget</u> The Board of Education approved HIDOE’s request last month to use some of these funds for COVID</p>

<p>COVID Policies Update (cont.)</p>	<p><u>ESSER III budget (cont.)</u> Impact Services. The field is addressing the impact of the pandemic on learning loss and have the funds to provide additional services, if needed.</p> <p><u>Health Concerns</u> Jennifer Ryan, Administrator in the Health Section, provided updates on new guidance from DOH on Isolation and Quarantine. The quarantine period has been reduced from 10 days to 5 days with some nuances. DOE has also developed a flyer entitled <i>Return to School/Work and Daily Wellness Check</i> that can be a cheat sheet for families to know what schools expect. The general themes are that COVID guidance depends on age, vaccination status, the type of activity, and the ability to wear a mask.</p> <p><u>Questions/comments from members and guests</u> C. I wish that HIDEOE would provide N95 masks to teachers. A. Currently the CDC does not recommend the use of KN95 or N95 masks for use in schools. Rather they are recommending a two-layer mask or surgical mask, if working close to the student. Most important is a good fit and making sure that you can wear the mask all day. KN95s may provide additional protection, but there is less regulation of the product as compared to medical grade N95s. At the federal level, new masking resources may become available soon. C. We have heard that the Biden administration is planning to provide schools with millions of COVID test kits. Q. Do you have any idea when they might be distributed? A. The kits will be distributed through the Department of Health. Jennifer is meeting with them today to learn about the process to order the appropriate number and how to best administer these point of care tests (not the kind you send home in a backpack). We need to develop a testing plan and also understand how these additional test kits integrate with existing testing on campus. There may be more information available by SEAC’s next meeting.</p>
<p>Overview of DVR Services to Students with Disabilities</p>	<p>Cheryl Matthews characterized DVR as the state’s employment agency for individuals with disabilities. While they do their best to meet the needs of their participants, they are also required to meet the needs of the employers. DVR is federally funded with a state match. Some of their services require consideration of personal resources or benefits. DVR is not an entitlement program like DOE although they are funded by the same U.S. Department of Education. Services must be approved by a DVR Counselor through determination of eligibility and development of an Individual Plan for Employment (IPE).</p> <p><u>DVR Mission and Vision</u> The mission is to help participants achieve their hopes and aspirations for meaningful competitive employment through timely and individualized VR services, and DVR’s vision is to move forward to work.</p> <p><u>Acronyms</u> Cheryl pointed out several acronyms commonly used by DVR: <i>SWD</i> is a student with a disability between</p>

