

SPECIAL EDUCATION ADVISORY COUNCIL MINUTES



Details

Date September 25, 2024

Time 12:30 pm to 2:00 pm

Location:

Kansas State School for the Blind

1100 State Avenue

Kansas City, Kansas 66102

Zoom

Call to Order: at 12:36pm

Roll Call

Members (X In person, Z on Zoom, blank absent):

x	Autumn Biltz	x	Jennifer Kucinski		Chris Reffett
x	Sydney Dringman		Jennifer Kurth		Sabrina Rishel
	Jennifer Florez	x	Dr. Jessica Lopez		Rebecca Shultz
	Brandon Gay	x	Dr. Marvin Miller		Dr. Sean Smith
z	Whitney George	x	Bradley Miller		Roxanne Zillinger
x	Lindsey Graf	x	Dr. Brooke Moore		
	Rebekah Helget	x	Dr. Troy Pitsch		
	Jennifer King		Charity Porter		
x	Dr. Lena Kisner				

Ex-Officio Members (x in person, z on zoom, blank absent):

	Luanne Barron	z	Leslie Girard		Idalia Shuman
z	Mike Burgess	z	Melanie Haas		
z	Ashley Enz	x	Jon Harding		

KSDE Staff: (x in person, z on zoom, blank absent):

	Steve Backman		Brian Dempsey	z	Cary Rogers
	Trish Backman		Dr. Crista Grimwood		Dean Zajic
	Joyce Broils	x	Bert Moore		
	Stacy Clark	x	Alysha Nichols		

Guests: ASL Interpreters

Kansas leads the world in the success of each student.

Quorum (12) met: 11 - no

Call to Order

Lindsey Graf

- Welcome and Introductions
 - New Members
 - Rebekah Helget
 - Roll Call

OSEP Visit Review

Bert Moore

- Strengths
 - There is a great relationship between systems and technical assistance system network (TASN)
 - Especially in rural districts, who said they lack the ability to have opportunities for engagement and professional development and TASN fills that void for them
 - Open to Feedback
 - Relationship with TA centers
- Needs
 - Personnel; shortage of teachers and paras
 - There are lots of opportunities now for getting licensed through the new programs from Teacher Licensure
 - Secondary Transition
 - Parents shared that there is a minimal number of individualized options open to students
 - Parents feel like there is only one option open to students
 - Part C to Part B Transition
 - State Interagency Coordinating Council said the Local Education Agency representative was not attending the transition meeting 90 days prior to a child turning 3 years old.
 - Indicator 12, which is measured by Special Education and Title Services
 - Was addressed before the OSEP meeting but it was still mentioned.
 - As a state is KSDE collecting enough evidence to support that systems are coming into compliance with IDEA requirements
 - Concerned KSDE only pulls 20 or 26 files
 - Monitoring of interlocals and co-operatives, which are categorized as Local Education Agencies
 - OSEP will check with their General Council, as there was no direct answer since students are attached to districts not these agencies
 - Want more information on file review, data reporting, due process, and dispute resolution
- Comment from Dr Marvin Miller: I was in several of those meetings and just reflecting

on that, especially from the parent groups, a lot of the parents don't know the correct terminology. That's not their job. So they were using phrases like "evaluation" or "assessments" for things that, that's not what they were. And I also noticed that families confuse all the different systems, so some of the things some people were complaining about were not actually the education system. But were some of the other systems that support that which in some other states might be integrated, but not in Kansas. It lets us know we need to help our parents understand more of the terminology and the roles of different agencies

- Another thing asked was how does KSDE know the parents rights document is understood by parents
 - Question by Autumn Biltz: Is there a way to get an audio version of the Parent's Rights document

Indicator 8 Survey Change Update

Bert Moore

- It was discussed how to change this survey at the last meeting. However, the document had already been prepared at that time.
- Currently looking for questions that would be appropriate to add to the indicator 8 document that would give parents an opportunity to give us feedback on what they think works in the IEP meeting, or in the meetings in general, that the systems are doing and what can be improved and what is not working
 - Want parents to feel supported
 - Need data that is measurable
 - SEAC will be assisting and coming up with those questions
- Do parents feel engaged in the special education process, not just the IEP but the initial evaluations and annual reviews, the questions they ask and how do they feel. Are the parents prepared to understand what's being recommended?

