

Iowa Special Education Advisory Panel

June 6, 2017

Facilitators: Nancy Ankeny-Hunt

Panel Secretary: Cayanna Reinier

Present: Valerie Baker, Craig Barnum, Carma Betz, Kurtis Broeg, Billie Cowely, Margaret Joan Ebersold, Susan Etscheidt (via Zoom), Amy Liddell, Larry Martin, Beth Rydberg, Mary Stevens, Karen Thompson, Kelly Wallace, Charles Levine, Ruth Frush, Sandra Smith, Joel Weeks,

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

Presenters: Ellie Burns, Amy Alfrey

Not Present: Kate Cole, Jan Collinson, Donita Dettmer, Aryn Kruse, Joseph McAbee, Christian McFadden, Melanie Patton, Amy Petersen, Erin Torruella, Kathleen VanTol, Jason Yessak, Kenda Jochimsen, Keri Osterhaus, Doug Wolfe

Opening/Minutes

Minutes from April 7, 2017: Kurtis moves to approve the minutes, Valerie seconds; all in favor to approve.

Public Comment – Beth Rydberg:

She has had some great conversations with people lately, and one of those conversations was with our Special Education Director. We talked about how almost 25 years ago the principal came to us and said let's try this new thing call inclusion because I think your sons are good candidates for this. When Joel died we sat to write part of the eulogy with one of this friends and she said to me "I knew Joel my whole life and I never knew the degree of Joel's disability." That is when it hit me that this thing that we started 25 years ago called inclusion worked; it is not only working for these kids that were being included, it was working with those kids that who were also going to help provide guidance by taking care of etc. But having that realization that it worked, and now inclusion education is an expectation or something that is always done instead of something that is limited to a special group is very important.

Another conversation I had was with Vicki McCool remembering back when the teachers in my son's school wanted to go to a functional curriculum and I did not agree with that. It is and was so important that the school continue to teach academics and not focus only on functional life skills. Sometimes it's easier to step back and say let's just teach you how to survive, but these students need to be included in the academics so they can participate in jobs, conversations and life in general.

Graduation Requirements

We had hope to be further in the conversation when we put this on the agenda, but we will discuss what we have so far and then discuss further at later meetings.

These requirements will be helpful as it will lay out a way to assess what a student have taken to reach graduation. One thing to understand is that the requirement it isn't about credits, it is more about content;

many districts are defining how they need this requirement by years and content (i.e. 4 years of English, 3 years of math, etc.).

We really want to talk with our partners, the Iowa School Board Association as well as School Administrators of Iowa so that everyone understands the multiple ways students can receive content; it is really going to have to be individualized. For some students you know there is a learning curve; maybe we need to look how that class is distributed and adjust as needed. The issue especially in smaller schools is providing a highly qualified instructor that can provide these classes for the students if it is not what is regularly offered, but this may be where we look outside the normal classroom (online, etc.).

There is a lot of conversations surrounding this topic, which is good. We have high expectations and we want to be careful how we roll this out. Someone in their Senior year next year, as well as Juniors, should not be affected by this as it is a new interpretation and will still be too new for them to reach the requirements. The conversation has been do we start with 9th graders or 10th graders in the 2017-2018 year? The preference of the group would be 9th graders as it will allow for four full years.

Differentiated Accountability

[DE Differentiated Accountability Website](#)
[General Supervision and IDEA Differentiated Accountability](#)

Iowa has now established a Unified Differentiated Accountability and Support System (UDAS). It is designed to provide support for public districts, accredited nonpublic schools and AEAs when and where they need it the most. As we talk about IDEA in the UDAS it is important to point out we are supporting Universal, Supplemental and Intensive levels. We will be embedding Healthy Indicators, providing Needs Assessments to identify and prioritize needs as well as engage districts and schools with diagnostic tools to address prioritized needs and changes.

As we talk about the Continuous Improvement Process in Differentiated Accountability we are focusing on Early Literacy. As we start talking about IDEA it is much bigger than literacy. Within Differentiated Accountability in conjunction with the ESSA plan there are three major components: Universal Desk Audit, Identification for Supports, and Supports for Schools.

