



# IDEA Advisory Meeting

## MINUTES

DECEMBER 8, 2020  
9:00 AM – 4:00 P.M.

VIRTUAL MEETING

### MEETING CALLED BY

Dr. Patti Mahar, Chairperson

### TYPE OF MEETING

IDEA Advisory Meeting

### FACILITATOR

Gerry Teevens

### NOTE TAKER

Michelle Souther

### ATTENDEES

Gerry Teevens, Michelle Souther, Lucy Fredericks, Susan Gerenz, Barb Burghart, Dr. Patti Mahar, Emmanuel Mensah, Jodi Webb, Renee Wetzsteon, Mark Ehrmantraut, Lea Kugel, Angela McSweyn, Tina Degree, Jacqueline Adusumilli, Rachel Tabler, Michelle Woodcock, Penny Breuer, Karyn Chiapella, Jessica Howlingwolf, Brenda Ruehl, Amanda Meier, Barb Burghart, Tracey Zaun, Debbe Poitra, Beth Larson-Steckler, Michael Netzloff, Patty Cummings, Melissa Casteel, Jacey Enget, Nicki Kehr, Nicole Lang, Victoria Johnson, Stephanie Keen was proxy for Penny Veit-Hetletved and Becky Gustofson was proxy for Brenda Ruehl, Carson Grave

## Agenda topics

### OFFICE OF SPECIAL EDUCATION UPDATES

GERRY TEEVENS & TEAM

### DISCUSSION

COVID (Gerry)

- Assistance to schools during the COVID-19 Pandemic is available on this website on DPI  
[COVID Resources: https://www.nd.gov/dpi/familiescommunity/nddpi-updates-and-guidance-covid-19](https://www.nd.gov/dpi/familiescommunity/nddpi-updates-and-guidance-covid-19)

### COVID19 Funding

- ESSER Relief Funds Funding
  - March 13, 2020 – September 30, 2022
- Education Corps Funding
  - July 1, 2020 – December 30, 2020
- Broadband Assistance Grant
  - July 1, 2020 – December 30, 2020
- GEER Funding
  - March 13, 2020 – June 30, 2021
- Resiliency Grant Funding
  - July 1, 2020 – December 30, 2020

Patty Cummings brought us some concerns regarding some of the funding. If districts wanted to purchase additional technology, you had to have the items physically on your property in order to use the funding. Companies were backlogged and unable to meet those parameters. Gerry said that the parameters and guidelines were set by the federal government. Gerry indicated that the parameters around the use of the money and who could apply for it was set by the federal government. When the money was distributed to the districts the special education unit was expected to confer with the district for special education needs. DPI made it known to the Governor's office that Special Education Units are known as LEAs in the state with the hope that special education units would receive a GEER Funding grant if they applied.

### SRCL-"On the 5's" Resource Guide -Susan Gerenz

- **In just five minutes,**
- You and your child can build connections in the brain to
- boost the **POWER to learn**, while improving **calming and focusing skills.**
- **Decide what times work best**, then set aside 5 minutes each hour to take a Brain Break.
- **Set your phone**, timer, or watch on **One of the 5's**. The average individual is awake 16 hours, thus 16 opportunities for
- Brain Breaks each day.
- **Do hourly Brain Breaks** when you are with your child. Then **partner** with your teacher or caregiver to **keep your child "On the 5's"** when you are apart.
- Movement, Sensory, Distraction and Calming Skills

### OHI Training "Save the Date" -Susan Gerenz

- Save the date: NDDPI training January 12, 2021: 4:00 – 5:00 p.m. CST

**Community of Practice for Students with Social-Emotional-Behavioral Disorders -Michelle Woodcock**

- The Office of Special Education plans to have an application out to people who may be interested in participating in this group. This would be a statewide community of practice for those working with children and youth with Social-Emotional-Behavioral Disorders. This Community of Practice has not met yet. The first meeting will be held at the end of January. Renee Wetzsteon would like to participate in this group.

