



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.

January 16, 2014

6:30 pm – 8:30 pm

RI Parent Information Network
1210 Pontiac Avenue Cranston, RI 02920

Meeting Minutes

Present: Kate Barnas, Wilfred Beaudoin, Sharon Bissonnette, Ann Brockmann, Cris Brodeur, Amy Canario, Jennifer Connolly, Susan Donovan, Cindy Duckworth, Joanne Eichinger, Deborah Garneau, Rosemary Gomes, Craig Levis, JoAnn Nannig, Robin Pacheco, Mary Pendergast, Douglas Pierson, Brian Quigg, Maria Silvestri-Golotto, Sharon Ursini-Quimby

Absent: Edward Angilly, Eileen Botelho*, Lori DiPina*, Allyson Dupont, Gillian Elliot Pearis, Patti Hien, Barbara Irons, Laura Laviano, Cynthia Notarianni*, Pamela O'Brien*, Elizabeth Santana, Robert Wall

RIDE-OSCAS: David Sienko, Beth Pinto

** Indicates that prior notice was given regarding absence*

Call to Order, Welcome, Agenda Review: The meeting was called to order at 6:40 pm. Susan welcomed everyone and Dr. Susan Wood and invited Dr. Wood to begin her report to the membership.

New Business:

Speaker: Dr. Susan Wood from OSCAS presented the Part B State Performance Plan (SPP) and Annual Performance Report (APR). Dr. Wood indicated that she would need feedback with comments and questions from the RISEAC within the next two weeks to meet the deadline she has to submit the report to the Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP). She pointed out 3 packets which had been distributed to each member:

- 1) RISEAC input sheet,
- 2) SPP/APR report in its entirety, and
- 3) DRAFT Indicator Highlights.

She then reviewed the DRAFT Indicator Highlight report, indicator by indicator, soliciting questions or comments at any point during her report. Highlights of her comments and membership questions follow:

- Indicator 4 a & b – RI doing well in area of Rates of suspensions/expulsions. RI met and exceeded the rigorous target of 2% with actual data of 0%.
- Indicator 6 – Percent of preschool children with IEPs who demonstrate improved skills and behaviors in key areas. A question was posed about why the percentages do not add up to 100%. Dr. Wood indicated that all preschool children with IEPs are not necessarily in preschool programs. Some may just be receiving walk-in services like speech.
- Indicator 16 & 17 – Written complaints and due process – These two sections had been deleted from requirement to report.

Susan requested that the RISEAC membership submit their responses to the SPP/APR to the Leadership Committee by Friday, January 24th. The leadership team will collate those responses to submit to DR. Wood.

Announcements:

- College Forum, March 8, 2014 – 10th year for the forum, to be held at Providence College
- Partnership Conference, March 12, 2014 – There will be three breakout sessions for: 1) Early Childhood Intervention, 2) Schools from 5 years old to Middle School level, and 3) Pathways to Transition for 14 years and up. There are applications on the RIPIN website. Vendors will have tables of resources available during the conference.
- National Secondary Training Technical Assistance Center Transition Capacity Building Conference, March 13-14, 2014 – by invitation for those working on transition.
- RISEAC Process for SPP/APR – (shared previously)
- Meeting with Commissioner – Friday, Jan. 24 for Mary and Susan to present RISEAC’s annual report

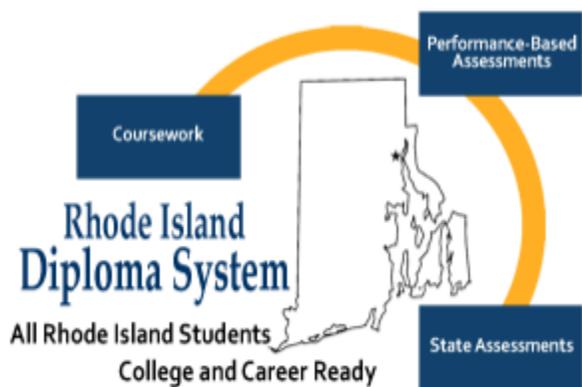
Approval of Minutes for November 21, 2013 – With the following corrections: page 2, under New Business: delete “Some states use data...YRBS well.” and replace with “Rhode Island adds a disability category to allow for that comparison.”, a motion was made by Ann and seconded by Rosemary to approve the minutes. The vote was unanimous to approve.

Director’s Report: David Sienko

1. NECAP Results for Seniors and Re-test options

There have been a few developments as we prepare for the release of the NECAP results for the class of 2014. The Office of Multiple Pathways has revised the web site with useful tools for schools and parents. You may access the web site through this link:

<http://www.ride.ri.gov/StudentsFamilies/RIPublicSchools/DiplomaSystem.aspx> Click on the last tab on the page “Planning for the 2013 NECAP Score Release” to see the tools. There is also a Prezi presentation available when you click on the RI Diploma System Logo:



(Prezi / 1-Page Document)

RIDE has released a Waiver Decision Tree to assist school leaders in making decisions regarding student eligibility for consideration for a waiver from the state-assessment graduation requirement. You can access the Waiver Decision Tree on our website, at: <http://ride.ri.gov/Portals/0/Uploads/Documents/Diploma-System/WaiverDecisionTree.pdf>. Finally, the Retest for the seniors who have not shown growth and met the diploma requirement is being scheduled for late February, early March. For more information about waivers, please contact Cali Cornell (Cali.Cornell@ride.ri.gov).

