**SPECIAL EDUCATION ADVISORY COUNCIL**

**Minutes – September 11, 2020**

**9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.**

PRESENT: Andrea Alexander, Debbie Cheeseman, Rebecca Choi (for Mary Brogan), Annette Cooper, Mark Disher, Martha Guinan, Scott Hashimoto, Amanda Kaahanui (staff), Annie Kalama, Tina King, Bernadette Lane, Cheryl Matthews, Wendy Nakasone-Kalani (for Bob Campbell), Kaili Murbach, Kau‘i Rezentes, Susan Rocco (staff), David Royer, Francis Taele, Steven Vannatta, Lisa Vegas, Jasmine Williams, Susan Wood

EXCUSED: Brendelyn Ancheta, Virginia Beringer, Tina King, Dale Matsuura, Carrie Pisciotto, Rosie Rowe, Ivalee Sinclair

ABSENT:

GUESTS: Sara Alimoot, Daintry Bartoldus, Lisa Craig, Linda Elento, Rumi Heine, Sandy Jessmon, Janet Kim, Sarah Man, Vanessa Ott, Kiele Pennington, Kelli Taniguchi, Albert Vargas, Paula Whitaker

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| **TOPIC** | **DISCUSSION/ACTION** |
| **Call to Order/ Welcome** | Chair Martha Guinan called the Zoom meeting to order at 9:03 a.m. and expressed the hope that all present are feeling well. |
| **Introductions** | Martha asked members and guests to introduce themselves. |
| **Input from the Public** | 1. Rumi Heine, a doctoral student in the UH Department of Special Education teacher preparation program for students with severe disabilities, thanked SEAC for allowing her to come and share her dissertation research. She is seeking parents of students with autism from age 7-17 to participate in her study training them how to implement a behavior analytic technique with their child using telehealth.   **Action: Rumi shared a flyer regarding her research. Martha asked interested parents to contact Rumi directly. Amanda will send out the study flyer again.**   1. Sandy Jessmon asked for clarification as to whether the care coordinator on an IEP is required to be certified in special education. She also questioned why some schools providing in-person instruction to students with disabilities are only offering classes Monday through Thursday. Annie Kalama explained that there is no state or federal requirement that a care coordinator has to be certified because their responsibility is not to provide direct services, although many care coordinators are also certified special education teachers. For the second question, Annie stated that schools have been allowed to choose their own instructional models. They need to be sure they have scheduled their in-person services, so that they are managing safety and health standards the best they can.   **Action: Annie offered to speak directly with Sandra or speak to her granddaughter’s school.** |
| **Announcements** | 1. Amanda Kaahanui announced that the SPIN 2020 Conference which was postponed in April has now been scheduled as a virtual conference for October 17th. It is a no cost conference offered on a Zoom platform with opportunities to visit exhibitors and ask questions of the |

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| **Announcements (cont.)** | presenters in real time. Martha added that SEAC will be one of the exhibitors, so if any  members would like to join her in the SEAC Zoom room, she would welcome the assistance.   1. Tina King announced that Leadership in Disabilities and Achievement of Hawaii (LDAH) would be holding its annual traveling mini conference virtually on October 16th from 1-4 p.m. 2. Amanda announced that SPIN has been working with Annie’s branch and other parent agency partners to produce infographics that correspond to special education requirements related to the reopening of schools. They can be found on the SPIN website under the infographic tab. Susan Rocco added that the infographic on definitions is one of the most important, because it allows IEP team members to have a common language and understanding of new terms in use. Heidi Armstrong expressed her appreciation for the infographics and shared her plan to disseminate them as widely as possible. As IEP meetings are held, schools will have a packet of the infographics available either digitally or by hard copy to give to parents. She also asked for assistance from the parent partnership organizations in getting the materials into the hands of parents. |
| **Review of the Minutes of the August 14th Meeting** | Susan Wood offered some minor corrections to typos in the minutes.  **Action: The minutes were approved as corrected.** |
| **Update on the Impact of COVID-19** | Annie covered updates and new information, current instructional models, related service delivery models, the timeliness of evaluations and re-evaluations, and assistive technology supports for distance learning.  New information and updates   * A decision was made to extend the Learn from Home phase of distance learning through the end of the 1st Qtr. while at the same time continuing to provide in-person services for vulnerable students. * A September 1st memo on specially designed instruction (SDI) and distance learning clarified that in order to provide FAPE, SDI must also be provided across all delivery models, including having a dedicated special education teacher assist students in full distance learning options, like Acellus. * A draft Homebound Placement memo is being prepared to clarify that this placement decision must be made by the IEP team, and any services provided must be in the home. When finalized it will be provided to SEAC members, as well as to LDAH and SPIN. * Quarterly Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) are being formed for special education teachers of students with significant disabilities to share evidence-based practices and review health and safety guidelines. They will begin in October by district. * Five mandatory special education training modules are now available online through PDE3. DOE has enlisted Stetson to do a professional recording and enhancing of these modules that include:   + Prior Written Notice,   + Extended School Year, |

