

Special Education Advisory Panel (SEAP)

March 2, 2015 Meeting Minutes

Attendees: Brandy Funk, Stephanie Hoffman, Brian Darcy, Charlie Silva, Jill Matthews, Travis Russell, Robin Greenfield, Keith Allred, Amanda Pena

SEAP Welcome and Update, Minutes Review and Approval: (Keith Allred, SEAP Chair)

- Keith welcomed the panel members
- Review of minutes was postponed until later in the morning

Introduction of New Special Education Staff : Dr. Charlie Silva, SDE Special Education Director

- Wendy Lee is the new fiscal and accountability coordinator for the Department
- Ivana Hotchkiss is the new data manager for the Department of Special Education
- The Results Accountability position is open and will be filled this spring
- SEAP members introduced themselves and Keith Allred explained the purpose of SEAP

SDE Update – Dr. Charlie Silva, SDE Special Education Director

- Dr. Silva reported that there is a minimal increase in federal funding for special education
- Dr. Silva gave an update on the Annual Performance Report which was due to Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) on February 2, 2015. The Department received technical assistance from OSEP in preparation of the report. OSEP will review the report and send comments. If changes are to be made they will have 15 days to make changes and resubmit to the Department.
- The State Systematic Improvement Plan (SSIP) is currently being completed and will be submitted to OSEP by April 1, 2015. Keith requested that Dr. Silva report on the results of the Plan at the May SEAP meeting. The focus of the plan is on Literacy instruction at Grade 4. A survey was sent out in the fall 2014 to stakeholders from around the state. Data reviewed indicated areas of need within regions of Idaho.
- The Department is also reviewing what kind of data they require schools to report and when that data is sent to the state as a way to create a more efficient and effective system of reporting



Review of Parent Survey: Dr. Charlie Silva, SDE Special Education Director

- In May 2014 the revised Parent Survey was distributed to a stratified sample of 4,774 parents of students receiving special education services. A total of 591 surveys were returned with a response rate of 12.4%. The return rate from the previous year was 13.5%.
- A discussion was held as to potential reasons for the lower return rate. Dr. Silva gave examples of other states who use range of strategies to increase return rates including providing monetary incentives or giving public recognition to schools with high return rates.
- Dr Silva requested that SEAP make recommendations to her on how to increase the survey return rates as well we suggestions for addressing the three lowest levels of agreement on the survey. These included: 1) information to parents on organizations/training that offer support for parents of students with disabilities; 2) involvement of parents in discussions related to post-secondary options, employment, and independent living/adult service providers; and, 3) preparation of a student for life after school.

Review of the Equitable Access to Excellent Educators: Marcia Beckman – Director of Elementary & Secondary Education Act (ESEA) Programs

- Idaho receives \$10 million dollars under Title 2A to provide professional development to teachers and administrators in an effort to ensure that children in Idaho have access to qualified teachers. Each state is required to develop a plan on how to implement procedures related to training. Idaho has an issue with retaining teachers and data indicates that most special education teachers only remain in a position for three years. The SDE is in the process of getting stakeholder input in an effort to develop an appropriate plan

ESEA Waiver Update : Marcia Beckman – Director of ESEA Programs

- Ms. Beckman reviewed the history of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA). Currently named No Child Left Behind. The U S Department of Education offers waivers to states to bypass certain conditions of the Act. Idaho is currently in the processing of renewing the waiver which is due March 31, 2015 which will be in place until 2019.

Parent Survey Discussion: Keith Allred, SEAP Chair



- A further discussion will take place and SEAP members will make the following recommendations to Dr. Silva regarding the Parent Survey return rate: 1) Do not make any changes to the content of the survey; 2) Gather another year of data; 3) Have Jill Mathews from the SDE research what incentives other states use to increase survey return rate and come up with a list of advantages and disadvantages to present at September 2015 meeting, 4) Ask The Center for Technical Assistance for Excellence in Special Education at the Center for Persons with Disabilities (TAESE) from Utah State University to provide analysis of data for the 2014-15 school year by August 2015 for discussion in September SEAP meeting
- The survey results will be sent out to SEAP members who were not present for the meeting
- The Panel would like Dr. Silva to participate in an additional discussion/recommendations about the survey during the May 11, 2015 SEAP meeting

Approval of Meeting Minutes: Keith Allred, SEAP Chair

- Meeting minutes from the January meeting were reviewed and changes and edits made to the content. Keith Allred asked for a motion to approve the minutes. Amanda Pena moved to approve the minutes and Brandy Funk seconded the motion. The January minutes were approved.
- Meeting minutes from the November 2014 meeting are in the process of being revised and will be approved at the May 2015 meeting.

Member Updates: Keith Allred, SEAP Chair

- Brian Darcy from Idaho Educational Services for the Deaf and the Blind (IESDB) gave an update on American Sign Language (ASL) Enrichment training that has taken place for students, parents, and siblings. He also indicated that a potential IEN shutdown will have an impact on internet access for regional programs.
- Travis Russell (proxy for Ted Oparnico) indicated that the Correction Alternative Placement is adding a GED to its programs
- Keith Allred (Chair) from BSU gave an update on the status of special education degree programs in the state with regards to number of students and potential issues with maintaining those programs
- Jill Mathews – Family and Community Engagement Coordinator from SDE reported that the Department is in discussion about creating a dual certification (general education and special education) to combat the shortage of special education teachers in Idaho. She also gave the panel information about the 22nd Annual Idaho State Prevention and Support Conference that will take place in Sun Valley, Idaho on April 9-10, 2015. The



conference is sponsored by the Department of Education and focuses on youth at risk.

- Amanda Pena – Department of Health and Welfare (DHW) reported that her division at the DHW is monitoring legislation related to parental rights and any overlap with other agencies. She also provided information on the 2015 Strengthening Families Training Institute that will take place on March 17-18, 2015 at the Boise Hotel and Convention Center

Memberships: Robin Greenfield, SEAP Vice Chair

- A discussion was held about SEAP members whose terms expire as of the May meeting. Members who want to either continue for a second term or will be recommended by their agency (required participants) need to complete an application form and submit it to Jill Mathews at the SDE
- The panel needs to recruit additional parents for the SEAP
- Applications will be reviewed in early June by the SEAP Executive Committee and then forwarded to the Superintendent of Public Instruction for Approval. Continuing and new members will be notified of their acceptance by July 1, 2015.

Future Meeting Dates:

- May 4, 2015 SEAP members are invited to a session from 9-12 presented by Art Cernosia on dispute resolution. The meeting will be held at the SDE
- May 11, 2015 will be the final SEAP meeting

The meeting was adjourned at 2:00 pm