**Special Education Webinar Series – Michelle Woodcock**

- Special Education webinar series – have created bimonthly webinars that started in September. More than 400 participants from across the state. We are sharing evidence-based practices, IDEA compliance information and creating a platform for educators to share resources and have discussions. Upcoming webinars include Social Emotional Learning, Self-Regulation, Assistive Technology and Fading Adult Support. If you would be interested in listening to upcoming webinars, register here: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/nddpi-special-education-webinar-series-tickets-117806411147>

**Professional development on writing Transition IEPs – Lea Kugel**

[Graduation/Dropout and Writing Transition IEPs Virtual Training | North Dakota Department of Public Instruction](#)

**Update on Dispute Resolutions: (Mark Ehrmantraut)**

- Questions – Failure to Implement
- Facilitations
- Mediations
- Complaints
- Due Process

**2020-21 Dispute Resolution**

Facilitation – 1

Mediations– 0

Complaints – 6

- 1 Not IDEA
- 4- Individual IDEA
- 1- Systemic (the complaint we received made numerous allegations against a unit. The systemic complaint we received is still under review to determine the appropriate next steps).

Due Process - 1

**Corrective Action Plans – CAP**

**CAP MUST Address:**

- Individual issue(s)
- Ensure the violation isn't part of a larger systemic issue

**3 Main Areas to get Correction**

- Professional Development
- Compensatory Education
- File Review

**Consistent Message:**

- Communicate
- Relationships (Trust)
- Good Faith Efforts
- Individualize
- Prior Written Notice (Communication Tool)

**If student not making progress: 4 R's (Lenore Knutson)**

- Reconvene
- Review
- Restrategize
- Revise

**CONCLUSIONS**

**ACTION ITEMS**

**PERSON RESPONSIBLE**

**DEADLINE**

**DISCUSSION**

- IDEA requirement for State Education Agencies Part B and Part C
- SPP is our state plan for improving educational results for all children with disabilities
  - Currently 17 indicators in our plan
    - baseline data, measurable and rigorous targets, and improvement activities
  - Data is collected from all districts
    - data is used to continuously improve state and school district activities

Thus, improving results for all children with disabilities.

**IDEA '04 State Performance Plans**

- Plans must establish measurable and rigorous targets.
- States must annually collect data in these priority areas to analyze the **performance of each LEA**.
- Each state must report annually to the secretary on its performance under its performance plan.
- States must report annually to the public on the **performance of each LEA** on the targets in the state's performance plan.
- plan.

**Public Information on District Performance**

[Insights of North Dakota \(nd.gov\)](http://insights.nd.gov)

**Objectives**

- Review SPP/APR indicator data.
- Examine trends, discuss progress and slippage (if any).
- Suggest/recommend activities or actions for improvement.

**State met target on these indicators**

- 2 Dropout Rate
- 4A Suspension/Expulsion Rate, Overall
- 4B Suspension/Expulsion Rate by Ethnicity
- 7A1 Social-emotional Skills GROWTH
- 7B1 Acquisition & use of Knowledge & Skills GROWTH
- 7C1 Use of appropriate behaviors GROWTH
- 8 Parental Involvement
- 9 Disproportionate Representation of Race/Ethnicity
- 10 Disproportionate Race/Ethnicity, Disability Category
- 12 Early Childhood Transition
- 13 Secondary Transition
- 14B Post-School Outcomes: Competitive Employment or Higher Ed

**State didn't meet target on these indicators**

- 1 Graduation Rate
- 5A Inside the regular class 80% or more of the day
- 5B Inside the regular class less than 40% of the day
- 5C In separate schools, residential facilities, or homebound/hospital placements
- 6A Preschool Regular Classroom Setting
- 6B In separate classroom, school, or facility
- 7A2 Social-emotional Skills FUNCTIONING
- 7B2 Acquisition & use of Knowledge & Skills FUNCTIONING
- 7C2 Use of appropriate behaviors FUNCTIONING
- 11 Evaluation Timelines
- 14A Post-School Outcomes: Higher Education
- 14C Post-School Outcomes: Competitive Employment, other employment, or Higher Ed or education or training program
- 17 State Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP)

**State slipped on these indicators**

- 5B Inside the regular class less than 40% of the day.
- 14C Post-School Outcomes: Competitive Employment, other employment, or Higher Ed or education or training program

**Who is Most Likely to Graduate?**

Based on the 4-Year Adjusted Cohort for 2018-19

- **Environment**
  - ✓ Students in regular classroom: 80.28%
- **Primary Disability**
  - ✓ Specific Learning Disability: 81.10%
  - ✓ Other Health Impairments: 76.09%
- **Ethnicity**
  - ✓ White: 76.02%
  - ✓ Asian: 87.50%