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| **Update on the Impact of COVID-19 (cont.)** | * + IEP 101,   + Present Levels of Academic and Functional Performance, and   + Goals and Objectives.   Teachers will have until May 2021 to complete the modules.   * Annie’s office has been in collaboration with SPIN, LDAH, and the CCCs for the last few months to provide parent-friendly information that includes the infographics mentioned earlier.   Expectation of current instructional delivery models  During distance learning, schools must implement each student’s IEP through the provision of special education, related services and specially designed instruction to the greatest extent possible. This expectation also applies to students whose parents have opted for total distance learning.  Current Instructional Models  Annie thanked SPIN for working with our distance learning team at OCID on a common understanding of distance learning terms resulting in two infographics. She described the instructional models as follows:   * Distance Learning is learning that does not occur in-person. It can include live virtual sessions (like WebEx), paper packets and the use of messaging apps, and phone and video calls. * Face-to-face Learning is provided on the school campus. Priority is given to students with IEPs, English Learners and young students (Pre-K to 2nd grade). * Hybrid or Blended Learning is where students rotate between distance learning and face-to-face instruction. * Total Distance Learning requires a parent to opt-in to have their child receive instruction via a self-paced online curriculum. Students with IEPs are also provided with a dedicated special education teacher.   Asynchronous vs. synchronous instructional models  Synchronous is teaching in real time one-to-one or in a group. Students can interact with the teacher and classmates. During asynchronous learning the student works at his/her own pace via paper packets, instructional videos, online learning programs, etc.  Distance Learning resources  Annie shared a list of resources on a landing page provided for DOE teachers and related service staff. The list is in addition to any distance learning training provided to all teachers.  Review of related services  A statewide June 1st randomized audit looked at related service delivery via tele-practice, hybrid and in-person services. The graphic displays some of the most commonly used services. The largest percentage |

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| **Update on the Impact of COVID-19 (cont.)** | Review of related services (cont.)  of therapy received (81%) was for students who had speech-language therapy in their IEP. The percentages of students receiving the same or a portion of their services for other related services were 64% for occupational therapy and 53% for physical therapy. This review reflects services in the 4th quarter and last summer. Another audit is anticipated. Some of the challenges noted in the audit included scheduling, health and safety concerns, and communication with families.  Bright spots  Despite all of the challenges in delivering services during the pandemic, the Department received some positive feedback, particularly about tele-practice. Annie read a sampling of notes of appreciation. She acknowledged that tele-practice got off to a slow start, but the staff has worked diligently with families as shown by the positive testimonies. Parents report that they now understand their child’s needs better and how they need to help their child at home.  Timeliness of initial evaluations conducted  Data was collected between July, 2019 and three other points in time—May 1st, June 26th and September 8th. Evaluations were conducted within timeline 81.8%, 76.3% and 75.8% respectively. The timeliness was pretty good considering in-person services were just beginning. The Department will continue to work to improve the percentages.  Pending assessments by assessment type  Annie displayed another chart showing pending assessments by assessment type for initial and re-evaluations. There were significantly less assessments pending in early September, indicating that the Department is getting caught up.  Timeliness of IEPs  As of September 11th, 97% of students had updated or current IEPs. Schools are being advised to hold IEP meetings even though an annual IEP is not due, so a lot of meetings still need to occur this quarter. Some of the evaluations and IEPs are being delayed for the following reasons:   * Students need to be observed in their naturally occurring educational environment; * Some families don’t want to have an observation conducted in their home; and * There are scheduling conflicts.   Assistive Technology  Annie reviewed the IDEA definitions of assistive technology device and assistive technology service. Examples of AT devices include both high-tech tools (multiple functionality) and low-tech tools (single function). Typically, it is an occupational therapist who works with parents and the student using these devices. Both low tech and high tech devices can be incorporated into distance learning. There is a high |

