

**Iowa Special Education Advisory Panel**  
**Date: January 8, 2016**  
**Facilitators: Nancy Ankeny Hunt**  
**Panel Secretary: Cayanna Reinier**

**Present:** Valerie Baker, Craig Barnum, Carma Betz, Kurtis Broeg, Jan Collinson, Billie Jo Cowley, Margaret Joan Ebersold, Susan Etscheidt, Ron Koch, Amy Liddell, Susie Lund, Amy Peterson, Emily Sopko, Mary Stevens, Karen Thompson, Kathleen Van Tol, Kelly Wallace, Julie Aufdenkamp, Sandra Smith, Joel Weeks, Donita Dettmer.

**Department Staff Present:** Nancy Ankeny Hunt, Barb Guy, Cayanna Reinier.

**Absent:** Denise Brown, Cari Higgins, Aryn Kruse, Larry Martin, Joseph McAbee, Melanie Patton, Beth Ryberg, Jason Yessak, Kendra Jochimsen, Ruth Frush, Doug Wolfe

**Guests:** Meredith MacQuigg, Thomas Mayes, Maggie Pickett

**Handouts for the January 8, 2016 available on the [Google Site](#):**

- [Agenda](#)
- [Minutes](#)
- [State Performance Plan and Annual Report](#)
- [SSIP – Phase II](#)
- [AT in IA](#)

### **Welcome/Introductions**

The meeting was called to order by Susie Lund at 9:02am

### **Approval of Consent Agenda (Minutes, 9/11/15)**

Motion made by Kurtis Broeg to approve, second by Mary Stevens. No discussion – Motion approved.

**Public Comment:** No Public Comment

**SPP/APR Meredith MacQuigg** (Please refer to the Meredith's [Power Point](#) presentation on the Google Site)

The Iowa Department of Education has a six year performance plan that they submit to the Office of Special Education Programs. The State Performance Plan (SSP) is for 2013-2014 through 2018-2019. The targets for this plan were recommended to the State panel last year and were adopted for 2013 – 2018. The SSP is how we are implementing IDEA Part B.

The Annual Performance Report (APR) we submit once a year in February. It is comprised of sixteen indicators; 5 which are compliance indicators and 11 performance indicators. There has been a little bit of changes over the year due to the guidance we receive Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) over the years; historically there is an emphasis of compliance but now has shifted towards goals.

The indicators are usually discussed and referred to as B 1- B 17; but Meredith has tried to present them in a way that they make sense not necessarily in numerical order.

Those students who are in their fifth year of high school do not affect the dropout rate unless they actually drop out. They do however affect the graduation rate. This changed three years ago when it was mandated by the feds.

The feds define those enrolled in higher education as youth that have been enrolled in a full or part time in a community college (2 year program), or a college/university (4 year program), a minor program, or at least one complete term at any time since leaving high school. Competitive employment is defined by the feds as work for pay at or above the minimum wage, working with others that are non-disabled for more than 35 hours a week for at least 90 days in the year after completing high school; which includes military. Enrolled in another post-secondary or training mean that they have been enrolled in a program in a full or part-time basis for at least one term within the year of leaving high school in an education or training program; examples are: job core, workforce development program, adult education and a vocational/technical school that is less than a two year program.

Data is always available for you to look at on Grad 360, [osep.grads360.org](http://osep.grads360.org). If you click on Part B or Part C of state profiles you will get a map that shows each State profile.

### **Complaints Update – Thomas Mayes**

Thomas will write up the discussion in a chart format for the SEAP google site.

There are three types of procedural safeguards in the federal statute: mediations, due process complaints (which are heard by administrative law judges) and State complaints (that are investigated and resolved by Iowa of Education staff members). Today we will only discuss State complaints.

Most State complaints are resolved voluntary but over the last two years since Thomas last spoke at SEAP there have been fourteen that went through to a decision from the Department. Ten of them were actually substantive; four were bizarre jurisdictional. Of the ten, the District/AEA prevailed on eight and the parent prevailed on two.

Lesson's learned (overview):

- Cut and paste IEP's are bad;
- The standard is reasonableness and compliance not perfection or better than;
- When dealing with State complaints whether they are non-special education or special education issues; remember your bedside manner when dealing with parents, talk to them like they are grown-ups and remember this is their child;

- IEP implementation is a great idea;
- Don't use your special education instructors as substitutes.

### **Findings from Evaluation of Procedures Manual - Mary Stevens**

The Department of Education contracted with West Ed to take a look at the AEA Special Ed Procedures manual. The purpose of the study was to really take a look at what we have in the manual, get an understanding of how it is used, explore ways to improve the format and the organization, and to plan for sustainability of the document.

There were specific questions that were generated to be addressed by the study. They are:

1. Who uses the manual and why?
2. What type of information is presented in the manual?
3. What are the consequences for not including certain information in the manual?
4. What are the strengths and challenges of the search function of the manual?
5. Is there ways it can be approved?
6. Is it a sustainable document?

There was several different ways they collected this information including:

- Focus groups
- Interviews
- A consultants acted as an independent reviewer to really take a look at the manual and review in detail
- Conducted surveys
- Met with advisory groups

The common themes from the results that came through are:

- Most people were satisfied with the content of the manual and found it helpful
- There was strong agreement that the formatting could be improved
- Request for more examples in the manual
- Recognition of processing and updating changes in the manual
- The size and volume of the manual is overwhelming
- There is inconsistent use and/or interpretation of the manual across the AEAs
- Vague and confusing content

The overall recommendation was to

- Refine the process and increase the transparency with the manual
- Improve the format and organization
- Communicate changes to the field
- Really present at the beginning of the manual, and set the stage, the purpose of the manual.