2. LOFT – Summer Leadership Program for High School Students

AG Bell is currently accepting applications for its Leadership Opportunities for Teens (LOFT) program to be held in Orlando, Florida the summer of 2014. The application deadline is February 26, 2014. LOFT is for high school students with bilateral hearing loss who use listening and spoken language. Scholarships are available for families with financial constraints. LOFT is a great opportunity for high school and college-bound teens interested in a leadership experience away from home with their peers. Visit the AG Bell website to learn more and to download an application. You may also share the attached fact sheet. <http://www.listeningandspokenlanguage.org/LOFT/>

3. Helpful Resources

Using a Response to Intervention Framework to Improve Student Learning - A pocket Guide for State and District Leaders (by AIR) – this may be useful in helping general education teachers and administrators see the importance of RTI (Multi-Tiered Systems of Support) in facilitating school improvement.

Rethinking Special Education Due Process (by AASA) – an interesting read about alternatives to due process and a possible primer for IDEA Reauthorization.

4. RIDE issues request for proposals for 21st Century Community Learning Center grants

RIDE has released a Request For Proposals (RFP) for the federal 21st Century Community Learning Centers competitive grant opportunity. The key priority for this program is to establish comprehensive, high-quality, out-of-school-time programs that focus on academic improvement and target students from high-poverty, low-performing schools. Eligible applicants include: Local Education Agencies (LEAs), including charter LEAs; public and nonpublic schools; and community and faith-based organizations in partnership with one or more high-poverty, low-performing school or schools. The [RFP](#) is available on our website. Please contact [Jan Mermin](#) for information about the 21st Century Community Learning Centers.

5. U.S. Education, Justice Departments issue *first-ever* guidance on nondiscriminatory discipline practices

The U.S. Department of Education Office for Civil Rights and the U.S. Department of Justice Civil Rights Division have released [first-ever federal policy guidance](#) aimed at addressing the problem of racial discriminatory

discipline practices in elementary and secondary education. The two Departments issue the guidance in the form of a [Dear Colleague Letter \(DCL\)](#), to help schools and districts identify and remedy discriminatory discipline practices. The guidance explains federal nondiscrimination requirements under Titles IV and VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the legal approach the Departments will take when investigating complaints or compliance reviews alleging race or national origin discrimination in a school or district's discipline practices. The Dear Colleague Letter also provides concrete examples to help schools and districts understand the potential civil rights violations that may arise when disciplining students.

6. Announcement for the RI IDEA Part B Application

Will be coming out soon, we will forward you the information as soon as it is posted to the RIDE web site.

7. Governor's Budget

The Governor released his FY2015 budget last night. There is good news for continued support to local school budgets. The following are some highlights:

- Full funding for Year 4 of the Funding Formula,
- additional \$1.1 million (\$4.4 million total) for transportation,
- an additional \$500,000 (\$1.5 million total) for high-cost special education,
- an additional \$500,000 (\$3.5 million total) for career-and-technical education, and
- an additional \$1 million (\$3 million total) for early-childhood education,
- \$5.9 million over five years to repair career-technical centers across the state.

8. PARCC Assessment and the Transition to CCSS

This is an agenda item for next month's meeting; however, you will be getting information about the pilot of the PARCC assessment soon as districts start to plan for the new assessment. More to come next month.

9. DOJ Continuing Investigation

As you all have been following in the media, the US Department of Justice has released its findings regarding the continuing investigation of ADA Title II violations in Rhode Island regarding sheltered workshops. OSCAS has continued to assist in this process with DOJ and the other state agencies. The changes we have seen at the Birch Academy at Mt. Pleasant High School in Providence have been impressive and would not have been possible without the existing capacity in our state to provide effective transition services. The key going forward will be assisting our adult agency partners in supporting our students in community integrated settings once they have left school, and we have committed to work with BHDDH and ORS toward this outcome.

Old Business: None.

Public Comment: Guest E. Wood commented that the SPP/APR report was very technical. Cris Brodeur asked the question about how RIDE/OSCAS is assisting the community in becoming knowledgeable and accepting of the alternate assessment and certificate program. Susan suggested that it would be best to address Cris' question at a later meeting, possibly to Jane Slade. David said he would pass the question on to Jane so that she could address it when she comes to present to the RISEAC membership.

Adjournment: A motion was initiated by Amy and seconded by Maria to adjourn. The meeting adjourned at 8:40 pm.

Recording Secretary: Ann L. Brockmann

RISEAC website: www.riseac.org