



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

Deborah A. Gist
Commissioner

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.

November 15, 2012

6:30 pm – 8:30 pm

RI Parent Information Network
1210 Pontiac Avenue Cranston, RI 02920

Meeting Minutes

Present: Lori Barden, Wilfred Beaudoin, Princess Sirleaf Bomba, Ann Brockmann, Amy Canario, Jennifer Connolly, Susan Donovan, Joanne Eichinger, Gillian Elliot Pearis, Rosemary Gomes, Laura Laviano, Craig Levis, Robin Pacheco, Mary Pendergast, Ann Rudman, Robert Wall

Absent: Donna Alqassar*, Kate Barnas, Eileen Botelho* , Lynn Bouvier-Kapiskas*, Cris Brodner*, Allyson Dupont*, Deborah Garneau*, Patti Hien*, Melissa Moniz, JoAnn Nannig*, Cynthia Notarianni*, Pamela O'Brien*, Louise Tillinghast

RIDE/RITAP Attendees: David Sienko

Guest: Elizabeth Pinto

** Notes that prior notice was given regarding absence*

Call to Order, Welcome, Agenda Review: The meeting was called to order at 6:38 pm. Susan welcomed everyone and reviewed the agenda for the evening. In order to allow the guest speakers time to present and then to go home when finished, Susan suggested that the guest speakers be allowed to present first.

New Business: 2012 Special Education Statewide Parent Survey was presented by Susan Naysnerski, Diana Kriner (Transition Manager, RIPIN) and Sally Arsenault (OSCAS, RIDE). As one of the indicators (#8) in the State Performance Plan, Parent Engagement is measured via the Parent Survey. The guest speakers reviewed several aspects of the survey: why *this* survey, what it measures, how it is used, how survey participation is encouraged and how the results are shared. The RISEAC was given copies of the presenters' PowerPoint and a copy of the Analysis of Parent Survey Data Addressing Part B SPP/APR Indicator #8, a report prepared by Randall D. Penfield, Ph.D, on behalf of Piedra Data Services for the state of Rhode Island. There was time given for Q&A during the presentation and afterwards as well.

Announcements:

- Susan reminded members that several links and resources about the Common Core State Standards were shared via the Listserve this past month.
- A reminder was given about the screening of Dan Habib's film "Who Cares About Kelsey?" on November 29th in the new science building at RI College.
- The Parent Conference: Transition 101 on November 30th has about 135 parents registered at this point.
- The SEAN meeting on November 8th had about 50 attendees who heard a presentation by the Certificate Workgroup, those working on Alternate Assessment for those on IEPs.
- Another College Forum for students with disabilities is scheduled for March 9, 2013, the 9th year, to be held at Providence College. There will be breakout sessions for both parents and students.
- RISEAC members were reminded that two items concerning bullying, the Bullying/Teasing/Harassment Policy and the Bullying and/or Cyber-bullying Report Form, had been sent out via the Listserve by Bob Wall.

Approval of Minutes: The minutes for October 18, 2012 needed the following corrections: Lynn Bouvier-Kapiskas had an excused absence, Elizabeth Pinto should be listed as a guest since she is not yet officially employed at RIDE, and the spelling of Joe Walejko's name was corrected. A motion was made by Bob and seconded by Laura to approve the minutes with the corrections noted. The vote was unanimous to approve.

Director's Report:

- The first of the year's Special Education Directors' briefings was held on November 8. There were 45 attendees. The briefing focused on the new Early Childhood Race to the Top grant and the role of special education.
- The presentation by Dr. Joy Zabala from the National Center on Accessible Instructional Materials which was scheduled for Nov. 1 had to be cancelled since Dr. Zabala was unable to get to RI due to Hurricane Sandy. The training will be rescheduled in the near future.
- RIMAC – Rhode Island and the RI Materials Access Center now housed at TechACCESS in Warwick has been selected to participate in Targeted Technical Assistance with the National Accessible Instructional Materials (AIM) Center @ CAST. It is an important honor and will support the expansion of AIM throughout RI. RIDE and TechACCESS will be working together to capitalize on the free technical assistance available to our state. Updates will be provided by David on activities that result from this opportunity. Any questions in the meantime may be directed to Becky Wright at 222-8404 or emailed to her at Becky.Wright@ride.ri.gov.
- David circulated information cards on PANDAS (Pediatric Autoimmune Neuropsychiatric Disorder Associated with Strep). The International OCD Foundation wanted to make physicians and parents aware that infections can trigger mental illnesses like Obsessive Compulsive Disorder (OCD). Overnight, children's behavior can change drastically, and if parents recognize these symptoms, they can have their child tested for strep. Often, a course of antibiotics can eliminate the psychiatric symptoms and save a child from lifelong mental illness. There are several websites available with more information including www.ocdfoundation.org/PANDAS/ and www.pandasresourcenetwork.org.
- RI Autism – In 2009, the Rhode Island Autism Spectrum Disorder Evaluation and Treatment Act was signed into law. In order to implement this public policy, the Department of Education shall perform a random sampling in the public schools to determine both met and unmet student needs. The information will be used to develop a way to address the unmet needs. The survey for the needs assessment is currently underway.
- In response to a question about the status of the brochure on restraint, David indicated that progress was being made and RIDE was looking to have it posted on their website in English and Spanish, once they

have it readable in Adobe. A joint staff training is planned at RIPIN for RIPIN and Parent Support Network (PSN) members so they are ready to provide answers to calls they may get about restraint.

Old Business:

- Presentation of the RISEAC Annual Report and meeting with the Commissioner is scheduled for some time after November 26. It may be with the Commissioner's assistant. The request has been made to the Board of Regents and we are waiting to hear back on confirmation of the meeting.
- Tentative schedule of speakers for RISEAC:
 - Dec. 20 – update on Other Health Impaired (OHI) by Alice Woods and others; also Midge Sabatini on RI Bullying Policies and Procedures
 - Jan. 17 – Susan Wood presents the annual State Performance Plan/APR
 - Feb. 27 – Phyllis Lynch (or designee) on Transition to Common Core, PARCC and accommodations
 - March 21 – TBA – Janice Label on restraint procedures and elimination of restraints in all educational settings
 - April 25 – Sharon Lee & Jane Slade with updates on graduation requirements
 - May 16 – Alice Woods - Report out on restraint procedures

New Business: Workgroup meeting time – Workgroups met and updated their action plans. The groups then reported out with any changes they had made. These were then handed back to Mary to collate and prepare to share with all.

Public Comment: None.

Adjournment: A motion was made by Craig and seconded by Amy to adjourn. The meeting adjourned at 8:28 pm.

Recording Secretary: Ann L. Brockmann

RISEAC website: www.riseac.org