

MINUTES

Miami-Dade County Public Schools SUPERINTENDENT'S DISTRICT ADVISORY PANEL FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES (SWD)

Minutes of October 17, 2013
School Board Administration Building – Room 559
3:00 P.M.

Members Present

Vickie Burley	Stephanie Mintz	Elaine Silny
Enrique Escallon	Linda Reiter	Madelene Spado
Isabel Garcia	Christine Reigadas	Miguel Suau
Ava Goldman	Doris Shorkey	Kathy Vergara
Lynn Miskiel		

Alternates Present

Maribel Clave II-Marin – Easter Seals
Camila Rocha – Easter Seals
Susanna Velez – Easter Seals

Honorary Members Present

Jane Blake

School Board Members Present

Laurie Malman – Alternate Dr. Lawrence Feldman

School Personnel Present

Rosalia Gallo
Edna Waxman

Guests Present

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 3:05 pm.

Introduction and Welcome

After introductions, Ms. Chris Reigadas, Panel Chair, welcomed members and guests.

Approval of Minutes

Members of the Panel approved the minutes of the meeting of September 26, 2013 corrected. Enrique Escallon moved to approve the minutes as corrected. Miguel Suau seconded the motion. Chris Reigadas asked members to approve the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Enrique Escallon moved that in the future Panel members approve the minutes through a consent agenda format. Miguel Suau seconded the motion. Mr. Escallon noted that this would save time during the meetings. Ms. Reigadas called the question. The motion passed unanimously.

Agenda Items

Senate Bill 1108: Edna Waxman, Instructional Supervisor, ESE Compliance

Chris Reigadas introduced Edna Waxman to present information about new regulations in Senate Bill 1108. Ms. Waxman explained that Senate Bill 1108 provides mechanisms for increased parental involvement and specifies school and program accountability requirements. Ms. Waxman continued to describe the areas of change defined in the legislation.

Section 1002.20, Florida Statutes (F.S.) K-12 Student and Parent Rights

- School district personnel may not object to, discourage or attempt to discourage the attendance of an adult of a parent's choice at any meeting with school district personnel. Actions that are prohibited include attempted or actual coercion or harassment of parent or students, or retaliation or threats of consequences to parents of students.

Ms. Waxman explained that this means that parents can bring anyone they want to meetings. This rule applies to all public school students. A form has been developed for signature of all attending the meeting.. Signatures are required at end of meeting. Enrique Escallon asked why participants were not required to sign at the beginning of the meeting. Ms. Waxman explained that the form is signed at the end of the meeting because it confirms that parents were not denied the right to bring another individual to the meeting.

- Changes: Notice of Procedural Safeguards for Parents of Students with Disabilities

In accordance with the provisions of Florida Statutes 1008.212, upon the school district superintendent's recommendation to the commissioner of education that an extraordinary exemption for a give state assessment administration window be granted or denied.

Ms. Waxman explained that this means the school personnel must provide parents with a copy of the Procedural Safeguards when the parents request an extraordinary exemption.

School Districts are required to acquire parental consent for the initial provision of services. Parental consent is required for specific actions such as the designation of the alternate assessment, provision of instruction in the state standards access points curriculum, and placement in an exceptional student education center.

Notice of change in services must be provided ten (10) days prior to the scheduled meeting.

FLDOE State Appropriation for Full-Time Students

School district must provide information to parents regarding the amount of funds the school receives for each of the five ESE support levels for a full time student.

Filing a Due Process Hearing Request

Parents or the school district may file a due process hearing request on any matter relating to a proposal or a refusal to initiate or change the identification, evaluation, eligibility determination, or educational placement of a child in the provision of FAPE.

Florida Statutes Section 1003.572: Collaboration of public and private instructional personnel

Private instruction personnel paid by parents can come into school to administer services.

Private instructional personnel are defined as: individuals certified under 393.17, behavioral programs, speech-language pathologists, occupational therapists, physical therapists, psychologists, and clinical social workers.

- Section 1003.572, F.S., Collaboration of Public and Private Instructional Personnel

Private instructional personnel are permitted to observe, collaborate, and provide services. Principal and teachers must consent to time and place.