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| **Update on the Impact of COVID-19 (cont.)** | usage of iPads that can also aid in communication. Schools are working with families to infuse AT into learning. Some AT for deaf and hard of hearing students includes remote interpreters, remote CART (communication access real-time translation), remote CAN (computer assisted note-taking), and captioning. Annie provided some links for AT and reading, writing, and math.  Questions and comments from members and guests  Q. With Total Distance Learning, parents and students opt in? A. Yes, and there is a form that they request that through.  Q. The instructional models chart doesn’t include the option of homebound services as a way of delivering services. Is it included under distance learning? A. Actually, it may be a combination of models, because we are delivering services that may be virtual or may be provided in the home to students whose IEP teams determine that homebound is the most appropriate placement.  Q. Where would that fit on your model? A. I’m not sure. Maybe it’s another column that describes that.  Q. Is asynchronous instruction teacher-assigned—the teacher tells them which program they should be using and gives assignments? A. Yes. Sometimes it’s a combination of sending home work sheets and assignments on an online learning platform.  Q. For families who don’t have printers at home or a way to get to and from school, are schools able to mail the packets to the home? A. Annie believes that they are. She encouraged families in this situation to reach out to their teacher or principal and make that need known to them.  C. It might be helpful to add homebound and home/hospital services as a separate column on the instructional models chart. A. That’s a good idea. Typically a student receives a homebound placement for significant emotional or medical reasons. Parents may be nervous about changing an IEP placement now, for fear that when schools offer in-person services again, their child won’t be able to go back to school, but placement is based on the student’s needs and is not permanent.  C. I recommend doing another related services poll as soon as possible to be sure services are being provided. A. It would be advantageous for Annie’s team to work on collecting data with the Monitoring and Compliance Office, because it is related to accountability.  C. Please address the importance of letting your child’s school know as soon as possible, if you want to schedule an IEP meeting. A. We’ve asked schools to hold IEP meetings during the 1st quarter, and we’ve asked them to prioritize scheduling the meeting, if a parent requests it.  Q. Why are schools changing IEP documentation of minutes from weekly to monthly? Does this have something to do with distance learning? A. Annie offered to research the issue.  Q. To be clear, home services are being provided, if they are outlined as having to occur in the home setting? A. Yes, assuming the IEP has determined that homebound is the appropriate placement. There is |

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| **Update on the Impact of COVID-19 (cont.)** | Questions and comments from members and guests (cont.)  no option for some of the services to be provided in the home and some outside the home. Annie offered a follow-up chat to get into more specific details.  Q. Some student assessments, like for gross motor issues, would be difficult to conduct virtually. How are you handling them? A. Some are not getting done, but over the summer, DOE used CARES funds to bring the assessors and IEP team in to the school and invited students to the school setting for assessment.  Q. Can you clarify when an FBA can or cannot be provided? A. Severe behavior is one indication that an FBA might be needed; however there are other instances where an FBA might be provided, for example when a student is not expected to respond to lower level practices, or the student has experienced some interventions and has not responded. When a parent comes to an IEP meeting with an FBA from a private provider, the IEP team must consider that information.  C. The issue of assistive technology was brought up related to student supports. If parents have a problem with a computer, where do they go for help? Is the Ohana Help Desk aware of A.T. devices and do they know where to refer people? A lot of times speech-to-text just crashes your computer, and they would need to know that. A. For the more universal tools, the Ohana Help Desk could help, but for the more specialized technology, parents are getting training. (Heidi) If there are questions, we encourage parents to reach out to the teacher. That parent-school communication is key. Outreach has to be both ways.  C. We had wanted to invite the Ohana Health Desk to our meeting, and hopefully to the SPIN Conference. We notice that their main avenue for assistance is talking to one caller at a time, and that’s not efficient. There are very few documents on their portal that talk about how to access a platform and only one video. We would like to be able to influence them to create more videos sooner. One call at a time doesn’t help parents who don’t know what question to ask. We would like to see Q & A documents, and we would like to know how many special education families they are serving. A. (Heidi) Would it be helpful if we had the Ohana Help Desk personnel contact the SEAC Leadership Group? If so, we’ll make that linkage. |
| **Agenda Setting for the October 16, 2020 Meeting** | Members suggested agenda items for the October 16th meeting. As a reminder, the 16th was selected as the alternate meeting date because the 9th falls within Fall Break. Suggested topics include:   * An Information Technology (IT) presentation on the Ohana Help Desk * Recommendations for amending the By-Laws * COVID-19 Impact Services and who needs them * An update on special education and charter schools (suggested by a guest) * Social Emotional Learning (SEL) screening tool and how the data is used * Infographic Work Group meetings |

