



Act 173 Advisory Group
October 4, 2021, 8:00 a.m. – 9:30 a.m.

Draft Meeting Minutes

Microsoft Teams Virtual Meeting

Call In: 1-802-552-8456

Conference ID: 379 601 43#

Purpose of the Advisory Group per [Act 173 of 2018](#): To consider and make recommendations on the implementation of a census-based model of funding for students who require additional support.

Present:

Advisory Group (AG) Members: Meagan Roy, Chair; Marilyn Mahusky, Vice Chair, Disability Law Project; Jeff Fannon, Vermont-National Education Association (VT-NEA); Peter Garrecht, Vermont Council of Special Education Administrators-selected special educator; Cheryle Wilcox, Agency of Human Services, Department of Mental Health (DMH); Jay Nichols, Vermont Principals' Association; Mill Moore, Vermont Independent Schools Association (VISA); Lisa Bisbee, VT-NEA-selected practitioner; Sue Ceglowski, Vermont School Boards Association; Elizabeth (Beth) Novotny, Council of Independent School (CIS).
AOE: Meg Porcella; Chris Case, Jacqui Kelleher, Bill Bates, Jennifer Perry, Brad James, Emily Simmons, Maureen Gaidys.

Others: Susan Aranoff; Marianna Donnally, AHS.

Call to Order, Roll Call/Introductions/Amendments to Agenda

Chair Roy called the meeting to order at 8:00 a.m. and asked for members present to introduce themselves. There were no amendments to the agenda.

Review and Approve Minutes from June 7, 2021, Meeting

Wilcox moved to approve the meeting minutes from the June 7, 2021, meeting; Fannon seconded. Nichols and Novotny said they would abstain. There was no further discussion. Chair Roy called the vote. The motion passed.

Opportunity for Public to be Heard

There were no members of the public to be heard.

Presentations

Act 173 & Special Education Rules Professional Development (PD) - Case, Kelleher, Porcella

Chair Roy reviewed the agenda and offered for the AOE team to share their presentation titled, [AOE Act 173 Update](#). Porcella spoke about the purpose of Act 173, the DMG Report and current and planned PD. Case spoke about the four systems levers and their connection to Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS), educational support teams (EST). Kelleher spoke about special education and technical assistance and PD, rule series 2360, goals, and rule changes and the monthly training cycle. She provided [a link to the special education professional development page](#) and the timeline for delivery of these trainings.

There was discussion on shortage of substitute teachers required to allow regular staff to attend office hour sessions, flexibility, short timeline for Response to Intervention (RtI) implementation, stakeholder input into training/PD, Act 173 recommended a delay and it is unfortunate that school districts were not given the time created by the delay to work towards implementation, steps the AOE has used to identify school districts that need focused PD, AOE working to triangulate need across the state and working to identify themes that have come out of the recovery work, self-identification to identify districts needing extra support, importance of AOE looking at this as a pilot regarding accountability and the need to approach deficiencies through coaching and support, needing AOE's help in conveying to the General Assembly that the delay in implementation didn't necessarily make schools more ready, need to be sensitive to field exhaustion, creation of best practices, vetting of reliable tools, and coordinating with 12 other states who dropped the discrepancy model.

Special Education Funding - Service Planning & Time Documentation – Finance Team

Perry spoke about a special education financial rule changes, fiscal guidance and support topics and the timelines.

There was question/discussion on time studies and the continued reliance on these, that AOE has had no conversation with Business Managers on this topic, AG's concern that the AOE requirements exceed what is required by federal law, that the AG raised stakeholder input as an issue, and the possibility of engaging the AOE/AG with collecting stakeholder feedback. Chair Roy surveyed the AG on whether they wanted to request more stakeholder input. There was consensus. AOE welcomed the suggestion to engage with a small group of AG members and others to get input on this.

Discussion

There was discussion on AOE taking feedback and understanding it better, tweaking existing time studies is what was recently understood to be happening, Medicaid and special education time studies are different, supporting the law and its flexibility, important to get this right to protect teachers and let them get back to the important work of teaching students.

Chair Roy will finalize a list of AG members to work with AOE in a future meeting on special education finance. AOE will conduct a Doodle poll.

Finalize Meeting Schedule

Chair Roy suggested having future meetings the first Monday of the month from about 9:30-11:30 a.m. The AG agreed to this. Chair Roy thanked the AOE for their good work and said we now need to work to make it manageable by July. Items for the next agenda: update from stakeholder group, similar parallel update on PD for the programmatic side, and update on rulemaking for independent school rules.

Adjourn

Chair Roy adjourned at 9:27 a.m.