The primary focus of the state's monitoring activities are:

1. Improving educational results and function outcomes for all children with disabilities; and
2. Ensuring that public agencies meet the program requirements under Part B of the Act, with a particular emphasis on those requirements that are most closely related to improving educational results for children with disabilities.

When we talk about General Supervision in Iowa, we talk about four duties:

1. Duty to Inform
2. Duty to Prevent
3. Duty to Inspect/Detect
4. Duty to Correct

There is a General Supervision Task Force that sits within C4K and their duties include developing a desk audit tool with supports and decision points. The intent of the General Supervision Task Group is to develop recommendations and provide feedback for IDEA compliance issues that includes:

1. Methods of identifying needed levels of supports to districts and AEAs,

2. Structures and methods of providing multi-levels of support, and
3. Specifying the general supervision responsibilities of LEA, AEA and DOE within a differentiated accountability system.

The [General Supervision flow chart](#) explains steps taken when an issue is reported or discovered. The [IEP review tool](#) focuses on main questions: Is this IEP reasonably calculated to provide educational benefit? By asking this question it is changing the conversations with schools and teachers and it is focusing on more of what are you trying to teach and what are you expected to see, instead of what are the pieces you can check off having in the IEP. This allows us to focus on the individual and their education specifically more than just a checklist

Specially Designed Instruction

The State Personnel Development Grant (SPDG) is a grant funded by the Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) and is used to improve systems of professional development, technical assistance, and dissemination of knowledge about best practices. This grant is available to states on a five year cycle. Currently Iowa's SPDG grant runs from October 1, 2015 through September 30, 2020. Iowa's purpose for the SPDG grant is to improve practitioner's abilities to diagnose, design, and deliver high quality Specially Designed Instructions (SDI) for diverse learners so that learners with disabilities are successful. Iowa's SPDG process is to establish a statewide system to effectively implement and support personnel preparation and professional development in the area of specially designed instruction. Iowa's SPDG focus is within literacy in preschool, K6, significant disabilities, assistive technology, family and school partnerships.

The Objectives the SDI focuses on is to:

1. **Establish a Technical Assistance System** to effectively implement and support personnel preparation and professional development in the area of specially designed literacy instruction.
2. **Build capacity of Iowa's coaching network** so that network participants have the capacity to train, coach, and support delivery of specially designed literacy instruction with integrity.
3. **Deliver high quality professional development** so that specially designed literacy instruction is implemented with fidelity and effectively improves reading proficiency for a wide range of learners.

SDI Guiding Principles

The following foundational beliefs are of key importance as we work together to improve our special education outcomes, services and SDI for our learners here in Iowa:

- Learners receiving special education services are general education learners first and always.
- Highly effective special education services and outcomes are dependent on highly effective Universal Instruction and a school-wide intervention system.
- Effective SDI is designed through collaboration between highly qualified educators and families.
- SDI is delivered by special education and general education teachers and professionals in various settings across the day.
- The Iowa Core Standards, Iowa Core Essential Elements, Early Learning Standards, and school-based expectations should drive diagnosis, design and delivery of SDI.
- Highly effective SDI flows from high quality and specific assessment information.
- SDI helps learners to access the Iowa Core Standards and reach grade-level aligned goals.
- SDI helps learners to address their unique needs as result of the individual's disability

For more information please see the full [Specially Designed Instruction Presentation](#).

Vice Chair Election and Final Business

It was a unanimous vote, and Kathleen VanTol will be next year's Vice Chair.

The new member committee met and were very fortunate to have really good people apply with amazing applications and ideas. We had 8 spots and 12 that applied. The committee recommends:

Elizabeth Hockey

Doug Wolfe

Jennifer Aldridge

Heather Brand

Kelly Ramus

Cynthia Blackard

Chelsie Engelbart

Bryan Sage

Vote: Unanimous vote for all new members.

Amy Liddell motions to adjourn and Kurtis Broeg 2nd. Meeting concluded at 3:00.