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| **Infographic Work Groups – Initial Vetting of Three Infographics** | Martha reported that there are three work groups that are ready for an initial vetting of their infographic by the full membership. Members were encouraged to use SEAC’s Infographic Review Form as they listen to the presentations and email their completed form/comments to [spin@doh.hawaii.gov](mailto:spin@doh.hawaii.gov).  Behavior Support Plan Work Group  Susan Wood and Jasmine Williams reported on their infographic entitled “How to Obtain Behavioral Services.” Alysha Kim also participated in its development. Susan began by saying after much discussion, the group decided to use the infographic as a general overview of behavioral services. Each section or chunk will give birth to another infographic with links and forms. It applies to parents of children who have not yet been identified, as well as to children with an IEP or 504 Plan. Sections include behavior concerns, expectations, supports & services, what is next, now what? and check for success.  Jasmine stressed the intent of putting information into simple terms for common understanding. It needs to be broken down further. For example, describing the difference between a Behavior Support Plan (BSP) and a Behavior Intervention Plan (BIP).  Feedback from the group included:   * Praise for tackling a difficult topic. * Adding MTSS in the Supports and Services section: “school level services may include school-based behavioral health, counseling, classroom*/Tier 2* supports, and a Behavior Support Plan.” * Linking MTSS and what Tier 2 is would be good information. * As we begin to put in terms from the educational side, parents need definitions of those terms. * We may have to look at user-friendly words, like the terms in distance learning. * Whenever a school has an MTSS plan, they would have Tier 2 grids on their website where anyone can see the additional supports at that school. * Does your title need to be altered to “What are Behavioral Services?” rather than “How to Obtain Behavioral Services?” Some parents may not be ready to obtain services. * It’s the same process to get support as with academics. Academic expectations are behaviors, too, like turning in homework. * Perhaps the title can be a question: “Are you Concerned About Your Child’s Behavior?” or “How Can I Get Behavior Supports for My Child?”   Student Support Staff Work Group  The title of this infographic is “What’s in a Name: Student Support Staff Positions in Hawaii?” and its main drafters include David Royer and Kevin Bardsley-Marcial with help from Amanda. David shared that the group started out with many more positions than the final six. DOE advised them to limit it to where they are heading in their terminology. There may be additional terms that parents ask about that |

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| **Infographic Work Groups – Initial Vetting of Three Infographics (cont.)** | Student Support Staff Work Group (cont.)  could be covered in an additional page that describes whether that term is still in use and/or what has taken its place. We did our best to define the differences between these roles. There is some overlap and “AKAs”—alternate names for the terms. It gets tricky when it comes to who can work with a student with a BIP, as opposed to a BSP. Those roles are different in Hawaii, although they are not different anywhere else. The final six job titles are what will be used for DOE contracts. Amanda added that the group started with 8 roles including skills trainers and the Paraprofessional Teacher, but we discovered that the use of those terms were not correct or consistent. The primary audience for the infographic is the IEP team, where there is sometimes confusion about terms.  Feedback on the infographic included:   * Finding a graphic figure for the middle of the infographic that looks more Hawaiian. Graphics can be imported into Venngage, so if anyone has luck finding a graphic, forward it to SPIN. * Add a flower pattern to the figure’s shirt and a flower behind her ear. * Move the clinical psychologist to the 3rd slot, followed by the ABA paraprofessional. Then tie the LBA before the RBT. That’s more of the order of what would come first. * The order the work group had it in was the role groups with whom the student would come into contact and the supervising role groups coming last. * Sometimes a school may use a PPE and a PPT as 1:1. * Guidance came out at the end of last year on how a school can fund a PPE or PPT. They had to make a lot of changes, because you need an AA degree for one and a high school degree for another. The new guidance is based on pay. * I like the inclusion of AKA (Also Known As) titles. * Note that the Clinical Psychologist or the LBA is called in before the other roles are assigned. * Some families are not aware that the DOE employs clinical psychologists. They are not always contracted individuals. * This infographic can start the conversation, but more information will need to be provided in subsequent documents or a dialogue guide. * Add a date to the infographic.   Parents as Partners Work Group  Members working on this infographic entitled “’C’ How We Partner” included Kau‘i Rezentes, Tina King and Scott Hashimoto with support from Amanda. Scott began the description of the process by stating the group’s intention—to provide concrete advice and skills to both parents and professionals on |

