



# State Advisory Panel

## For Special Education

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**Minutes Summary**  
**State Advisory Panel Meeting**  
**January 20 & 21, 2011**  
**Lake Blackshear**  
**Cordele, GA**

**Thursday, January 20, 2011**

Time	Events	
7:30 – 8:30	CONTINENTAL BREAKFAST	
8:30 – 9:30	<p>Welcome Panel Member Introductions and Update</p>	<p>The panel meeting was officially opened. Ms. Vettraino read into the record the list of Panel members who were in attendance. Panel members were asked to disclose whether the meeting was being recorded. Four panel members indicated that they were audio recording the meeting.</p> <p>Members present included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wendi Baird</li> <li>• Karen Baron</li> <li>• Nicole Brown</li> <li>• Steve Derr</li> <li>• Kathy Everett</li> <li>• Cody Fontenot</li> <li>• Chris Horton</li> <li>• Brian Mosley</li> <li>• Reva Pierce</li> <li>• Danette Rogers</li> <li>• Radha Vettraino</li> <li>• Natalie Whitlow</li> <li>• Nancy Woods</li> <li>• Scott Bales</li> <li>• Lori Brown</li> <li>• Denise Burrell</li> <li>• Jennifer Dixon</li> <li>• Deborah Fields-Harris</li> <li>• Jennifer Harris</li> <li>• Linda Meiring</li> <li>• Stephanie Moss</li> <li>• Sue Riner</li> <li>• Cathy Smith-Jackson</li> <li>• Lynda White</li> <li>• Donnie Winokur</li> </ul>
9:30 – 10:00	<p>GaDOE, Divisions for Special Education Services and Supports Update</p>	<p>Debbie Gay presented updates from the Division for Special Education Services and Supports.</p> <p>Mrs. Gay provided an update regarding the concerns related to video recording expressed at the last panel meeting. She reviewed the purpose and duties of the State Advisory Panel and the current policy on recording. The Georgia State Advisory Panel meets and goes beyond the advisory panel requirements set by the federal government.</p> <p>She met with the legal department at the Department of Education and looked at other states policies related to State Advisory Panels. The panel meeting is a public meeting. The</p>

Time	Events
	<p>policy on recording was examined. The current policy does not specify what type of recording is allowed, only that any individual recording the meeting needs to announce that recording. The amendment to the panel policy on recording that was presented at the last meeting was examined by the legal department. It was determined that this amendment could not be used as it addresses what individuals can do with their own personal property. The primary question discussed with the legal department was whether the state open meetings law applies to this group.</p> <p>Three options were provided by the legal department:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Continue with the current State Advisory Panel policy for recording with any type of recording allowed.</li> <li>2. Submit a letter to the Attorney General requesting advice on whether the State Advisory Panel meetings are considered open meetings. Panel members can attach letters to support their concerns related to recording the meetings. The panel would need to follow the Attorney General's recommendations.</li> <li>3. The panel could no longer meet publically, rather conduct future meetings via phone conferencing.</li> </ol> <p>Mrs. Vettraino asked that panel members consider the 3 options presented, and then submit their thoughts to the Policies and Procedures committee. The committee will then review the suggestions/comments submitted and present the findings to the panel. Comments were taken from the panel.</p> <p>Dr. John Barge, the new State School Superintendent, has started work. He has presented a 2-tiered reorganizational structure for the Department of Education. Panel members asked that Dr. Barge be invited to the March meeting.</p> <p>The department is continuing to work on the State Performance Plan (SPP) and the Annual Performance Report (APR). Drafts of the indicators with updated targets and activities will be provided to panel later in the meeting for the panel to review and make additional recommendations.</p> <p>A Transition endorsement is available on teacher certifications through the Professional Standards Commission (PSC). A grant with the University of Kansas, which will provide an online training for transition, will enable individuals to obtain this endorsement.</p> <p>The Least Restrictive Environment (LRE) project through the State Personnel Development Grant (SPDG) is continuing. The project is in its fifth year and expects approximately 240 schools to be involved in the project.</p>

