



Peter McWalters
Commissioner

State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Shepard Building
255 Westminster Street
Providence, Rhode Island 02903-3400

Rhode Island Special Education Advisory Committee

The Rhode Island Special Education Advisory Committee is an active voice in advocating that all students receive superior educational services enabling each student to achieve optimum success throughout the school years and into the world of adulthood.

March 19, 2009
6:30pm – 8:30pm

New England Institute of Technology
Hall of Fame Room
2500 Post Road, Warwick, RI 02886

Meeting Minutes

Present: Denise Ahern, Melissa Angell, Deborah Belanger, Wilfred Beaudoin, Ann Brockmann, Amy Canario, Barbara Chadwick, Kim Chouinard, Sheila Collins, Marie Cummiskey, Craig Levis, Dorothy McDonough, Jane Morein, Marty Morris, Pamela O'Brien, Ralph Orleck, Robin Pacheco, Kellie Piche-Tatro, Walter Sage, Sharon Schubert, Lisa Shea, Paul Stroup Jr., Sharon Terzian, Louise Tillinghast,

Absent: Deborah Ambeault*, Jeffrey Aubin*, Steven DiBiasio*, Joanne Eichinger *, Ruth Feder, Deborah Goessling*, Kat Grygiel, Kelly Marie Martin*, Richard Moore, Mary Pendergast*, Karen Rebello, Jane Slade*

*sent advanced notice

RIDE: Sally Arsenault, Ken Swanson

Guests: none

Call to Order, Welcome, Agenda Review

Announcements: Sharon said that Gary Alexander from Department of Human Services is looking for people to serve on the review board.

Ralph indicated that about 4-5 years ago, the RISEAC group had worked on the issue of students who withdrew from school. He is now on a subcommittee on adult education which, because of the stimulus money, may have the ability to address the issue of special needs students who withdraw from high school. Ralph indicated that this group may be looking for our (RISEAC's) support.

Approval of the February 12, 2009 Meeting Minutes: There were no corrections and the minutes were approved.

Director's Report: Kenneth Swanson, Office for Diverse Learners

IDEA Issues

- A copy of the Specific Learning Disability criteria has been approved to go out for public hearings.
- Early Childhood Regulations will also be going for public hearings.

Parent Survey

The survey will be in parents' mailboxes this coming week. Please contact RIPIN if you do not receive one.

The survey, once tallied, will be followed up by 4 regional meetings to address the findings. Those invited will be special education directors and LAC chairs. The consultant for the survey will also be present at each meeting.

Leadership Institute

The institute on May 4th will focus on drop out prevention. A panel of local Rhode Island districts with successful drop-out prevention strategies will present. The keynote speaker will be Russell Rumberger, PhD., Director of California Dropout Research Project.

Stimulus package

Each community will get double the IDEA allotment for the next two years. The rules are yet to be written. All money will be passed through the state to districts. Title II money will also double. The challenge will be the "funding cliff", one-time large investments not guaranteed to continue.

Old Business

- **Subcommittee Reports**

Physical Restraint committee- An invitation was sent to Marv Abney and David Abbott to come to the RISEAC meeting on May 21. Marv Abney indicated he could come, but David Abbott would not be able to attend. The committee discussed whether to present to Marv Abney without David Abbott also present. The decision was made to provide direct communication to both with a cover letter from RISEAC. The letter would indicate that RISEAC would look for input from both men. Discussion and final changes (under section A. i. change "or" to "and/or") were made to the report by the Physical Restraint subgroup. The report was then approved by the committee.

Membership – Currently we have 36 members with 24 parents and every category filled. Phone calls were made to those who have not been attending. A category sheet was passed around to confirm its accuracy. The new membership drive asked for applications to be in by March 1. Only one application was received. Only one member's terms expires – Ralph's – but an amendment to the bylaws was made last year to allow him to continue his term as chairperson. The deadline for members to notify Sheila if they are leaving RISEAC is next week, March 26.

New Business

High School Regulations – Paul Stroup has spoken with David Sienko about the impact of the 2003 High School regulations on special education students. David Sienko is willing to come and give a Powerpoint presentation on supports and impact on graduation on April 23.

SEAN (Special Education Advisory Network) The annual dinner meeting is April 6 at Chelo's of Warwick. Sally Arsenault and Deb Belanger will do a needs assessment with the local advisory committee representatives in an effort to strengthen the LACS.

Presentation: Children's Behavioral Health and Education Division Overview – A presentation was given by Janet Anderson, Ed.D., Mike Burk, Ginny Stack, and Frank Pace. A folder with handouts and a Powerpoint presentation were provided.

Public Comment – None

Adjournment – The meeting was adjourned.

3/19/09 Recording Secretary: Ann Brockmann

RISEAC website: www.riseac.org

Next Meeting: April 23, 2009

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