Ms. Waxman emphasized that the provision of these services does not waive the rights of a free appropriate public education under IDEA.

Elaine Silny commented that it will be interesting to see how this regulation plays out. Miguel Suau said that his daughter did not get therapy because her academic curriculum was so intense that she needed to attend class at all times. He then got therapy from a community provider.

Elaine Silny said speech is prohibited from taking a student from any academic subject whatsoever. If a child is not in an elective, this presents a problem. Stephanie Mintz asked if it would be helpful to have a statement from the Panel. In her opinion, this provision would be difficult at the high school level. Jane Blake said that just before she retired it was ruled that students could not be removed from academic subjects for therapy.

Ms Waxman emphasized that this regulation is new and we have to develop guidelines as this moves forward. She said that district personnel will better be able to determine the pros and cons after a year of implementation.

Kathy Vergara and Chris Reigadas invited Edna Waxman to return to the Panel at the end of the year or early next year to let us know how this works out.

- Section 1008.212, F.S., Students with Disabilities, Extraordinary Exemption

IEP may determine that specific circumstances or conditions prevent a student with a disability from physically demonstrating the mastery of skills that have been acquired and are measured by a statewide standardized assessment, to include an end-of-course assessment or alternate assessment in accordance with Florida Statutes 1008.22 and an extraordinary exemption be granted from the administration of the assessment.

Ms. Waxman explained that a request for an extraordinary exemption must be submitted to the assessment office for approval, then to the Superintendent, and then to Commissioner of Education. Parent may file due process against Commissioner of Education. She emphasized that very few students have extraordinary exemptions.

Enrique Escallon asked how the district determines how to appropriately assess a student. Ms. Waxman said the best way we have is to assess what a child has learned through his work in the classroom. She emphasized that every student is different.

- Section 1012.585, F.S., Process for Renewal of Professional Certificates

Ms. Waxman explained that all teachers must take one college credit or equivalent of in-service points (20 hrs) in teaching students with disabilities. This is part of the renewal process. Discussion followed.

Chris Reigadas thanked Edna Waxman for her informative presentation.

Silver Knight Project Overview: Mariana Barbara, Panel Student Representative

Mariana Barbara was unable to attend the meeting today.

Committee Reports

Awards Committee

No meeting

Kathy Vergara/Jill Brookner

D/HH Committee

Lynn Miskiel/Linda Reiter

Lynn Miskiel distributed the minutes of the October 9th meeting at J.R.E. Lee Education Center. She distributed copies of the Florida Communication Plan and reviewed the purpose of the plan.

Kathy Vergara and Lynn Miskiel are members of the Florida National Deaf Agenda team. The Communication Plan is to be developed prior to the IEP meeting. The purpose is to inform the development of the IEP. Determination is through Department of Education. Edna Waxman said that there is a section on the IEP that must be checked verifying that a Communication Plan has been completed. It will not be possible to complete the document if the item has not been checked.

Kathy Vergara noted that several years ago, Barbara Chotiner introduced the Communication Plan to the Panel.

The next meeting will be on December 4th at Hialeah Miami Lakes Senior High School.

Elaine Silny asked about funding for hearing aids and ear molds form Phonak. Ms. Silny would like to attend the meeting via phone conference. Ms Reiter and Ms. Miskiel said that they would investigate to see if this is possible. Ms. Silny said she would be happy to call in via cell phone.

Education-Inclusion Committee

Rosalia Gallo/Rosa Maria Barbara

Ms. Gallo reviewed the Inclusion Achievement Forum.

Panel Secondary Transition Committee

Jill Brookner/Enrique Escallon

No meeting.

By-Laws Committee

No meeting.

Nominating Committee

Stephanie Mintz said that she is pleased to be an honorary member of the Panel. Chris Reigadas announced that the Panel has two openings for parent members. Ms. Reigadas said that the other two openings will be filled by a parent from the Haitian community and Sofia Lachapelle, who attended the May 2013 meeting.

Steering Committee

No meeting.

Family and Community

Miguel Suau/Chris Reigadas

Involvement Advisory Committee

No meeting. Miguel Suau announced that the committee may meet every two months rather than monthly.