### Who is Least Likely to Graduate?

Based on the 4-Year Adjusted Cohort for 2018-19

- **Environment**
  - ✓ Students in separate school: 20%
  - ✓ Spec Edu in Homebound/Hospital: 28.57%
  - ✓ Regular Class < 40% of Day: 41.18%
- **Primary Disability**
  - ✓ Intellectual Disability: 56.16%
  - ✓ Emotional Disturbance: 56.48%
- **Ethnicity**
  - ✓ Black or African American: 58.14%

### Trends in On-Time Graduation Rates for All Students, Students with IEPs, and ED

- ED Students – 56.60%
- All Students – 88.30%
- IEP- All – 73.40%

### Reasons SWD didn't Graduate

- Did not like school
- Anxiety – social skills, being bullied, school phobia, difficulty being in public
- Pursuing GED
- Work
- Lack of family support
- Disabilities got in the way
- Could not complete course requirements
- Failed required classes

### Early Warning Systems

- Attendance
- Behavior Incidents
- Course performance

Participation and Achievement of SWD on State Assessment for 2019-20 – no data. Schools did not administer the NDSA due to COVID.

### Disproportionate Representation in Specific Disability Categories

- Two districts identified with disproportionate representation of racial and ethnic groups in specific disability categories

### Indicator 11 -Child Find

- 3102 number of parental consent to evaluate
- 3090 of children whose evaluations were completed within 60-day timeline
- Rate of 99.61%
- Target 100%

### Indicator 12 Early Childhood Transition

- 514 children who have been served in Part C and referred to Part B for eligibility determination
- 514 children referred by Part C prior to age 3 who were found eligible for Part B, and who have an IEP developed and implemented by their 3<sup>rd</sup> birthdays
- Rate – 100%
- Target – 100%

### Indicator 13 – Secondary Transition

- Percent of youth with IEPs aged 16 and above with an IEP that includes *appropriate measurable postsecondary goals* that are *annually updated* and based upon an *age appropriate transition assessment, transition services, including courses of study,* that will reasonably enable the student to meet those postsecondary goals, and *annual IEP goals* related to the student's transition services needs.
- There also must be *evidence that the student was invited to the IEP Team meeting* where transition services are to be discussed and evidence that, if appropriate, *a representative of any participating agency was invited* to the IEP Team meeting with the prior consent of the parent or student who has reached the age of majority. (20 U.S.C.1416(a)(3)(B)).
- 395 youths with IEPs aged 16 and above on sample
- 395 that contain each of the required components for secondary transition
- Rate: 100%

- Target: 100%

#### **Indicator 14 Post School Outcomes**

- Percent of youth who are no longer in secondary school, had IEPs in effect at the time they left school, and were:
- Enrolled in higher education within one year of leaving high school
- Enrolled in higher education or competitively employed within one year of leaving high school
- Enrolled in higher education or in some other postsecondary education or training program; or competitively employed or in some other employment within one year of leaving high school
- 747 total in sample
- 333 total interviews completed
- 44.6% response rate
- Ready for Life after High School – 72% Yes – 28% - No
- COVID – laid off from job – 24%
- 34.8% hours were reduced as a result of COVID

Indicator 17 – SSIP - Improve 6-year extended graduation rate for students with ED.

2020-21 – 5 Focused Areas

- 1) Messaging – Dropping out is a Process, Not an Event
- 2) Early Warning Systems
- 3) Web-Based Document – Help with:
  - a) Planning
  - b) Implementing
  - c) Evaluating
  - d) Reporting

(Based on OSEP’s 7 elements taken straight from the measurement language  
Based on creating systems that develop and sustain Continuous Improvement)

- 4) Aligning Continuous Improvement Efforts
- 5) Middle / High School Effective Practices (Graduation and Dropout)

Beth commented that such a critical point dropping out is a process. Beth wonder if Mark has presented to family groups that dropping out is a process. We have monthly calls with the parent support and advocacy groups but Gerry thinks that is a good suggestions and Gerry said NDDPI will look at reaching out to Family Voices, Federation of Families, and Pathfinders, etc. to see if there is interest. Again, relationship is everything – engagement, true engagement.

