



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.

April 16, 2015

6:00 pm – 8:00 pm

RI Parent Information Network

1210 Pontiac Avenue Cranston, RI 02920

Present: Edward Angilly, Sharon Bissonnette, Cris Brodeur, Ann Brockmann, Susan Donovan, Joanne Eichinger, Gillian Elliott Pearis, Jennifer Gladding, Rosemary Gomes, Patti Hien, Barbara Irons, Trish Martins, Pamela O'Brien, Mary Pendergast, Douglas Pierson, Brian Quigg, and Maria Silvestri-Golotto

Absent: Eileen Botelho*, Tarin Byrne*, Jennifer Connolly*, Cherie Cruz, Lori DiPina, Cindy Duckworth*, Deborah Garneau, Laura Laviano, JoAnn Nannig*, Robin Pacheco*, Elizabeth Santana, Sharon Ursini-Quimby*

**denotes that prior notice was given regarding absence*

RIDE/RITAP Attendees: Beth Pinto

Call to Order, Welcome, and Agenda Review: The meeting was called to order at 6:07 pm by Sue Donovan. Sue welcomed all members to the meeting.

Announcements:

Sue Donovan announced:

- Dinner selection sheet will be going around for the June 18th meeting and will be held at Luigi's Restaurant from 5:00pm to 7:00pm
- Statewide Parent Survey – RIPIN received a lot of calls regarding definitions /wording and translations (Spanish).
- Dare to Dream is on track with 450 students
- SEAN meeting – RI Disability Law Speaker -promoting Dear to Dream with meet the parents

Updates:

- Copy of the bylaws for all and a vote next month's meeting on May 14th
- Pam O'Brien announced - May 8th SEAN Conference /free to attend registration actively taken place (a lot of presentations; a large piece on youth suicide)
- Rosemary Gomes announced – Education Exchange was at the end of March a lot of students and parents with few teachers with great input on the five year Strategic Plan

Approval of Minutes:

- Minutes of March 19, 2015: motion to approve minutes by Trish Martin; seconded by Ann Brockmann. All approved. Minutes accepted.

New Business:

- Discussion on new bylaws changes
- Vote on new by Laws next month meeting on May 14th
- By laws are posted on State website
- Membership drive moved to May
- RISEAC needs two parents and one higher Ed. for the 2015-2016 membership
- Pam O'Brien has one parent interested and three pursuing in higher Ed.
- Vacancy of Officers – any recommendations please e-mail Beth or Sue
- Vote on 2015-2016 new membership (current membership grandfathered in)
- Slated for Leadership 2015-2016, Chair- Sue Donovan, Vice Chairperson- Patti Hien, Corresponding Secretary –Jen Gladding, Recording Secretaries- Eileen Botelho and Maria Silvestri-Golotto
- Input on the Annual Plan from workgroup members (Ann Brockmann will facilitate)
- The Annual Report to be completed and submitted by July 1st deadline
- Beth will send out a reminder email to RISEAC members for membership

April 2015 Director's Report: Beth Pinto spoke on behalf of David Sienko

1. Four Rhode Island schools selected to participate in initiative on personalized learning

The New England Secondary School Consortium and the Great Schools Partnership have selected four Rhode Island secondary schools to “participate in a new initiative that will help them develop [personalized learning experiences](#) that address the distinct learning needs, interests, and aspirations of individual students.” Over the coming years, the Great Schools Partnership will provide each school with a team of school-improvement specialists, or school coaches, who will help school leaders and teachers implement their plans. The four Rhode Island schools selected to participate in this initiative: the Alan Shawn Feinstein Middle School of Coventry, Central Falls High School, Cumberland High School, and Ponaganset High School (Foster-Glocester).

