

**Special Education Advisory Panel Meeting Minutes**  
**Comfort Suites**  
**January 14-15, 2016**

Members in Attendance: Theresa Erickson, Barbara Varnum (Thursday), Estee Aiken, Stephen Morsette, Dan Laughlin, Robin Farrell, Josh Wigen, Wendy Studt, Heather Denny, Tristan Scott, Courtney Bell, Christine Whitlatch, Theresa Becker (Thursday)

Excused Members: Kellie Ann Hicks, John Wetsit, Theresa Becker (Friday), Barbara Varnum (Friday)

Non-Members in Attendance: Dick Trerise, Frank Podobnik, Steve York, Doug Doty, Dale Kimmet, Susan Bailey-Anderson, Anne Rainey, Marlene Wallis,

**Thursday, January 14, 2016**

Chairperson Dan Laughlin called the meeting to order at 8:30 a.m. The Panel members, OPI staff and visitors introduced themselves.

The Agenda was reviewed. Wendy Studt moved to accept the Agenda, Tristin Scott seconded the motion and the motion passed. The Agenda was approved as written.

The minutes of the September 17-18, 2015, meeting were reviewed. Tristen Scott moved to accept the minutes of the September 17-18, 2015, meeting and Courtney Bell seconded the motion. The minutes were approved as written.

The election of officers for the 2015-2016 Advisory Panel was moved to the January 14-15, 2016, meeting.

Dan Laughlin, Co-Chair, moves into the position of Chair following his reappointment to the Panel.

Co-Chair:

Theresa Erickson nominated Courtney Bell for the position of Co-Chair for 2015-2016, Christine Whitlatch seconded the nomination and the nomination passed. Courtney Bell was elected as the Co-Chair for 2015-2016.

Secretary:

Dan Laughlin nominated Barbara Varnum for the position of Secretary for 2015-2016, Courtney Bell seconded the nomination and the nomination passed. Barbara Varnum was elected as the Secretary for 2015-2016.

**Division Up-Date**

Frank Podobnik informed the Panel that the Division of Special Education is fully staffed at this time. He told the Panel that the Division has hired 10 Behavioral Consultants that were trained in October and they began going into the field in November and December.

Frank said that the “Notice of Public Hearing on Proposed Amendment and Repeal” held on November 6, 2015, pertaining to Special Education received much feedback, especially in the Parental Consent proposals.

The Notice of Public Hearing on Proposed Amendment and Repeal is located on the OPI Web site.

### **OPI Report**

Steve York informed the Panel that Dr. Mickey Corso of the Quaglia Institute for Student Aspirations will be the keynote speaker at the CEC Conference in February.

Steve discussed the Montana Suicide Awareness and Prevention Training Act, HB 374, with the Panel. The Act directs the Montana Office of Public Instruction to provide training and technical assistance to schools in Montana about youth suicide awareness and prevention training.

The OPI staff available for assistance are:

Erin Butts, School Mental Health Coordinator, 406-444-0688

Tracy Moseman, Coordinated School Health Unit Director, 406-444-3000

Jordan Brown, Project AWARE Initiative, 4-6-444-0773

Steve discussed the Teaching Learning Hub that is “Online Learning for Montana Teachers.” He said it is a far more efficient way for rural teachers to receive training. Susan Bailey-Anderson will discuss the Teaching Learning Hub during her presentation.

Steve informed the Panel that the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) replaces the No Child Left Behind. A plan is being developed and should be finished by the middle of July.

### **Annual Performance Report**

The submission process for the Annual Performance Report (APR) has changed. In the past all data for each indicator was submitted in narrative form; now data is “fill in the blanks.” The amount of material submitted has been reduced.

Dick and Frank discussed the indicators with the Panel members.

The U.S. Department of Education had determined that Montana needs assistance in implementing the requirements of Part B of the IDEA. The determination is based on the data reflected in the state’s 2015 Results Driven Accountability Matrix, which is included with the minutes.

### **Montana Autism Education Project Up-Date**

Doug Doty, Statewide Coordinator, Montana Autism Education Project (MAEP), provided the Panel with an up-date of the Montana Autism Education Project. Doug noted that as of October 2014, there were 1,199 Montana public school students with autism and 153 school districts had at least one student with autism. The MAEP provides regional and district-level trainings on request or as needed.

Doug said that 200 online training accounts per year are purchased from a company that offers video training in educating students with autism spectrum disorders. This school year there are already 153 educators enrolled in the training.

Autism consultants are available and can consult on individual students, provide consultation to individual teachers and consult at the classroom level. There is no cost for the consultations. To request a consultation, send an e-mail to [ddoty@mt.gov](mailto:ddoty@mt.gov) with a brief description of the reason for the consultation and the student's school, initials, gender and age.

A newsletter is sent out monthly. The newsletter contains upcoming training in Montana and nearby states, availability of the online training, upcoming or recently archived Webinars, Blog Posts of interest, reminder of consultation and training services available and a link to a bibliography of autism books available through interlibrary loan.

### **CSPD/Professional Development**

Susan Bailey-Anderson presented an up-date on the programs of the Professional Development Unit.

#### **CSPD—Teacher Learning Hub**

What is the Teacher Learning Hub? It is an online interactive learning management system that provides free, high-quality professional learning; minimizes the time teachers spend away from their classroom attending off-site professional learning; saves school districts money by supporting online professional learning opportunities, as well as other opportunities.

The [www.mtplportal.org](http://www.mtplportal.org) provides access to professional learning information from across the state in one easy location.

The Montana Youth Leadership forum is scheduled for July 18-22, 2016, at Carroll College.

Orientation to Special Education—Online Facilitated Course—This course is designed to provide a basic introduction to special education and the needs of students who have disabilities.

The Paraprofessional Consortium has put together a ListServe as a way to reach out to Paraprofessionals and those who work with Paras. To subscribe go to: <http://opi.mt.gov/Subscriptions/> and click on the box for PARAPROFESSIONAL.

The MBI Summer Institute is scheduled for June 20-24, 2016, in Bozeman. Registration opens March 31, 2016. To register use: <http://www.montana.edu/cs/conferences/mbi/>.

### **Friday, January 15, 2016**

#### **Call for Public Comments**

Chairperson Dan Laughlin asked for public comments. There were no public comments.

## **Annual Performance Report (Continued)**

The discussion of the Annual Performance Report continued. Indicator 8—Parent Involvement was discussed. The Target for Indicator 8 was met. Surveys are distributed to the parents of districts that will be monitored. The surveys are returned to Utah University for compiling results.

Frank also informed the Panel of how the Set-Aside funds are distributed.

Chairperson Dan Laughlin, on behalf of the Panel, will write a letter to support the Annual Performance Report for FFY 2014.

## **OPI Data Overview**

Anne Rainey, IDEA Part B Data Manager, provided a presentation on the following: Overview and demonstration of the Achievement in Montana (AIM) system; Explanation of Child Count, Exiting and School Discipline reporting requirements; Demonstration of Child Count reporting system; and a Demonstration of Special Education Data in the Montana Growth and Enhancement of Montana Students (GEMS).

## **Meeting Dates**

May 4-5, 2016—Joint Meeting with CSPD

June 9, 2016—One-day meeting, including election of officers

## **Adjourn**

Robin Farrell moved to adjourn the meeting, Josh Wigen seconded the motion and the motion passed. The meeting adjourned at Noon.