



Special Education Advisory Panel Executive Board Meeting

APPROVED MINUTES

Meeting Place: Virtual Meeting

Address: Microsoft Teams platform

Date: Wednesday, February 3, 2021 (4:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m.)

Present: Crista Yagjian, Robin Hood, Jacqui Kelleher, John Spinney, Rachel Seelig, Jamie Crenshaw, Carrie Lutz, Sarah Fabrizio

Agenda:

4:30-4:35 Come to Order

4:35-4:40 Approve December Minutes

4:40-4:50 Welcome New Members and Discussion of Work of Executive Board

4:50-5:15 Review and plan for January Full Panel agenda

5:15-5:40 Discussion of and Plan for SPP/APR Target Setting / Indicator Work

5:40-6:15 Discussion of Subcommittee Structure Strengths and Possible Need for Adjustment

6:15-6:25 Public Comment

6:30 Adjourn

Come to Order:

Sarah reported she was beginning in the meeting while still in the car and asked if another member could take minutes. Jamie agreed to take minutes.

Review and approve minutes:

A motion was made by Crista, seconded by Robin, to approve the January 5, 2021 draft meeting minutes. Jamie stated that she would like to add more detail to the Review and Plan for January Full Panel Agenda topic. Instead of the sentence "The January meeting will start with panel members sharing their why." She would like it to say, "The January meeting will start with panel members sharing their individual experiences and why they joined the SEAP." All present agreed to the draft meeting minutes including the amendment.

Review Full Panel agenda and plan meeting:

The February meeting will begin with panel members sharing their individual experiences and reasons why they decided to join the SEAP. Originally it was planned to have 2 members share their stories but due to the number and breadth of AOE items, it was decided that only 1 member would be sharing their story at this meeting. All future meetings after February will resume with 2 members sharing their stories.

Rachel asked for member opinions about adding an executive board meeting summary to all of our full panel meetings. A discussion ensued. It was decided that an email will be sent to the full panel three days prior to every meeting. The email will include the next meeting's agenda, any materials/information for discussion, and a link to any meeting minutes up for approval. All agendas and minutes are posted on the AOE website for public review.

Meg Porcella will provide training to the full panel on Microsoft Teams.

There are three items that the AOE will be presenting to the panel:

Item one: New SPP (State Performance Plan)/APR (Annual Performance Reports) Requirements and Preparing for Target Settings

Item two: Effectiveness of Technical Assistance: Description of TA (Technical Assistance)/PD (Professional Development) Approach and Collecting Data on Effectiveness of AOE Assistance

Item three: Critical Shortage Areas

The Rules and Regulations subcommittee is not scheduled to meet until the end of February so there will not be an update given during this meeting. This provides additional time to the AOE agenda items and discussions.

Discussion / Decision on Role of SEAP regarding Weighting Study:

Rachel explained that she received a question on whether the SEAP would be providing advice on the weighting study. The weighting study was ordered as part of Act 173 (the law that will move special education to a census-based funding model and endorses five best practices as laid out in a report by the DMG group to the legislature). However, the study is broader than just financing special education, it is about taxation to fund schools more generally and how we get to an “equalized pupil” amount. Jacqui reported that there are AOE staff actively working on this issue right now, but that they are not necessarily at the place where they are ready for our advice. If we want a presentation on this topic, that could be arranged.

Rachel posed 3 questions: (1) Is it our role to provide advice on the weighting study, since this is a legislative decision? (2) If it, is do we have the knowledge to provide advice on taxation and education financing generally? (3) can we acquire the knowledge that would be needed to provide that advice?

Discussion of the first question, and that it actually implicates more broadly the role we can/should play with regard to the legislature. In other states, there is a person on the panel who monitors the legislature, gives an update at each meeting, and the panel decides whether there is legislation that merits comment, and what that will be. The weighting study is not the only piece of legislation that is currently under consideration that may be of interest to the Panel. There is also a bill about school discipline data collection, and one about literacy instruction. Some individuals on the panel have, on their own, been involved with these bills. Several members were in favor of providing testimony but there were very valid concerns brought forth about the newness of the Board and the panel’s time constraints (meeting only once a month). The legislative process moves rather quickly so is it feasible? Robin mentioned that we should check our By-Laws to see if the SEAP is even allowed to provide testimony outside of the State Board of Education. Agreement that we need to spend more time establishing a policy and procedure on how to follow and comment on legislation. We will work on this as the Executive Board, and be ready for the second half of the biennium, but we do not feel ready to jump into this right now, as we have a lot that is mandated by the IDEA that we still need to do. Being involved in legislation is not prohibited by the IDEA, but it is also not one of the things we are mandated to do.

Discussion of the second and third questions postponed. But we will consider asking for a presentation on the weighting study at a future meeting.

Policy discussion: Assigning SEAP members to non-SEAP working groups / meeting opportunities as Panel Representatives:

A concern was shared about the non-SEAP working group volunteers. It seems that the same individuals are signing up for these opportunities. How can we enable more members to volunteer? It was suggested that we wait to ask for volunteers until additional information on the opportunity can be shared to the group via email. Some members may not be as familiar with the topic so providing additional information may enable more members to participate. Members will have a set time frame to review the documents and reply to Rachel if they are interested in volunteering.

Aligning Officer elections with By-Laws:

Our By-Laws state that members shall be elected from its members a Chair, Vice-Chair, and Secretary. Officers shall be elected to serve a term of two years upon vote of a quorum. Officers may serve up to two consecutive terms for the position to which they are elected. Due to member resignations that occurred last spring, our Chair, Vice-Chair and Secretary terms do not align with the By-Laws. It was suggested that we either hold a new election or extend the current Officers terms past February to September 2022 to align with the By-Laws. All executive board members agreed to extend the current Officers terms to September 2022.

Inactive Committees – Plan for activating:

The SEAP currently has two subcommittees (Coordination of Services and Corrective Action) that are inactive. It was discussed when we want them to meet and how often. Both subcommittees are low on members at this time. It was decided that these two subcommittees would-be put-on hold until needed.

Public Comment:

There was no public comment.

Adjourn:

A motion was made at 6:03 p.m. by Carrie Lutz, seconded by Sarah Fabrizio to adjourn the meeting. All were in favor. Meeting adjourned at 6:03 p.m.

The next Special Education Advisory Panel meeting will be held virtually on Wednesday, February 17, 2021 - 4:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.

Meeting Schedule (Hold the Dates):

March 4, 2021 (4:30pm – 6:30pm) Virtual
April 5, 2021 (4:30pm – 6:30pm) Virtual
May 4, 2021 (4:30pm – 6:30pm) Virtual
June 9, 2021 (4:30pm – 6:30pm) Virtual
July – TBD
August – TBD
September 9, 2021 (4:30pm – 6:30pm) Virtual