****

**Minutes**

July 13, 2020

10 a.m.

Microsoft Teams

Virtual Meeting Platform

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Council Members in Attendance** | **Department Employees in Attendance** |
| Joey Ellis, Chair  Scott Rupe, Vice Chair | Theresa Nicholls, Assistant Commissioner  Joanna Bivins |
| Amy Allen | Kate Martin |
| Angela Jackson | Joann Runion |
| Darlene Walden | Angela Wegner |
| Chantal Hess-Taylor | Rachel Suppé |
| David Craig  Mark Liverman | Susan Usery  Zachary Stone |
| Jennifer Escue | Nancy Williams |
| Melvin Jackson  Catherine Knowles | Anika Chambers  Crystal McCarver |
| Stephanie Ortego  Shannon Taylor  Tammy Day  Loria Hubbard  Dawn Fry  Virginia Crump | Michael Holman  Allison Davey  Phara Williams  Ruth Christopher  Alison Gauld  Gary Smith |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Council Members Not in Attendance** | **Visitors in Attendance** |
| Brian Brown  Allie Pedinoff  Cleatrice McTorry | Kim Kredich  Shaundraya Hersey |
|  |  |

**Objective**

Provide policy guidance with respect to special education and related services for children with disabilities in Tennessee.

**Welcome/Introductions**

**Dawn Fry, Chair**

* A brief introduction was made for the third Advisory Council meeting of 2020. Guests, council members, and TDOE employees were thanked for their attendance.
* Due to concerns over Covid-19 and statewide guidelines limiting gatherings, this meeting is being conducted virtually through the Microsoft Teams platform.
  + While the meeting is taking place virtually, it is still open to the public.
* A quorum is present and voting may proceed.

**Approval of Current Agenda (Guiding Principle Seven)**

**Dawn Fry, Chair**

See AC website ([here](http://www.tennessee.gov/education/article/special-education-advisory-council)) for agenda

* **Action Item**

Dawn advised the present council members to review the July 13, 2020 agenda.

* **Final Action Taken**

The Council reviewed the agenda and voted to approve.

**Approval of April 27 Meeting Minutes (Guiding Principle Seven)**

**Dawn Fry, Chair**

See AC website ([here](https://www.tn.gov/education/student-support/special-education/special-education-advisory-council.html)) for October minutes

* **Action Item**

Dawn advised the present council member to review the April 27, 2020 minutes.

* **Final Action Taken**

The council reviewed the minutes and voted to approve.

**Selection of New Chair and Vice Chair**

* Joey Ellis was nominated as Chair. The nomination was seconded and put to a vote, leading to Joey Ellis securing the position as Chair of the council.
* New member, Scott Rupe, was nominated as Vice Chair. The nomination was seconded and Scott Rupe secured the position as Vice Chair of the Council

**Special Education Rule**

**Theresa Nicholls, Assistant Commissioner**

* The Tennessee State Board of Education has been working to align their rules with updated statutes.
* The majority of changes are not substantive, but rather changes made to reorganize the language present.
* Theresa asked the council to review the changes and provide feedback.
* Question: On page 10, there is language regarding a parent “revoking consent”. How would a parent do such a thing?
  + Answer: The revocation of consent must be provided in writing.

**SPDG Update**

**Kate Martin, Senior Director of Special Education**

* Some changes have been made to accommodate Covid-19 safety concerns.
* The training remains the same, for the most part, though delivery will be provided through virtual methods.
* Additional training is being added to prepare trainees to redeliver training virtually.
* The mini-grants are still in place.
* The Early Childhood Summer Summit will also be taking place in a virtual format.

**State Determination**

**Zac Stone, Director of Data Services**

* Zac gave a brief overview of the Annual Performance Report (APR) State Determination
  + This report is required to show data regarding IDEA implementation across the state.
* There are four different determinations a state can receive: meets requirements, needs assistance, needs intervention, and needs substantial intervention.
  + Tennessee’s 2020 determination was needs assistance.
* The full APR is accessible on the Tennessee Department of Education website.
  + The notification letter from the federal Department of Education’s Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) is available on the website as well.

**Grants Update**

**Allison Davey, Senior Director of Strategic Supports**

* The process has been redesigned to support the department’s strategic plan and to drive systemic change.
* Historically, these grants were provided one year at a time. Under the new structure, it is possible for schools to receive these grants for multiple years, should they meet qualifying criteria.
* There are three grants: Explore (one year), Implement (up to three years), and Sustain (up to two years).
* Question: Could some examples of how these grants are being used be provided?
  + Answer: School districts have used these grants to convene data teams, contract with third parties to analyze and prioritize their needs, implementing programs to address post-secondary outcomes, and continuing and expanding SPDG activities in their school systems.

**IEP Review; Supplementary Aids and Services in EasyIEP**

**Crystal McCarver, Senior Director of Regional Engagement**

* In EasyIEP, supplementary aids and services can be added after the Goals section.
* Supplemental aids must being with ‘AT’ (assistive technology) for inclusion on the IEP.
* General guidance is provided in the EasyIEP manual and individualized coaching and training for district support.
* Specific guidance related to supplementary aids and services can also be found in the EasyIEP manual.
* Ongoing guidance will be provided through PCG conference calls and training, coaching, and technical assistance opportunities related to IEP reviews.

**Technical Assistance Network Update**

**Joanna Bivins, Director of School Psychology and Behavior Services**

* The department is seeking to ensure that all supports are handled properly, regardless of school or district size.
* The goal is for assistance to be provided on the basis of data collected throughout the state.
  + The department conducted an in-depth needs assessment in order to gain this data.
* Some issues being addressed by the department, as a result of the data found through the needs assessment, are behavior and programming challenges, discipline issues, restraint and isolation, child find, alternate assessment participation, pre-K LRE, transition planning, achievement proficiency and growth, and shortages.

**Public Comments (Guiding Principle Seven)**

* Kim Kredich, a volunteer advocate in Knox County and parent of a child with a disability, spoke about her concerns that the Tennessee Department of Education was not adequately investigating administrative complaints.
* Kim also stated that she feels more members of the public should be aware of these meetings and speak during the public comment portion.

**New Business/Additional Items (Guiding Principle Seven) Joey Ellis, Chair**

* Melvin Jackson asked whether in-person meetings for the council would resume.
  + Answer: The status of in-person meetings will remain virtual at least until guidance from the health department deems in-person meetings safe.
* Multiple members encouraged public comment.
* The next meeting was tentatively set for October 13.

**Call for Future Meeting Topics (Guiding Principle Seven) Joey Ellis, Chair**

* Updates regarding school reopening procedures was requested.

**Closing Remarks/Adjourn (Guiding Principle Seven) Joey Ellis, Chair**

* A motion was made to adjourn the meeting. It was seconded shortly after.
* Joey thanked everyone for their input and attendance and adjourned the meeting.