Decreasing the dropout rate for students with disabilities was a priority that the IDEA Advisory Committee decided to focus on this year.

Patti Mahar made a comment that hybrid mode of learning has been wonderful for a student she is working with. He went from D and Fs to A and Bs. Removing the social aspect from him has enabled him to do so much better in academics. The student is really excelling with the hybrid and he doesn’t want to go back face to face.

Some kids are doing better not being in the classroom. We hope that the hybrid option stays available after COVID.

Jacey Enget – Do you think the child having general a education teacher that they enjoy effects the drop out rate? I know I will never forget the impact my third-grade teacher had on me.

#### **CONCLUSIONS**

Jessica Howling Wolf – Is the credit recover not yet active. Still in the developmental stages? Yes, developmental stages. She said that it is a great idea and way to help the students be successful in obtaining HS Diploma.

Beth Larson-Steckler discussed that NDDPI is looking at a Diploma 2 (GED) option that may be available to students.

SPP/APR: PARENT SURVEY

EMMANUEL MENSAH AND KARYN CHIAPELLA

#### **DISCUSSION**

Indicator 8: Parental Involvement

- 5,446 parents of students with disabilities ages 3 to 21 to whom survey questionnaires were mailed or links to survey sent
- 687 (12.61%) Response rate
- 73.14% respondents who indicated that the school facilitated their involvement
- Target – 73.10% - target was met
- 162 of districts who participated in the survey
- Questions 4 & 6 get the most disagree
- Question 4 – I am asked about how well special education services are meeting my child’s needs
- Question 6 – My child’s school follows her/his special education plan.

Gerry said that the state doesn't look into the individual district data unless we are focusing monitoring or if a complaint is filed. The districts are given this data and it is their responsibility to look and review the data.

Nationally and in ND, COVID revealed not only significant inequities in education but deepened them.

Karyn Chiapella: "After speaking to several directors four questions came to me":

- What is the PURPOSE of the survey?
- Who sees the results?
- What are the results used for?
- How does the survey drive CHANGE (local and state level)?

Seek ways of change

- Could we go to some of our minority schools and ask them how best to meet the needs of their culture
- We need to engage in meaningful dialogue with these stakeholders who know their communities best
- Get resources/advocacy groups to connect with families
- Piggyback on them to build relationships in the community and ensure they know our purpose for the survey is to DRIVE change
- We must seek help/ideas to get more creative in our surveys while still protecting identities
- Partner with agencies (Indian & Multicultural affairs; tribal communities, etc.)
- Develop an action plan

Comments and Suggestions:

Amanda Meier - How do case managers have the opportunity to provide insights to their districts or units? One director reached out to their case managers and asked that they email the survey to the parents indicating to the parents that it would be meaningful data to her/him as far as how they could support the student and families better. That unit had an 80% response rate by doing that.

Debbe Poitra is happy to see that districts are reaching out to the tribal schools. Trust is a factor and that needs to be created by the schools and parents. It is even difficult for **us** to get parents to response to parent surveys. Parents need to feel they matter and are valued. You need to do it throughout the year not just the end of the year. You need to be talking to them on a regular basis. They want to know the value of the survey. They want to know if changes are going to be made if they respond. This is good for all parents but especially for Native American parents.

Trust and use of data (what will come out of this survey) is super important for all parents.

What ideas do you have to help get parents fill out surveys? Parent liaison are going out in the field and looking for the children.

Can parents receive the survey at an IEP meeting? One of the schools has done that. They setup a separate room with a computer to allow parents to fill out the survey at the time of the IEP meeting.

Are the results of the survey compiled in a report and shared with parents? Results along with action plan items might help bridge communication for some. – Melissa Casteel

Our report is public knowledge and the IDEA Advisory Committee was given a copy. The district report would depend on the district giving that to the parents because some districts may have small numbers.

Jessica Howlingwolf said that a lot of Native American communities have a lot of grandparents raising kids and they don't have the technology experience to fill out an electronic survey. Townhall, BBQ are good examples of community options for those hard to reach communities.

CSI on New Town – maybe that would be an option to have discussions there. Beth Larson-Steckler

Fort Totten volunteered to send out their surveys this year and increased their response rate using email and text.

