

SUMMARY
November 12, 2021 Meeting
Indiana State Advisory Council (SAC)
on the Education of Children with Disabilities
Online Virtual Meeting

<u>Council Members:</u>	<u>Present</u> <u>(Yes/No)</u>
Kim Dodson , The Arc of Indiana	N
Bethany Ecklor , Division of Mental Health & Addiction, Indiana FSSA	N
Melaina Gant , Department of Child Services	Y
Dennis Heathfield , Cummins, Inc.	Y
Dr. Nancy Holsapple , Office of Special Education, Department of Education	Y
Theresa Koleszar , Division of Disability & Rehabilitation Services, Indiana FSSA	N
Funmi Ige-Wright , parent representative	Y
Aleesia Johnson , Indianapolis Public Schools	N
Donald Koors , Indiana School for the Blind and Visually Impaired	Y
Kristi Linson , Children's Special Health Care Services, State Department of Health	N
Molly McGuire , parent representative	N
Dr. John Nally , Department of Correction	Y
Dr. Leah Nellis , Indiana University-Kokomo	Y
Lesa Paddack , IN*Source	Y
Aura Roblero , Family Voices Indiana	Y
Tiffany Sanders , parent representative	N
Linda Schroeder , Old National Trail Special Services	Y
Dr. George Van Horn , SAC Chair, Bartholomew Consolidated School Corporation	Y
Sarah Watson , Archdiocese of Indianapolis	N
Lucy Witte , Indiana School for the Deaf	Y

Also Present:

Tracy Brunner, Patrick Rhodes, and Brandon Myers, Department of Education; Hannah Carlock, The Arc of Indiana; Phillip Parnell, INARF; Jenny Smithson, Muncie Community School Corporation

Call to Order

Chair Dr. George Van Horn called the meeting to order at 9:33 a. m. Twelve of twenty members responded to an attendance roll call.

Action Items

Melaina Gant moved to approve the September meeting summary; John Nally seconded. The motion passed.

Discussion Items

Council Member Reports and Concerns

At the request of a presenter, discussion was moved to the first part of the agenda. Hannah Carlock, representing The Arc of Indiana, summarized the process and identified the partners involved in compiling the required annual update of post-secondary Hoosier Workforce Resources for former students with disabilities and their families. At the Chair's request for a motion, Lesa Paddock moved and Linda Schroeder seconded approval to post the updated version on the websites of Indiana's Department of Education and Department of Workforce Development as required by state statute.

Council Chair Dr. George Van Horn explained the legal requirement, rationale, and purpose for presenting a written virtual meeting participation policy draft for the Council's review. Melaina Gant offered a motion to adopt the draft policy as written. Lucy Witte seconded; and the motion passed. Adoption of the written policy will permit virtual meeting participation to continue, in accordance with Indiana's public access requirements, after the expiration of the Governor's public health emergency declaration that is currently in effect.

Information Items

Indiana Department of Education (IDOE) Updates

State Director of Special Education Dr. Nancy J. Holsapple introduced Patrick Rhodes, IDOE Complaint Investigator, who presented the annual update on special education Dispute Resolution. Slides included with the November meeting materials included data on the numbers and types of hearings, mediations, and complaints investigated over the previous year. Patrick provided contextual information, noted recent trends, and shared links to access publicly available, redacted copies of findings and decisions. He concluded with a brief overview of the Office of Legal Affairs' recent review and proposed revisions of Indiana's special education rules ("Article 7") as well as its suggestions for streamlining the Hearing process as well as the Hearing Officer training and manual. Patrick responded to members' questions and comments; and he provided information on where to access online Dispute Resolution resources for educators and parents, how to contact the Dispute Resolution team, and the proper channels for requesting Dispute Resolution-related customer service.

Next, Nancy Holsapple introduced Brandon Myers, IDOE Special Education Data Specialist, who reported on the status of Office of Special Education (OSE) staff's work to gather stakeholder input and update Indiana's IDEA-required State Performance Plan and RDA (Results Driven Accountability) monitoring and reporting process (APR, Annual Performance Report) in accordance with new federal guidance. He summarized Indiana's compliance measures and special education monitoring outcomes; briefly

explained how the State sets targets for these measures in accordance with federal requirements; and gave a general overview of how OSE shares findings with LEAs (local educational agencies), including the multi-tiered levels of intervention and technical assistance that OSE and the Indiana Resource Network provide to LEAs based on these findings. Brandon described Indiana's federally required SSIP (State Systemic Improvement Plan) and thanked State Advisory Council (SAC) members who participated in related stakeholder meetings. He went over the Final Stakeholder Report, which was shared with the November meeting materials and is publicly available on IDOE's website, noting data demonstrating the historic gap in learning outcomes decreased in 2021 and noted this may be due – in large part – to the higher, possibly pandemic-related, learning losses among students without disabilities. He concluded with an encouragement to submit comments on the new proposed targets as stakeholder input will be the basis for finalizing the State's targets which will be submitted to the U.S. Department of Education in February 2022.

Dr. Holsapple briefly reviewed information previously shared with the Council regarding various new IDOE initiatives to address the special education personnel shortage crisis, including new pathways, opportunities, and funding options for interested individual to obtain special education teaching licensure. Nancy also described new public/private partnerships designed to assist both special educators as well as others who serve students with special needs and the State's expanded efforts to facilitate retention and supports for those working in the profession. She went on to remind the Council of IDOE's plans to implement a new online public dashboard of school and student performance measures then fielded members' questions.

Public Comment

The Chair reminded members that a copy of Ms. Smithson's email to the Council was included with the November meeting materials, along with a list of Indiana higher education institutions that offer dual licensure. He then welcomed Jenny Smithson, Director of a special education cooperative, and invited her to comment on the personnel shortage concerns and recommendations discussed in her recent email to the Council. General discussion followed, and members thanked Ms. Smithson for taking the time to share this information.

Next SAC Meeting Date

The Chair noted the council's next meeting is scheduled for March 11, 2022.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 11:30 a.m.