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		<p>A verification visit from the federal Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) will be conducted in 2014.</p> <p>The application for panel membership for the next 3 year term is currently posted on the Division for Special Education Services and Supports webpage. If panel members are aware of any individuals who may be interested in serving on the panel, let them know.</p> <p>Comments and questions were taken from panel members.</p>
10:00 – 10:15	<b>BREAK</b>	
10:15 – 11:30	<p>Person Centered Planning Presentation</p>	<p>Stacey Ramirez, Director of Individual and Family Supports at Georgia State University, presented on Person Centered Planning (PCP).</p> <p>The aspects of Person Centered Planning, as well as what Person Centered Planning was were discussed. The focus should be on the person and what their wants and dreams are.</p> <p>The core elements of Person Centered Planning were reviewed. Establishing relationship maps and the tools utilized in Person Centered Planning were discussed.</p> <p>Mrs. Ramirez discussed how to build the person centered community into the school system and increase the educator’s understanding of the importance of the tools and process of Person Centered Planning.</p>
11:30 – 12:00	<p>Public Comment Session</p>	<p>Eman Kirbah provided public comment related to Positive Behavior Supports. She stated she underwent ABA therapy and has learned that it (PBIS) can be used as fear treatment. She stated she is concerned about situations where PBIS can be used in similar situation as presented by GaDOE staff at the November meeting. She wants the panel to know that she is concerned about using PBIS as the main avenue for behavior management. She requested that the panel not just look at PBIS, but think about other methods, such as the Ruler Approach.</p>
12:00 – 1:00	<b>LUNCH (provided)</b>	
1:00 – 2:45	<p>SPP/APR Small Group Activity</p>	<p>Panel members worked in small groups to make recommendations for the State Performance Plan (SPP)/Annual Performance Report (APR) indicators.</p> <p>Elyse Lynch discussed the GaDOE work on updating the SPP/APR and described the structure for the panel to work in small groups during the meeting. Panel members will divide into groups and look at activities for each indicator on APR. Groups were requested to make recommendations on whether to keep, drop or add additional activities to their indicators.</p>

Time	Events	
2:45 – 3:00	BREAK	
3:00 – 5:00	SPP/APR Small Group Activity	Panel members continued to work in small groups to make recommendations for the SPP/APR indicators.  Elyse Lynch conducted a “report out” with each group’s recommendations at the end of the work sessions.
6:00	DINNER	

**Friday, January 21, 2011**

Time	Events	
7:00 – 8:00	CONTINENTAL BREAKFAST	
8:00 – 9:15	Committee Meetings	All committees met.
9:15 – 10:00	Committee Reports	<p>Committees reported to the panel on current activities and future recommendations.</p> <p>Debbie Gay discussed the March meeting and opportunity for panel members to attend the Spring Leadership Meeting which occurs directly before the panel meeting.</p> <p><i>Membership Committee:</i> Attendance logs for this year’s meetings were reviewed and individuals who have not attended 2 meetings during the current year will be contacted to determine their interest in continuing to serve on the panel. The committee will be reviewing applications and will be looking for replacements for agency members who have stepped down. Replacements will be needed for congressional districts 13, 8 and 2 for panel members rotating off.</p> <p><i>Dispute Resolution Committee:</i> The Department of Education has contracted with Parent to Parent to develop a series of fact sheets on pertinent special education issues. Parent to Parent will be sponsoring series of webinars on Due Process procedures to help inform parents using this process. The department has approved funding for mediators to attend training at the Justice Center. Two Due Process cases were reviewed by the committee.</p> <p><i>Policies and Procedures Committee:</i> The three options outlined by the Department of Education legal department were reviewed and discussed. Input received by the committee from panel members on the issue of recording of meetings was reviewed. Responses from panel members and the committee indicated that all were opposed to going to closed meetings and did not feel they needed to go the Attorney General. The final consensus was to leave the recording policy in the Policies and Procedures and to change the wording to “Members and visitors</p>