2. Commissioner's decision issued on payments from districts to charter public schools

On the basis of its governing charter, a charter public school is entitled to tuition payments from a district outside of catchment area for the student of a teacher who resides in the district: http://www2.ride.ri.gov/applications/RideDirectory/DOCS/2015/002-15_The_Learning_Community_v._Warwick%20_031015.pdf

3. Senate confirms Barbara Cottam as Board Chair

Barbara Cottam, who received unanimous support from the Senate in the vote to confirm her as the new chair of the Board of Education. Barbara is certainly well known to many Rhode Islanders from her time in government (as press secretary to Governor Sundlun), in business (she is currently an executive vice-president and the head of corporate affairs for the Citizens Financial Group, based in Providence), and in education, particularly as a founding member of Rhode Island Kids Count. Barbara also serves or has served on several boards of trustees, including Home & Hospice Care of Rhode Island, Crossroads Rhode Island, and La Salle Academy, as well as on the President's Council at Providence College

4. Career-Technical board convenes; RIPEC releases report on career-technical education

In keeping with the Career and Technical Education regulations of 2012, RIDE has been working together with our partners in business and industry to ensure that our career-

technical programs, centers, and schools provide students exposure to the world of work, offer students the opportunity to learn technical and career-based skills aligned with industry standards, and enable students to earn credentials that will prepare them for postsecondary education and training programs or for entry into challenging careers. These regulations emphasize the need for a strong connection between career-technical education and the workforce and business community. The goal is to ensure that all students have access to high-quality career-technical education that can lead them to rewarding jobs and to challenging careers. Legislation approved last year established a Rhode Island Board of Trustees on Career and Technical Education, which held its introductory meeting on April 2. To initiate the meeting, the Rhode Island Public Expenditure Council (RIPEC) has prepared a report on career and technical education, which is available [here](#).

5. MIC3 announces the Month of the Military Child

April 2015 is the Month of the Military Child. During April, the Military Interstate Children's Compact Commission (MIC3) along with many other organizations, nonprofits, and public entities will underscore the important role children play in our military communities. Our military children and families help sustain our fighting force, on whom we depend for the security and safety of our nation's families and communities. It is important to emphasize and recognize the role that military children play while their service-member parents are serving the nation. The MIC3 is committed to resolving the educational transition issues that are faced by these children and their families.

Across the nation, people are encouraged to "**Purple Up! For Military Kids.**" People are being encouraged to wear purple to show support for our military kids and to thank them for their strength and sacrifices. Please check for events in your area for celebrating during this month. More information is available at: www.dodea.edu.

6. The U.S. Department of Education released a new report detailing the unmet need across the country for high-quality preschool programs.

According to the report, [*A Matter of Equity: Preschool in America*](#), of the approximately 4 million 4-year olds in the United States, about 60 percent – or nearly 2.5 million – are not enrolled in publicly funded preschool programs, including state preschool programs, [Head Start](#), and programs serving children with disabilities. Even fewer are enrolled in the highest-quality programs.

The report highlights the need for an [Elementary and Secondary Education Act \(ESEA\)](#) that expands access to high-quality early learning opportunities and makes the law preschool through 12th grade, rather than K-12. High-quality preschool provides benefits to society of \$8.60 for every \$1 spent, according to the White House Council of Economic Advisors December 2014 report, [The Economics of Early Childhood Investments](#), about half of which comes from increased earnings for children when they grow up. An impressive coalition of education, business, law enforcement, retired military, child-advocacy groups, and faith-based leaders and 70 percent of voters said in a recent Gallup poll that they would support increasing federal funding to make sure high-quality preschool programs are available for every child in America.

The Obama Administration has made significant investments in early learning through the [Early Learning Challenge](#) and the [Preschool Development Grants](#) programs. The grants lay the groundwork for states to be prepared for the proposed [Preschool for All](#) program. The Administration has asked for an increase of \$500 million for Preschool Development Grants in the FY16 budget request to expand this opportunity to more states, the [Bureau of Indian Education](#), tribal educational agencies, territories, and the outlying areas.

