



Special Education Advisory Panel: Executive Committee Meeting

DRAFT MINUTES

Meeting Place: Hybrid Meeting - Microsoft Teams platform (Virtual Meeting) and Physical location option: The Classroom at UVM Extension, 327 US-302, Barre Montpelier Rd. Barre, VT 05641

Date: Thursday, January 26, 2023 – 4:30pm to 6:30pm

Present: Secretary Dan French, Chris Case, Lisa Johnson, Dawn Campbell, Rachel Seelig, Katie Ballard, Scarlett Duncan, Teagen Comeau, Crista Yagjian, Molly McFaun, Susan Aranoff
Guest-Kate Larose

Agenda:

4:30-4:35	Come to Order, Review Meeting Norms, Approve November/December EC Minutes
4:35-4:45	Welcome to Teagan, review current EC Discussions
4:45-5:15	Bylaws Update
5:15-5:30	Update and Next steps on current topics such as EQS, IEP Content, Corrections, Independent schools
5:30-6:05	Finalize Full Panel Agenda for February
6:05-6:20	Brainstorm for June Full Panel Meeting
6:20-6:30	Public Comment
6:30	Adjourn

Come to Order, Review Meeting Norms, Approve November/December EC Minutes:

Dan French made announcements to start the meeting and expressed appreciation to the members of the panel for their participation.

Governor's office prefers that several candidates for membership be presented at once so that the governor can make an appointment from those candidates. Secretary French is beginning to promote the panel and actively advertise to recruit more members. Suggests that we have an application and have the group review the applications. The AOE will review candidates and make selections to move forward to the governor for appointment. In sum, we should be promoting the group more to recruit more members and promote the work of the council more.

Discussion was held around the need to promote membership for more parents and persons with disabilities and make the meetings accessible. Discussion was held around the need for members who work in schools to be able to participate in meetings without impacting their jobs.

Discussion was held about the AOE having a voice in the reveal of the EQS. Secretary French is willing to come to one of the meetings to address the EQS. He may be able to attend the March meeting. There is a draft document in progress for the public comment period on the EQS.

Meeting came to order. Meeting norms were reviewed. Meetings from previous meetings have been posted. Scarlett Duncan made a motion to approve all previously unapproved minutes from previous meetings in December and November (executive committee). Dawn Campbell seconded. There was no discussion, and the motion was approved unanimously.

Welcome to Teagan, review current EC Discussions:

Welcome to Teagan as a new Executive Committee member.

A review of the focus of the executive panel responsibilities was done.

Bylaws Update:

Katie discussed the changes to the bylaws that were previously proposed. Past chair to ex officio member, vice chair to a voting member, are designees allowed for parent members of the panel and are there any rules or parameters around who is an appropriate designee.

Update and Next steps on current topics such as EQS, IEP Content, Corrections, Independent schools:

Introduction to Act 35 (S 16) was made for the panel. There are no suspensions for children 8 and under and created a task force to gather data about current practices. The task force will continue based on recommendations from stakeholders made up from the Vermont Coalition of Disability Rights. Recommendations were made about better methods of data collection and the possibility of outsourcing data collection, more training for general education teachers, creating more clarity around exclusionary discipline and what is and is not a suspension, additional professional development for staff, more clarity around HHB and protections for students. There is not current legislation at this time, but there are interested lawmakers and the deadline for filing is approaching.

Presentations have been made in the areas of:

- EQS
- IEP Content
- Repeated Goals
- Independent Schools
- Corrections

Are any of these considerations to be added back to the agenda in March?

Chris Case proposed that the Vermont Alternate Assessment would be a good topic of conversation. This will be addressed at the end of the February Executive Committee meeting to determine the level of interest and the amount of time needed to address the topic.

Dana Lesperance will be invited to the February EC meeting.

For EQS there may be more information to come. EQS appreciates the feedback but feels that this would be better addressed in the assurances document. They are more concerned with oversight and quality control.

Rachel Seelig suggested that we should respond to them to thank them for their consideration and inclusion of our feedback in the EQS process and discussion. We will make a comment at the 2/22/23 meeting during public comment.

Who oversees SPED students who are placed at independent schools? We may need to create a list of questions for the expert (Deb) so that Chris can go to her with some structured questions.

Lisa Johnson suggested that Dr. Andrew Shattock would be a good person to present on the use of PSW in light of the rule changes coming up in July. Lisa will email Katie with contact information and more information about the suggested topic.

Finalize Full Panel Agenda for February:

Katie asked if there is interest in bringing Act 35 to the February meeting agenda. Panel agreed that this is an important topic for the panel to keep on its radar and to understand.

AOE is in the process of creating definitions relevant to Act 35. Chris recommended that the panel participate in the Best Practices recommendations that will be created.

There is 40-minute block of time in February that will be open for topics, 30 minutes with Betty Roy, 30 minutes Emily Simmons will be with us in February to discuss dispute resolution, 20 minutes rule changes update and letter on general education training and implementation, restraint and seclusion, and 10 minutes for public comment and update on the search for the state director. Is there someone on the panel who can present on Act 35? The Chair or Amy Wheeler-Sutton are good choices.

There is still more discussion to be held about Indicators and our performance on them. Discussion was held around how much time is needed to address indicators and what is the most efficient/effective way to present them. 6:35-7:35 may be the window to address this.

Come to Order/Norms (10)
Public Comment (10)
State Director Update (10)
Betty Roy (30)
Emily Simmons (30)
Rule Changes (20)
Break (5)
Act 35 (30)
Indicators (20)

Brainstorm for June Full Panel Meeting:

Executive Committee needs to confirm space for meeting with AOE. Once confirmed, the EC can finalize full panel agenda.

Public Comment:

Kate Larose (Pandemic Coordinator Vermont Center for Independent Living) made public comment on the needs that students with disabilities have in relation to the pandemic. She is concerned that none of the language that she has suggested is present on the AOE website. There are concerns about the difficulty obtaining information needed to take action to protect their vulnerable students and families.

Crista asked about the next steps for this topic. Molly McFaun made a motion for Katie Ballard to discuss the public comment with Secretary French. Scarlett Duncan seconded. There was no discussion and the motion passed unanimously 5-0.

Scarlett is working on a survey on self-reflection for the team to see how we can check in with ourselves and the team to be more efficient. Is that something that we are interested in?

There was no other public comment.

Adjourn:

Meeting was adjourned at 6:12 with no objections.

Meeting Schedule (hold the dates):

February 23, 2023, 4:30pm-6:30pm ([Hybrid meeting](#))

March 23, 2023, 4:30pm-6:30pm ([Hybrid meeting](#))

April 27, 2023, 4:30pm-6:30pm ([Hybrid meeting](#))

May 25, 2023, 4:30pm-6:30pm ([Hybrid meeting](#))

June 22, 2023, 4:30pm-6:30pm ([Hybrid meeting](#))