Kaw Valley Lawsuit – KSDE Response

Bert Moore

- This incident was in the news
- Someone put in print that there was a para abusing a student with down syndrome, that this para was hitting the student in the head, calling the student names and making fun of the student. Basically, that this para was physically and verbally abusing this student and that the director and superintendent were allowing this to occur
- KSDE immediately decided to conduct a monitoring visit on that information
- On a separate instance, the school is accused of locking the student in a cage.
- There is a planned visit in October for interviews, IEP review, and monitoring
- Since a lawsuit has been filed, the outcome will be determined through the legal process

Ex-Officio Member Reports

Families Together

- In the supplemental documents from Families Together there is a link to *Chase Your Dreams* podcast that was completed with the TASN partners around the school mental health initiative

- The report is run January through June, there is a new data system
- Parent Leadership Conference is this weekend
 - Over 200 parents and kids registered in Topeka
- New grant with the Department of Commerce that is focused on employment
 - Expanding CHASE program
 - CHASE is an acronym for Community Honoring Adolescent Success in Education
 - Focused on pilot site of Garden City

Kansas Association of Special Education Administrators

- Connecting with KASEA continuing this year
 - Bringing KASEA members together by connecting members across the state.
 - Focuses on issues that are concerning the field
 - First Connecting with KASEA was September 11
- Kansas State University is working on a special education administrator evaluation tool. Several people are working with KASEA to partner with K-State on creating that tool which will be a resource that can go out to districts when its available
- Upcoming events
 - Tri-State Law Conference in Omaha, Nebraska, which a lot of KASEA members attend, in November 2024
 - KASEA Winter Conference in January 2025

Disability Rights Center

- October is National Disability Employment Awareness Month
 - There was a proclamation signing this morning
- Mike Burgess was recently a presenter at a Transition Tuesday Webinar, presenting on the I-transition planning tool
- Guardian statutes are due for a major update, hopefully during next session
 - There's been an advisory committee to the Kansas Judicial Council that has been working for 4 years, going through the current statutes line by line and adopting best practices from national standards and overlaying that into Kansas
 - Ensure that less restrictive alternatives have been tried before immediately jumping to guardianship which provides protections to those in need
- KDADS has an Employment First pilot
 - Seeing results in trainings
 - Goal was to get 5 new jobs with each partner
 - one partner has done almost 25 partnerships now
 - This is one provider in one community doing successful, competitive, integrated employment opportunities
 - Voting rights outreaches to different organizations since it is an election year

Kansas State Board Of Education

- Blue Ribbon Task Force on screen time
 - KSBOE decided to ask a task force to convene
 - 36 members
 - Includes parents, students, teachers, administrators
 - 4 meetings so far, next in October
 - 90 minutes long
 - Streamed on KSDE's YouTube channel
 - 4pm Central Standard on Thursdays
 - Experts come and present to the task force
 - Please think about how phones and tablets are being used in schools, and how that might affect how the actions of the task force might affect the student population as well as special education teachers
 - There are services written into IEPs, you can write out the necessary equipment into IEPs as well
 - It might be a good time to be thinking about and considering to be explicit in stating what exactly the student needs to have access to and why, because the IEP will always supersede any action that might be taken
 - Expected that the task force will come forward with recommendations, but that the KSBOE will not take formal action other than to provide that final document to districts as guidance
 - Please reach out to Melanie Haas or Dr Troy Pitsch, a Blue Ribbon Task Force member, if you have stories, questions, comments or concerns on screen time and smart devices in school

Kansas State School for the Blind

- Infant-Toddler program that serves Birth to 3-years-old
 - New program began last August
 - Serving 214 children currently that are blind or low vision
 - 8 providers in the state that partner with KDHE and their infant-toddler program, plus a state coordinator
- Field Based services
 - Serve over 200 districts across the state
 - Every student that comes here for placement is working towards being back at their home community
- Campus houses about 63 students
- 5K run tomorrow that supports students
 - Getting a new gym this year

Items for November SEAC Agenda

Meeting adjourned: at 1:44pm

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