

**SPECIAL EDUCATION ADVISORY COUNCIL**

**Minutes – August 2, 2024**

**9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.**

PRESENT: Kathie Awaya, Virginia Beringer, Mark Disher, Nancy Gorman (for Paul Meng), Martha Guinan, Amanda Kaahanui (staff), Kupu Kaniho (liaison to the Superintendent), Tina King, Cheryl Matthews, Trish Moniz, Wendy Nakasone-Kalani, Chris Pelayo, Kiele Pennington, Susan Rocco (staff), Rosie Rowe, Steven Vannatta, Lisa Vegas, Jasmine Williams, Susan Wood  
EXCUSED Will Carlson, Annette Cooper, Melissa Johnson, Dale Matsuura, Siena Molina

ABSENT: Mai Hall, Kau’i Rezentes, Scott Shimabukuro, Herbert Taitingfong

GUESTS: Doug Akiona, Michelle Arakawa, Alina Ashton, Marlene Asuncion, Kevin Cochran, Kauai Correa, Chad Domingo, Patty Dong, Alison Eby, Naiah Hart, Tara Hathaway, Trisha Lutzen, Lori Morimoto, Alecsander Olipares, Trent Orika, Lynn Romero, Che Silvert, Teri Tabiolo, Brikena White, Jacy Yamamoto

<b>TOPIC</b>	<b>DISCUSSION/ACTION</b>
<b>Call to Order/Welcome</b>	Chair Martha Guinan called the meeting to order at 9:03 a.m. and read a statement regarding the right of guests and members of the public to present comment or testimony on each agenda item prior to deliberation by the Council.
<b>Introductions and Member Reflection</b>	Martha asked members to introduce themselves and the constituency they represent and give a one-word answer to “Why I Serve on the Special Education Advisory Council (SEAC).” She also invited guests to offer their one-word description of their motivation to join the meeting. 38 responses were received. <b>Action: Amanda Kaahanui created a <a href="#">word cloud</a> using the offered words as a reminder of SEAC’s potential.</b>
<b>Input from the Public</b>	There was no written or oral input from the public.
<b>Announcements</b>	Martha announced that Superintendent Hayashi has approved SEAC’s recommendation to appoint the following members to SEAC for a three-year term: Trish Moniz (Honolulu District parent), Herbert Taitingfong (Leeward District parent), Siena Molina (Homeless Concerns Office) and Will Carlson (Maui District Educational Specialist from the Molokai Complex). Susan Rocco announced that two parent members resigned over the summer—Kaili Murbach and Jennifer Leoiki-Drino—and Debora Uyeda will soon be replaced as Mary Brogran’s designee from the Developmental Disabilities Division.
<b>2024 OSEP Determination</b>	Kupu Kaniho and Brikena White shared information about <a href="#">Hawaii’s Final Determination Letter</a> that arrived at the end of June. They began their presentation by sharing an inspirational video of a Special Olympic swimmer named Victoria Smith whose story reinforces the Department’s conviction that our differences give us hope.

<p><b>2024 OSEP Determination (cont.)</b></p>	<p><u>State Performance Plan/Annual Performance Report (SPP/APR)</u> Brikena reviewed the process that the Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) uses to hold states accountability for compliance with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act as well as positive outcomes for students with disabilities. States develop a six-year State Performance Plan (SPP) and submit an Annual Performance Report (APR) on data and targets for 17 indicators that describe the state’s efforts to implement the requirements and purposes of IDEA. The recent determination is based on indicator data included in the <a href="#">SPP/APR for FFY 2022</a> that was submitted in February 2024. Hawaii scored 65% on the <a href="#">Part B Results-Driven Accountability Matrix</a> resulting in a determination of “Needs Assistance” along with 37 other states. Hawaii received the maximum score on compliance indicators, except for Indicator 13 - Secondary Transition. However, Hawaii received only 40% of the possible points for results indicators based largely on lower scores for proficiency and participation in Hawaii’s Smarter Balance Assessment and the National Assessment of Educational Progress. The state also lost a point each for graduation and dropout rates by not being in the top one-third of states.</p>
<p><b>MAC/ESB Priorities for SY 24-25</b></p>	<p>The Monitoring and Compliance Branch and the Exceptional Support Branch have set eight priority areas to work with SEAC in the new school year. Seven are SPP/APR Indicators: <i>discipline, preschool LRE, preschool outcomes, State Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP) dispute resolution, parental involvement, and secondary transition.</i></p> <p><u>Communication</u> The eighth priority is to <i>increase communication</i> with parents and educators through three activities: Gathering input from parents through surveys on various topics, Publicizing HIDEOE conferences and encouraging DOE personnel to co-present with community organizations like HABA, HSHA and SPIN, and Improving digital access to knowledge and current information to engage parents in planning and decision making.</p> <p><u>Dispute resolution</u> Brik reported the marked increase in SY 23-24 in the use of mediation (23) and the filing of written complaints (47) while the number of due process complaints dropped to 39. Dispute resolution plans for SY 24-25 include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Finalizing the Procedural Safeguards Notice (PSN),</li><li>2. Creating companion material on the PSN and a summary document to use when explaining information to parents,</li></ol>