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| **Infographic Work Groups – Initial Vetting of Three Infographics (cont.)** | Parents as Partners Work Group (cont.)  how to communicate and collaborate. They wanted to convey balance or reciprocity that creates mutual respect for each stakeholder, even if one might be new to the process. This will foster good teamwork.  The group used the letter “C” to identify the skills/values in common. Kau‘i shared that they sought a balance of recommendations for both parents and professionals on each valued skill. Their one concern is that the infographic might be perceived as too wordy. Tina added that they foresaw that many families would soon be having IEP meetings. They wanted to empower parents with practical tips to be part of the process. The advice to professionals was to help them be more approachable and engaging.  Feedback on the infographic included:   * I like that a lot of the advice is the same for both parents and professionals, for example, *be on time*, and *return calls*. It allows each group to see that they are on the same page and have shared responsibilities. * Under *communicate*, sometimes parents don’t know how to ask the right questions in DOE lingo to get what they need. It may take a while to get the right service, because they didn’t know how to frame the request and pair it with a DOE service. In my experience, professionals rarely offer to interpret for the parent. They are mostly silent. * On the parent side, add *ask about terms, if you don’t understand them*. * Under the professionals' column, add *education for families*. * In the professionals' column under *communication*, add *open communication throughout the year*. * Encourage teachers to speak with parents prior to a meeting to understand what their concerns are and to prepare teachers to help the parent during the meeting. * Take out the word *nurturing*, because I think many professionals don’t see that as their responsibility. * Explain how this document will be shared. Is it provided to the parent prior to the IEP meeting by the school, or by a parent organization? * If you want the professional to share it, it probably needs to be vetted by the DOE. We could ask Annie to assist with that. * I like the title because it is easy to remember. It can be hash-tagged. * Make the “C” in the first letter of each word the same color as the title “C” to tie them together. * Consider people with visual disabilities in rethinking your color palette. * Some parents would disagree with the term *professionals*, because they think they are professionals, too. |

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| **Infographic Work Groups – Initial Vetting of Three Infographics (cont.)** | Parents as Partners Work Group (cont.)   * Does the term “educator” only refer to teachers? Would a psychologist or related service provider be considered educators? (David says in his field of special education, they are all considered educators, because they are assisting with the education of the student). Another substitute for *professional* could be *educator/support staff.*   **Action: Susan or Amanda will send out the draft infographics so members can complete their review. Members were advised not to share the draft versions.** |
| **Infographic Work Group Meetings** | Martha encouraged all members to meet in work groups to finalize draft infographics or begin addressing issues previously identified as priorities. The groups are as follows:   * Absenteeism – Steven and Susan R. * A follow-up Behavior Plan Infographic – Susan W. and Jasmine * IEP Team Members – Kaili, Mark and Brende * Diploma vs. Certificate – Dale, Flash and Lisa * Transfer of Rights – Susan W., Kau‘i and Annette * HMTSS (check to see if DOE has an infographic) – David and Rebecca * Parents as Partners – Kau‘i, Tina and Scott   Susan W. suggested tabling the absenteeism infographic now because of virtual learning. She also asked what was included in Transfer of Rights. Amanda explained that it includes the advocacy options for educational decision-making when students with disabilities reach age 18. Susan R. said that she and Steven still want to work on the absenteeism infographic, because the issue is attendance-taking. That’s how you determine if a student is chronically absent. In ‘normal’ times, students with disabilities are chronically absent at a higher rate than any other subgroup leading to poorer academic outcomes and possible drop-outs. If attendance is lax during the pandemic, and students aren’t recorded as being chronically absent, we will be missing a factor contributing to their educational failure. Annie has offered some guidelines on taking attendance, but they are complicated and difficult to understand from the parent side. Steven added, as we try to change it so that it is much more relevant to this time, we might be able to use this infographic as a way to spur on conversations. We know absenteeism can lead to school disconnectedness. SEAC needs to have a position on absenteeism as the federal government has expectations related to special education students.  Martha thanked Amanda for providing supports to the infographic teams over the summer. It helps to give us a unified force. Amanda said she is happy to continue to facilitate and meet with teams on Zoom to help navigate through Venngage.  **Action: Each member will join an infographic team.** |

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| **Final Announcements** | * Martha announced that the movie *Intelligent Lives* is being shown today at 1:30 p.m. via Zoom. It is a wonderful film by Dan Habib about young adults with intellectual disabilities. The viewing will be followed by a discussion group, if members want to join in.   **Action: Martha will send out a link to the Zoom meeting.**   * Susan announced that at 1:00 p.m. the Senate Committee on COVID-19 is holding a hearing re: special education with the DD Council and new Chair Debbie Kobayakawa presenting concerns and AS Armstrong responding. It may shed light or repeat what we already know. Members who would like to watch it, can go to the Capitol website (<https://www.capitol.hawaii.gov>) and check the hearing calendar for a zoom link to the hearing. |