## **CONCLUSIONS**

Renee would like to know if NDDPI goes back to the district/school that had a negative response for training? Emmanuel said the state could look at the data and see if there is a specific district that had negative responses and go back to them for training.

Is there a way for the schools to be held accountable? -Nicki Kehr

Jacqueline Adusumilli - would be curious if the results are broken down by age group at all. I'm wondering if there are a large number of parents who feel this way their first years after transitioning from Early Intervention. Since Early Intervention is extremely parent driven, are they feeling a shift in how services function in EI vs. a school setting? We are experiencing the same struggle in EI with our family surveys -some programs have huge response rates some have very small response rates. Even though the procedure is the same, the way in which it is implemented and the importance that is placed on the survey by the program will influence the response rate

Is there any disciplinary actions taken against those schools? I worry about the small town schools. – Jacey Enget

I think it very much depends on the individual school and the administration/leadership there. I would guess there are patterns/trends in certain schools (parent perspective) – Melissa Casteel

On the same note, when student transfers to another district. Different team members, hindsights, insights... I agree depends on individual schools and leadership plays a factor. – Jessica HowlingWolf

Is 5,000 the total of families with kids on IEPs – No, this is a sample of the total child count. 12% is a really low response rate and it is hard to make assumptions about parent option overall based on that response rate. – Melissa Casteel

Beth is wondering if there is any feedback from the parent involvement groups. Do they attend the meetings with the parents?

Melissa Casteel said if she hadn't sought out the resources on her own she wouldn't have known about any parent advocacy groups that were available to help parents. In my experience schools are not sharing any of what Beth has mentioned as an option for parents. Those that doesn't have the means to know where to look for help are falling through the cracks. I'm resourceful and it took me a while to find help and support/resources.

Victoria Johnson said she was unaware of resources available. She feels this is a big issue for parents and where to find resources. Is the information come in different languages or just English? That is a local school decision.

We discussed it with the units and some have paid for translators for IEP meetings and having some of their documents translated into different languages.

Patty Cummings indicated Fargo Public Schools is using some interpreters so parents can have full participation in the education process.

NDDPI tries to share information. Our office has calls once a month with the parent support and advocacy groups and we try to get information out but is it getting to the parents? Our office did share information on the family groups at the IEP 101 webinar this year. We will continue to try and spread the word through professional development. NDDPI has recordings if you register and can go back and watch the previous webinars. <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/nddpi-special-education-webinar-series-tickets-117806411147>

Resources are available on NDDPI website <https://www.nd.gov/dpi/familiescommunity/nddpi-updates-and-guidance-covid-19/resource-center>

Gerry: Family Voices and Pathfinders do host webinar sessions for parents. If you have a particular topic in mind, we can certainly work with the parent groups to see how best to have that information can be provided.

NEGLECTED AND DELINQUENT PORTFOLIO AND PROGRAMMATIC CHANGES AND TARGETS      BETH LARSON-STECKLER

Beth wondered how many people are aware the neglected and delinquent program. many of the youth that are in the program have IEPs or 504s. last year we lost five facilities in ND.

State conducted needs assessment:

- Needs Assessment
- Family engagement
- Transitions

Transitions:

- Entry into facility
- Residency
- Exit
- After Care

School District:

- Assign an individual
- Invite participants identified by youth, family
- Access needs as well as strengths
- Actively engage in transition meetings (starts day one)
- Make sure accommodations that assisted youth in being successful are in place

Questions contact [dpiees@nd.gov](mailto:dpiees@nd.gov)

DATES FOR FUTURE MEETINGS

PATTI MAHAR AND GERRY TEEVENS

Discussion: Joint IDEA/ICC meeting in September 15, 2021. Mark said that September 16-17 is our Northern Plains Law Conference so that would affect a number of special education staff. The committee suggested September 14, 2021. Jackie will go back to the ICC to see if that date works for them.

SUGGESTIONS SUMMARY

**Issues and Concerns in our State:** No issues were presented.

The committee approved the September Minutes Jacqueline Adusumilli made the motion to accept the minutes and Victoria Johnson seconded the motion.

**Public Comment:** No Public Comment

March meeting is scheduled for: March 10, 2021.

Agenda Items for March meeting:

- Updates on COVID
- Updates on Dispute Resolution
- Updates on Legislative Session
- Continue discussion on Parent Surveys
- State Systemic Improvement Plan final version for submission