<p><b>MAC/ESB Priorities for SY 24-25 (cont.)</b></p>	<p><u>Dispute resolution (cont.)</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>3. Initiating a request for proposals for IEP facilitation to be provided at no cost to schools or parents, and</li><li>4. Partnering with SEAC, LDAH and SPIN to provide training on the PSN to parents.</li></ol> <p><u>Discipline</u> New strategies will include: Developing a Guide for Alternatives to Suspensions, Revising administrator training to include restorative and preventative practices, Increasing Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBISS) practices and trainings, and Increasing Here to Help Schools to foster student well-being and adequate resources.</p> <p><u>Preschool LRE and preschool outcomes</u> To improve results for these two indicators, the State Interagency Group is planning activities to create guidance documents and professional development to help IEP teams make good preschool placement decisions and clarify critical program requirements and enrollment processes for Executive Office of Early Learning classrooms, HeadStart, Child Development Centers, Charter Schools, private preschools, and daycare providers.</p> <p><u>State Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP)</u> With the continued focus on early literacy, HIDEOE is getting technical assistance from the American Institute for Research and relying on coaching strategies that support the acquisition of skills to increase reading and writing proficiency.</p> <p><u>Parental Involvement</u> A new <a href="#">parent survey</a> with 11 questions + demographic questions was crafted last school year by a work group with technical assistance from Cesar D’Agord. An online platform has been developed to make the survey more accessible for parents. SEAC members were asked to encourage parents to take the survey. Additionally, Mr. Merced will provide another training for parents in SY 24-25, and ESB and MAC will be working with the Community Children’s Councils to build their capacity around special education.</p> <p><u>Indicator 13 – Secondary transition</u> Hawaii has been making slow gains on improving results for secondary transition which is measured using the NTACTION: C Indicator 13 Checklist. The lowest checklist scores relate to transition services lacking a course of study that will reasonably allow the student to meet his postsecondary goals.</p>
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<p><b>MAC/ESB Priorities for SY 24-25 (cont.)</b></p>	<p><u>Indicator 13 – Secondary transition (cont.)</u> Continuing to build capacity in this area will include continued training and follow-up support to school and complex area staff, finalizing the VR Services Guide for Teachers and offering students work-based learning projects. <u>Questions/comments from members and guests</u> C. SEAC needs a mechanism to compare special education graduation rates with non-disabled student graduation rates. ESB or MAC could apply the OSEP formula utilizing exit data to non-disabled students to compute a graduation rate that could be compared to SPED. A. MAC will do that in the future. In the meantime, the Accountability Data Center (ADC) has a comparison using a 4-year adjusted cohort for comparison. Q. Do you think the drop in due process hearing requests is related to the lack of plaintiff attorneys? C. SEAC is recommending that the preschool state interagency group set a priority goal to include more kids with IEPs in regular Pre-K classrooms or mixed HeadStart/DOE classrooms.</p>
<p><b>SEAC Responsibilities</b></p>	<p>Martha reviewed the <a href="#">SEAC Member Responsibilities infographic</a> to remind members to represent their constituency in discussions, attend as many of the 10 meetings as possible, listen and honor other’s views, prepare for meetings, help produce infographics, recommendations and other materials and share information with others in their community.</p>
<p><b>How We Do Our Work: Leading by Convening</b></p>	<p>Susan Wood and Steven Vannatta reviewed the principles of Leading by Convening, the process that SEAC adopted in 2016 to address complex problems affecting the delivery of special education programs and services. The principles include ensuring relevant participation, coalescing around issues and doing the work together. <u>Setting annual priorities</u> Steven reminded members that the first meeting of the school year includes an exercise for choosing three to four topics to explore and work collaboratively with the Department of Education to address. Priorities for SY 23-24 included preschool and school-age inclusion, bullying, dispute resolution and secondary transition. The SEAC Leadership team proposed six topics for consideration in SY 24-25:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● secondary transition</li> <li>● staffing/personnel barriers</li> <li>● family co-training</li> <li>● discipline/suspensions</li> <li>● dropout rates</li> <li>● chronic absenteeism.</li> </ul>