Preschool Development Grants support states' efforts to build or enhance their infrastructure to provide high-quality preschool programs, and expand programs in high-

need communities. The \$250 million awarded to 18 states will benefit more than 33,000 additional children in 200 high-need communities, where families have little or no access to affordable, high-quality preschool. With additional funding, the U.S. Department of Education could have provided high-quality opportunities for many more children in the 36 states that applied.

7. Rhode Island Foundation schedules Community Conversation on improving student outcomes in urban schools

The next Community Conversation, Leading for Change in Urban School Systems, will feature Dr. Andres A. Alonso, former CEO Baltimore Public Schools. The conversation will take place on May 7, at 5:30 p.m., at the Providence Career & Technical Academy. To register for this event, please [click here](#). More information on this series can be found [here](#).

8. OSCAS Special Education Directors Briefing

The final OSCAS Special Education Directors Briefing for this year was held Thursday, April 2, 2015, at Save the Bay in Providence. Over 40 Special Education Administrators met to review and discuss the preliminary results of the OSCAS Comprehensive Needs Assessment Survey and discuss strategies for technical assistance moving forward. This is one more step in the process of aligning the resources of OSCAS to the emerging priorities and needs of the LEAs.

9. OHI Module Now Available

OSCAS is happy to announce a new module available to provide assistance to teams regarding special education eligibility in the category of Other Health Impaired. This module is available on the RIDE website under **Special Education Regulations (Be Informed)** and **Special Education Resources (Other Health Impaired)** or at the following link http://media.ride.ri.gov/OSCAS/OHI_Module-FINAL_4-10-2015/story.html . Please share this valuable information with your evaluation teams, principals, parents and school staff! If you have questions, please contact Alice Woods at 222-8983 or Alice.Woods@ride.ri.gov.

10. Transition Outcome Survey

OSCAS is launching the Transition Outcome Survey for the students who exited school in the 2014-15 school year. Also known as Indicator 14, this data is collected annually and used to assist school districts in examining the outcomes of students who received special education services while in school now that they have exited. For questions on the outcome survey, please contact Jane Slade at Jane.Slade@ride.ri.gov, 222-8350.

11. Braille Summer Camp Offered

Services for the Blind & Visually Impaired is coordinating a Braille Literacy summer camp for blind and visually impaired children on behalf of the National Federation of the Blind of RI. We will send the flyer for this camp out on the RISEAC list serve. Please share the flyer to any teachers, parents, or students you feel may benefit by this outstanding opportunity.

12. 2nd Annual Children's Behavioral Health Conference

Parent Support Network is sponsoring a the 2nd Annual Children's Behavioral Health Conference – Promoting Prevention, Treatment & Recovery on **Friday May 8** from **8:30-4:00** at the **Sheraton Providence Airport Hotel** in Warwick. Sessions will include information on Suicide Prevention, Adverse Effects of Marijuana on Youth, Managing Challenging Behaviors in Children with Special Mental Health Needs, and more.

Please go to the [Conference Website](#) for more information and to [register](#).

13. Department of Health Releases State Plan for Integrated System of Care for Children and Youth with Special Needs and Their Families

The State Plan for an Integrated System of Care for Children and Youth with Special Needs and Their Families commissioned by a special needs systems grant that was awarded to the RI Department of Health, Office of Special Needs in October 2014 has resulted in the attached OSN Plan. Through a series of meetings and interviews, (add)ventures assisted the Department of Health in developing the attached document. For more information, please contact Deb Garneau at Deborah.Garneau@health.ri.gov.

Old Business:

- Guest Speakers were Mary Ann Snider, RIDE Chief of Educator Excellence and Instructional Effectiveness: **Presented –ESEA Waiver**

Public Comment: None

Motion to adjourn made by Ann Brockmann and seconded by Sharon Bissonnette. All approved.

Meeting was Adjourned 7:55 pm