<p>Overview of DVR Services to Students with Disabilities (cont.)</p>	<p><u>Acronyms (cont.)</u> the ages of 14-21, enrolled in an educational program, or a student 18-22 enrolled in a post-secondary program/college. <i>YWD</i> is a youth with a disability between the ages of 14-24 who is not enrolled in school.</p> <p><u>Case services process</u> The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) requires DVR agencies to establish and offer a new case type for potentially eligible students. This is where DVR provides the bulk of pre-employment services. The second type of service is for adults or students requiring individualized services. DVR is in a current <i>order of selection</i> meaning that all clients are put in a waiting list based on their disability category. Currently only the top category is open, and there is about a three-month wait for those services.</p> <p><u>Pre-Employment Transition Services</u> Pre-ETS are group services offered to students as young as 14. Staffing shortages and funding limit DVR’s capacity to be in every high school. The pandemic restrictions on some campuses have also required virtual services. Cheryl recommends that parents advocate for DVR services through the IEP team. If a student has employment as a transition goal, the IEP team should be promoting DVR to provide a continuum of services needed for their career aspirations. Each school has been assigned a DVR counselor who can attend IEP meetings with parental consent. The emphasis is on having a counselor at the initial and exit IEP meetings to help coordinate transition planning and link the student to post-secondary supports.</p> <p><u>Eligibility Determination</u> To be eligible for individualized DVR services a student must have a documented physical or mental disability that results in a substantial impediment to employment. That means the student cannot complete the process of preparing for, securing, maintaining and regaining employment on their own. DVR counselors also try to assess whether the participant can benefit from DVR services to achieve competitive employment.</p> <p><u>Substantial Impediments to Employment</u> There are seven domains that may pose a barrier to employment including mobility, communication, work skills, work tolerance, interpersonal skills, self-care and self-direction. If information is older than five years, DVR may look for additional documentation. Because DVR is in a current <i>order of selection</i>, participants are evaluated for the severity of their disability and fall into one of three priority categories—most significantly disabled, significantly disabled or not significantly disabled. Cheryl encourages parents and teachers to use the seven domains to help prepare students for employment and instill good work habits—like introducing chores and encouraging the student to perform his/her own personal care.</p>
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<p>Overview of DVR Services to Students with Disabilities (cont.)</p>	<p><u>Individualized DVR Services</u> Students can move from limited Pre-ETS to a full array of individualized services. Many of these services are provided by contracted providers and must be approved by a DVR counselor. Maintaining good communication with the family or guardian is essential for good employment outcomes. The student’s support network, including the school team, can help identify what services may be needed.</p> <p><u>Point of contact for DVR</u> While students are still in school, this contact is usually the VR counselor assigned to the high school. When there are staff shortages, like on Hawaii and Kauai, the contact is sometimes the Supervisor or Branch Administrator.</p> <p><u>Training opportunities</u> There are paid and unpaid work experiences out in the community. DVR involvement comes more into play when the student is ready to go off campus. DVR counselors are exploring how to work with Career and Technical Education to identify how to build a pipeline to identify needed modifications. DVR supports and encourages students to make informed choices about their career pathways.</p> <p><u>Questions/comments from members and guests</u> Q. May a 504 student be referred to DVR and qualify for services? A. Absolutely. Q. Can DOE request assessments to be done by DVR? A. Only if it is for eligibility purposes for DVR services. Q. I was informed that a cognitive assessment is usually conducted at the age of 16 by DVR. If an assessment was conducted one or two years prior, would another assessment need to be conducted again once the student turns 16? A. If I were on that case, that would be sufficient. I would also want to make sure that there haven’t been any current changes. C. Some schools are not willing to disclose subtest scores. My son is in 9th grade. In the future he may get better scores once pandemic restrictions are over. A. DVR is looking for a variety of sources in order to determine eligibility. The clearer the picture can be made to the counselor and documented, the better the eligibility outcome. DVR can also do a psychological assessment if needed. C. It is hard to get these evaluations for incarcerated general education students with a disability. A. Currently, due to the pandemic, we are serving incarcerated youth as potentially eligible and waiting for them to be released before planning any formal assessments for them. C. When students come to Olomana, I check to see if they have an IEP and do a Pre-ETS form. Before they leave, I apply for the full VR, so that the services would be available to them. It is easier to get the information for students who are locked up than students in the day program.</p> <p>Action: Cheryl’s presentation and assorted flyers will be posted on the minutes page of the SEAC website for review by members and other interested parties.</p>
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<p>Review of Minutes for November 12, 2021 and December 10, 2021</p>	<p>There were no changes to the November 12th or December 10th minutes offered by members or guests. Susan R. said that she is still in the process of verifying all who attended the December SEAC/SPP Stakeholder Engagement Meeting and may add additional names to those minutes. Action: Both sets of minutes were approved as circulated.</p>
<p>Agenda Setting for February 11, 2022 Meeting</p>	<p>Martha shared that SEAC has been invited to participate on the advisory group to the Superintendent Search Committee. The Committee is seeking to set the criteria on which the candidates will be evaluated. Martha asked for SEAC input to ensure that the needs of students with disabilities and their teachers and school personnel be included. Send Martha or Susan an email as soon as possible. Martha also suggested putting it on the agenda for discussion in February. Other suggestions included the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Legislation and HIDOE’s budget request, • HIDOE policies and practices relating to FERPA and HIPAA for students with disabilities in the age of email and virtual meetings, • Report by the Post-Secondary Work Group, and • Infographic Work Group meetings.
<p>Infographic Work Groups</p>	<p>Martha asked if any members would like to work on a new group related to the SPP/APR indicators. Susan R. suggested two possibilities: 1) combining a work group on the SSIP (Indicator 17), with the work group on early literacy to update information on their two infographics to the most current improvement strategies, and 2) creating a group around suspensions (Indicator 4) to promote alternatives to suspensions. Amanda pointed out it might be efficient to determine which of the infographics actually need a dialogue guide to elicit more input and buy-in from stakeholder groups.</p> <p><u>Work group reports</u></p> <p>Members joined small group discussions and came back together to report the following progress:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>The Five “Cs” of Partnership</i> – Scott Hashimoto reported out for his group that includes Tina King and Kau’I Rezentes. Their infographic is self-explanatory, but the group has come up with questions around each of the five partnership domains. They plan to give the questions along with the infographic to stimulate discussion. Susan R. pointed out that one goal of a dialogue guide is to generate ideas that return to SEAC for reflection and action and asked if it might be a good idea to add a mechanism for individuals who respond to the questions to provide feedback to SEAC. Scott and Tina agreed that it would be helpful to have a feedback link. Martha suggested putting the link on the SEAC website alongside the infographic. • Martha and Rosie met regarding <i>Extended School Year</i> but didn’t have time to make any decisions. Susan R. suggested looking at the Q & A document from the ESY Networking Session at the SPIN Conference for potential ideas. The group invited Sandy Jessmon to join in future work.

- Lisa Vegas reported for the *Certificate vs. Diploma* work group. They are beginning to work on a dialogue guide while they wait for the final guidance on the Certificate of Completion from HIDOE.
- *Hawai'i Multi-Tiered Systems of Supports* - Steven Vannatta said he, Paul, Cheryl and Susan R. spent their time updating each other on the work that had previously been done on the parent version of the HMTSS infographic.
- Mark Disher was the sole participant of the *IEP Team Members* work group meeting, and he plans to get together with Amanda to create a Q & A document.
- Jasmine and Jennifer engaged in an initial discussion about *Are You Concerned About Your Child's Behavior?* but felt lost without Susan W. as an anchor. Jasmine will capture their discussion points to send to Susan W. for her ideas.

Amanda suggested that by the next meeting SPIN try to organize links on the SEAC website to each infographic, along with historical notes, and templates of a dialogue guide and a Q & A document. That will help work group members find all the relevant documents when they meet.