<p><b>How We Do Our Work: Leading by Convening (cont.)</b></p>	<p>Susan Wood and Steven Vannatta reviewed the principles of Leading by Convening, the process that SEAC adopted in 2016 to address complex problems affecting the delivery of special education programs and services. The principles include ensuring relevant participation, coalescing around issues and doing the work together.</p> <p><u>Setting annual priorities</u></p> <p>Steven reminded members that the first meeting of the school year includes an exercise for choosing three to four topics to explore and work collaboratively with the Department of Education to address. Priorities for SY 23-24 included preschool and school-age inclusion, bullying, dispute resolution and secondary transition. The SEAC Leadership team proposed six topics for consideration in SY 24-25:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• secondary transition</li><li>• staffing/personnel barriers</li><li>• family co-training</li><li>• discipline/suspensions</li><li>• dropout rates</li><li>• chronic absenteeism.</li></ul> <p><u>Coalescing around priorities</u></p> <p>After small group discussions each member was given an opportunity to vote on the top topics. The following list includes the final areas/buckets and subtopics chosen in order of priority:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Discipline/Chronic Absenteeism/Dropout Rates<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ foster care children</li><li>○ safe schools (staff and students)</li><li>○ review and analyze 4140s</li><li>○ mental health</li><li>○ social emotional learning</li><li>○ parent engagement</li></ul></li><li>2. Secondary Transition<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ environments/community/businesses</li><li>○ extended learning to age 22</li></ul></li></ol>
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<p><b>How We Do Our Work: Leading by Convening (cont.)</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ diploma, GED &amp; Certificate of Completion</li><li>○ paid internships/work based learning</li><li>○ DVR utilization</li><li>○ IEP/transition planning</li><li>○ informed staff/staff and parent training</li><li>○ building capacity</li><li>○ PTP/CTE</li></ul> <p>3. Family Co-Teaching</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ availability of training in various modes—zoom/Facebook/YouTube, etc.</li><li>○ co-teaching (parents as trainers)/training together</li><li>○ across the spectrum</li><li>○ professional/parent</li><li>○ state/district</li></ul> <p>4. Staffing/Personnel Issues</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ shortages</li><li>○ safety of teachers</li><li>○ training</li><li>○ mentorship</li></ul> <p><u>Questions/comments from members and guests</u></p> <p>Q. How many of the buckets, if any, are carried over from last year? A. In the past, we haven't carried priorities over, but we certainly can, if necessary. Some priorities are systemic issues that may involve a multi-year process. We should be monitoring previous priorities, like legislative issues.</p> <p>Q. Do these buckets align with the OSEP performance report and the Monitoring and Compliance Branch's focus? A. Maybe. Family co-training is similar to the MAC focus on communication/parent involvement, and both have secondary transition as a priority.</p> <p>C. I am interested in the "staffing and personnel barriers" bucket. I'd like to see what is being done (or planned) regarding recruitment, retention, incentives, training, qualifications, etc.</p> <p>C. I think staffing and family topics are inclusive of secondary transition.</p>
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<p><b>How We Do Our Work: Leading by Convening (cont.)</b></p>	<p><u>Questions/comments from members and guests (cont.)</u></p> <p>Q. Is family co-training the support given to early intervention (EI) parents? Or is this parent training across the spectrum of age? Or was this family training alongside providers training—so everyone was learning/hearing the same thing?</p> <p>C. When looking at dropout data, you need to look at 4140s. Does DOE look at why these students are dropping out? Is the IEP not getting the support needed or thinking outside the box? A. Yes, we need to review why they are dropping out. We have the data.</p> <p>C. It is important to utilize different forms of media (i.e. YouTube) to offer parent training--not just in-person conferences during weekdays when families are working.</p> <p>C. More parent education is needed around the programs, so they can advocate, but also support from the IEP team to involve agencies and complete requests to ensure more participation.