Attendance Boundary Committee

Yolanda Herrera/Kathy Vergara

No report.

Other

Chris Reigadas brought gift cards for the GIFT Conference and announced that GIFT Conference volunteers are needed.

Ava Goldman announced that The Children's Trust sponsored NOVA Mobile Dental Unit and Heineken Mobile Vision Screening Unit are providing services to Miami-Dade County Public Schools.

GIFT Conference Meeting: Enrique Escallon said that it is important to include advocacy in the GIFT Conference agenda. Discussion followed about recruiting parents to attend the GIFTS Conference. MR. Escallon suggested asking parent organizations like the PTA and Parent to Parent of Miami to distribute information about the conference to parents. Ms. Reigadas agreed that this was a great idea. Isabel Garcia asked for more clarity. She said that they would share information about the meeting via the Parent to Parent website. Parent to Parent is hosting a table at the conference.

Ms. Garcia said that their website provides data regarding how many parents open their

weekly newsletter. Rosalia Gallo said that flyers are being sent out to the schools. At the current time about 200 or more have registered for the conference. Ms. Garcia said that Parent to Parent will post the agenda and schedule of presentations on the Parent to Parent website. Dr. Gallo said that around 300 attended the conference last year. Jane Blake recommended going for a target audience to spread the news. Ms Garcia recommended sending the information to programs funded by The Children's Trust.

Chris Reigadas said that the Panel should have a table at the conference. The Panel would need to register to exhibit. Jane Blake suggested developing a brochure to distribute at the GIFTS Conference.

Stephanie Mintz agreed that the Panel should have a table at the conference. Ms. Goldman suggested that the Panel table should be coordinated by members of the Panel. Members agreed. Elaine Silny expressed a concern about the length of presentations at the conference. Ms. Goldman recommended that members with suggestions attend GIFT Conference committee meetings.

Ms. Goldman said that advertising is being addressed by the conference marketing sub-committee. She said that she was sure that M-DCPS School Board members would attend the conference.

Jane Blake suggested advertising to parents through the school transportation system.

Dr. Gallo said that flyers are being distributed in Spanish, Creole and English and that conference sessions are being presented in three languages.

Isabel Garcia recommended asking students to share information with the parents. Ava Goldman talked about the new student experience section of the conference. Students are going to have their own merchandise mart.

Kathy Vergara distributed a report presented by the Florida Department of Education to the Florida Interagency Community Council for Infants and Toddlers (FICCIT).

Stephanie Mintz asked about expanding student representative members of the Panel. Perhaps we could start a pilot. Ava Goldman said that she will follow-up.

Chris Reigadas reported that the Miami-Dade Wolfson Association of Agencies (AOA) has developed a brochure for presentation at the Board of County Commissioners meeting. She passed an example of the brochure around for members to review.

Jane Blake reported that she attended a hearing at the Haitian Community Center, which is beautiful. She suggested that M-DCPS work with personnel at the Haitian Community Center to inform the community about M-DCPS. Ms. Goldman described M-DCPS representation in the Haitian Community. Ms. Reigadas added that the Haitian community is being informed about the GIFTS Conference.

Isabel Garcia announced that Enrique Escallon is now President of Parent to Parent. Members extended their warm congratulations to Mr. Escallon.

Ms. Reigadas said that agency members are a very important part of our Panel.

Enrique Escallon asked about the Proclamation at the recent School Board meeting honoring the two recipient schools of the Inclusion-Achievement Award. The schools are Greynolds Park Elementary School and Terra Environmental Research Institute. Vickie Burley and Liz Cramer represented the Panel at the Proclamation ceremony initiated by School Board member, Dr. Lawrence Feldman. Liz Cramer and Vickie Burley attended as members of the committee. Dr. Feldman drafted the Board Item. The possibility of a School Board Proclamation was included in the minutes of the Education-Inclusion Committee reported at prior meetings. The District was asked to inform the Panel Chair, Chris Reigadas, about such events prior to their occurrence. Discussion followed.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 5:05 pm.

Next Meeting

The General Membership meeting is scheduled for November 21, 2013 at 3:00 pm in Room 559 of the School Board Administration Building.

Respectfully submitted,
Kathleen C. Vergara