Time	Events	
		<p>are <b>requested</b> to notify panel members of intent to record any portion of the meeting (audio or video). In addition, the person recording the meeting is <b>requested</b> to not engage in any of the following: post on internet; allow viewing in a public forum by more than two people; and/or release it to third parties.”</p> <p>Comments were taken from panel members and a letter from panel member Lori Brown, which was received after the committee met, was read to the committee. A copy of the comments submitted to the committee concerning this issue will be given to the panel and kept on record.</p> <p><i>Public Comment Committee:</i> The committee reviewed the public comment made concerning Positive Behavior Intervention Supports. Scott Bales indicated that an email had been sent for public comment, but was not received or opened until after the public comment period. He requested that the email be read. This request did not meet the requirements for submitting written public comment 3 days in advance and was not read. The individual who sent the email will be contacted to see if they want the email entered into record and if so it would be read at the next meeting.</p> <p><i>Family Engagement Committee:</i> The committee did not have any items to report.</p>
10:00 – 10:15	BREAK	
10:15 – 12:00	SPDG Presentation	<p>Julia Causey presented on the State Personnel Development Grant (SPDG).</p> <p>The State Personnel Development Grant program was discussed. This is a 5 year grant which is currently in year 4. The goal of the grant and the projects currently being implemented were discussed. These included: Graduate First, ASPIRE (Active Student Participation Inspires Real Engagement), Transition Plan Support, Family Engagement, and the Special Education Induction Pilot.</p> <p>The Graduate First project focuses on increasing the graduation rate and decreasing the dropout rate of Students with Disabilities. Training was developed by the National Center for Dropout Prevention. Tools and development of the <a href="http://www.graduatefirst.org">www.graduatefirst.org</a> website were discussed.</p> <p>The SPDG provides training related to areas of engagement to school teams. –Schools need determine what type of training is needed and who is trained – How data is collected and how it used to assist students was also discussed.</p> <p>The SPDG website was reviewed, including areas of engagement and resources available.</p>

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		<p>Tammy Hart, Special Education Transition Coordinator from Franklin County High School presented on project performance at her school. She discussed how the team was set up, how they looked at data, training received by the team and growth of the team.</p> <p>Julia Causey discussed areas to be addressed next year. Questions and comments were taken from the panel.</p>
1:00 – 2:00	Family Engagement Presentation	<p>Patti Solomon presented on Family Engagement activities at the Department of Education.</p> <p>Research on the impact of family engagement on student achievement was discussed.</p> <p>The GaDOE Family engagement initiatives were reviewed. These included the Parent Mentor Partnership, Family Engagement Data Plans, Parent Surveys, CAFÉ Dialogues/Graduate First, the 360 Degree Family Engagement model, State Advisory Panel parent members, Focused Monitoring team parents, the superintendent’s Parent Advisory, Transition Interagency Councils, and creating parent friendly materials, such as IDEA fact sheets, rewrite of parent rights, parent rights video, and teacher training on communication</p> <p>Questions and comments were taken from panel members.</p>
2:00 – 2:30	State Advisory Panel Planning for Future Meetings	<p>Panel members provided input on topics for future meetings.</p> <p>Suggestions for future topics were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An update on the teacher induction project</li> <li>• Legislative update</li> <li>• Assessment update</li> <li>• Strategies for inclusion</li> <li>• Extend an invitation to the Dr. Barge, State School Superintendent</li> </ul>

Please note that the times listed above are approximate and may change except the public comment period. Every effort is made to begin the public comment at the appointed time. A full 30 minutes is always allowed even if the start has been delayed. Comment time is limited per speaker so that all have a chance to be heard.