</p> <p>C. I work as a surrogate parent, and I see chronic absenteeism as a real issue for foster kids. When I look at their files, some have been absent for 60 or more days and nothing is done to intervene. The responsibility rests not only on DOE but also on Child Welfare, other providers and birth parents who need to work together for this group of students.</p> <p>C. I have been a resource caregiver, so I agree 100%.</p> <p>C. We serve incarcerated students at Olomana who are missing years of schooling due to suspensions, not fitting in at school, the IEP not meeting their needs, etc. They are way behind in their credits for graduation, so we get pressure from the students, and sometimes their parents, to help them get a GED. They don't want to go back to the schools where they struggled.</p> <p>C. Kids can be educated through age 21, but that knowledge is not available to parents or gen ed teachers who assume they age out at 18. Q. Why not offer them those extra years to make up their credits, receive job counseling, etc.?</p> <p>C. When talking about teacher retention, I think we ought to be focusing on teacher safety. My school's Vice Principal shouldn't be breaking up fights and risking getting hurt.</p> <p>C. For secondary transition, I think we ought to utilize DVR and work internship programs. They are currently difficult for youth to access due to funding and staffing issues.</p> <p>C. I would like to see more of a focus of how students are utilizing DVR services. They appear to be underutilized and understaffed.</p> <p>C. From a military perspective, I find family co-teaching a helpful concept.</p> <p>C. I think high school students with special needs are often seen as being different, not fitting in, resulting in many students being depressed. This can lead to chronic absenteeism and dropping out.</p>
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<b>Update on <i>Positions vs. Interests</i> Video Project</b>	Steven announced that the work group has finalized the video script and purchased video making and editing software called Create Studio that will hopefully be flexible enough to approximate Roger Wood’s cartoon renderings of the video main characters in the final animation. As soon as a draft of the video is available, it will be shared with the Council for constructive feedback.
<b>Review of Minutes for the May 10, 2024 Meeting</b>	Susan W. offered minor typographical edits to the draft minutes. <b>Action: The minutes were approved as corrected.</b>
<b>Agenda Setting for the September 13, 2024 Meeting</b>	Members offered the following suggested agenda items for discussion in September: Secondary Transition <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Jackie Freitas on Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs</li><li>• Division of Vocational Rehab (DVR) - engaging parents &amp; island wide services</li><li>• Contracts by the DVR (CRP) - Pina Lemusu &amp; Cheryl Matthew from DVR</li><li>• Suspensions/discipline data presentation (Part 2)</li><li>• What IDEA says about the topic we are discussing. What are the requirements?</li><li>• <i>Interests vs Positions</i> video update</li><li>• Infographics ideas.</li></ul>
<b>Discussion of New Infographic Topics</b>	Martha asked members to consider new topics for infographic work groups during the SY 24-25. Suggestions included the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Work-based learning</li><li>• Continuing education through to age 22</li><li>• Infographic on each bucket</li><li>• How to do co-teaching.</li><li>• How do families know about available programs</li><li>• How to fill out the transition page of the IEP--what goes into each column, etc.</li><li>• Components of the transition plan</li><li>• Family/school communication and partnership.</li></ul>
<b>SEAC Meeting Schedule</b>	Steven reviewed tentative meeting dates for the remainder of the school year. Adjustments to the normal 2 <sup>nd</sup> Friday of the month schedule were necessitated by Fall Break in October and a Tuesday, December 3 <sup>rd</sup> venue reservation for the annual SPP/APR Stakeholder Meeting.



<b>SEAC Meeting Schedule (cont.)</b>	<b>Action: Members agreed on the following meeting dates:</b> <b>September 13, 2024</b> <b>October 18, 2024</b> <b>November 8, 2024</b> <b>December 3, 2024 - SPP/APR/SEAC Meeting to be held at the Japanese Cultural Center</b> <b>Jan. 10, 2025</b> <b>Feb. 14, 2025</b> <b>Mar. 14., 2025</b> <b>Apr 11, 2025</b> <b>May 9, 2025</b> <b>Brik and Steven will inquire on the availability of the McKinley School for Adults venue for in-person meetings.</b>
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