Next Steps:

- Important to clarify with the Department of Ed the roles and responsibilities of the DE and the AEA in the development, review and maintenance of the procedure
- The director's agreed that the primary purpose of the manual is to direct and inform the AEA and LEA staff about the appropriate procedures.
- They are asking David Happy to explore with the DE staff a different format for the manual, maybe like the Part C manual.
- They will be more explicit with the references to the federal regulations in the manual so that it is very clear what we are referencing.
- We need to provide professional development and learning with the staff that use the manual, especially with the AEA regional directors and Special Education directors within our LEAs, as they are more involved in interpreting the manual.

### **State Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP) – Barb Guy**

At next month's meeting OSEP will be here on an invitation as we work on our phase two development of our SSIP. Phase one was finished and submitted last April. This April we submit phase two that has three sections to it: infrastructure development, support for the program, and an evaluation plan. Barb will put a detailed plan of exactly what the Feds are requiring that will be added to the Google site if you want to take a look at what is all required.

The description for our SSIP and our measurable result is: learners with disabilities who are proficient readers by third grade. Looking at the winter data we had 25% of all students with IEPs who participated in reading meet their benchmarks in winter. This year we will report and use our spring data. Please remember we have not targeted any interventions to them as we have been using this last year to plan. In our planning we used the State Personnel Development Grant (SPDG) to mirror our SSIP which includes our focus on improving the effectiveness of specially designed instruction with the beginning focus on Pre K – 6 literacy, with our focus so far being on K – 3 literacy.

The Part B process for our SSIP is the same as the timelines we established in our SPDG. This year we are working on timeline and infrastructure development and next year we are officially starting with a cohort of seventy schools with the following year working with an additional cohort.

Next month at our meeting we will have our SPDG evaluator here so we can get some feedback on whether what we are looking at is really going to answer some of the things we want to know. We also have a number of strands where people are doing work and materials around specially designed instruction within an MTSS framework. As well as other strands surrounding Pre-K, technology and literacy, literacy for students with severe intellectual abilities, and Barbara Ohlund on how it all connects with C4K.

### **Assistive Technology – AIM/AEM – Maggie Picket**

As early as 1990 OSEP provided some guidance to some teams that were required to provide assistive technology to some students with disabilities. This generated a need for an Assistive Technology Specialist. Over the years through reauthorizations they really targeted

Assistive Technology language and required us to consider that at every IEP meeting; which in turn brought about accessible instructional materials. Over the years we have noticed a gap as there are not enough Assistive Technology Specialist to go around. This has created a shift to move from an expert model to more of a collaborative model.

Within the Iowa Department of Education we are working on what our collaborative model should look like. We currently have an Assistive Technology Leadership Team (previously AT Liaison Team) who acts as the work horse and we are adding an Advisory Council on Accessible and Assistive Technologies, which will act as the planning and coordinating entity.

The purpose of the Advisory Council on Accessible and Assistive Technologies will establish a cross discipline collaborative exchange of objectives, efforts and needs, to leverage an integrated system of accessible and assistive technologies to support all Iowa learners. The objectives of the council is to review the current efforts by the current leadership team in providing accessible and assistive technologies to learners in the State of Iowa and also explore future technologies, and identify cross collaboration across stakeholder groups.

The mission of the Assistive Technology Leadership Team will build capacity in the area of assistive technology; to support learners, families, and school teams in their efforts to facility independence and meaningful life outcomes for all Iowa learners.

One of our work teams within the Assistive Technology Leadership Team is the Steering Committee. The purpose of the committee is to strengthen the capacity of the State area and local education agencies to establish a system that supports the appropriate consideration, acquisition, and provision of accessible instructional and educational materials for all Iowa learners. This team consists of two Assistive Technology Consultants, one Speech/Language Pathologist, one Instructional Coach, one School psychologist, one parent, three higher education folks (two from UNI and one from Iowa).

AIM stands for Accessible Instructional Materials and are print or digital based materials that are presented in four ways; braille, large print, audio file, or digital text (text on the screen reading itself). We are utilizing the quality indicators from the National AIM center which will help create changes in our system and provide some sound practice.

They are also partnering with CAST the Center for Applied Special Technologies to be part of an intensive technical assistive cohort to help move this work forward. This includes pairing with nine other states across the country and will be launched this February at the national conference.

What's next:

- They are looking to update their AIM guidance.
- Create deliverables to support teachers, teams, staff, districts and AEA's in the consideration process and acquiring the materials needed.
- Provision – how do we utilize the tools we have to provide the services to students?

Another team that has been established is an Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC). This team hopes to collect a repertoire of augmentative and alternative communication resources, create a professional development to increase knowledge and skills, provide recommendation for implementation to maximize the communication and literacy growth for students with complex communication needs within the specially designed instruction at all level of the multi-tiered systems of supports.

Communicators that requires AAC usually are one of three types of communicators: emergent communicators, context dependent communicators and dependent communicators. The team that focuses around AAC has developed a number of different tools which include:

- AAC Planning tool – which integrates evidence bases practice and tools for assessment for learners with complex communication needs. Which in turn helps staff identify why type of communicator the student is as well as provides support and design framework.

What's next:

- Developing communication partner training.

### **Wrap-Up**

The Special Education Symposium has been set and will take place on June 13 and June 14<sup>th</sup>. SEAP will support the travel and expenses of members who wish to attend. Information for registration will be coming out sometime in March. There are a number of folks working on different content areas but the content will cover birth to 21.

Adjourn – 11:50.

Next meeting – February 12<sup>th</sup>