ACESD Full Council Meeting Minutes

In-person Meeting at Vocational Rehab in West Columbia
October 25, 2024

Members Present:

Allison Adrian, Greta Bailey, Susan Beck, Valarie Bishop, Megan Burns, Shana Charles, Mary Lynne Diggs, Rebekah Francis-Barnes, Heather Googe, Nikki Green, Denean Greene Rivers, Melissa Griffin, Deborah Harris-Sims, Allison Huffstutler, Kerri Kannengieser, Padgett Mozingo, Shannon Polchow, Lindsay Porter, Anne Radue, Teresa Rhodes, Liz Smithson, Mary Stevenson, Karen Tucker, Laura Vazquez, Margie Williamson, Mary Wood, Elizabeth Young

Guests/SCDE Staff Present:

LaToya Abney (for Jeni Garner), Mindy Allen, Dianne Bennett, Jenny Dillon, Anita Ellison-Porter (for Louise Johnson), Sherri Evans, Rebecca Faile (for Troy Hall), Cheryl Fitts, Sandy Garner, Sara Garrett, Nicole Hamm (for Meghan Trowbridge), Shante Hook (for Meghan Trowbridge), Clay Jeffcoat (for Kelly Birmingham), Robert Jones (for Dept. of Corrections), Shannon Jones, Peter Keup, Jena Martin (for Jennifer Buster), Ann Moore, Sharon Reed (ASL interpreter), Joyce Shreve (for Lindsay Schmelzel), LaToya Wiley, Susan Yancey (ASL interpreter), Arlyn Yant (for Kelly Birmingham)

Welcome, call to order by Susan Beck, Chair 10:05 a.m.

Approval of Previous Minutes:

Kerri Kannengieser made a motion to approve minutes. Heather Googe seconded. There was no discussion. Approved.

Public Comment:

- Mrs. Amy Hibbs from Simpsonville submitted a public comment via email for the chair to read. Her son, an eighth grader with cerebral palsy and Cabeza's Syndrome, is in an ID moderate self-contained classroom. He is also nonverbal. On September 11, Mrs. Hibbs was informed that her son's teacher was reported for physical and verbal abuse. She also viewed evidence that her son was one of the teacher's victims. While current mandated reporters are trained to look for suspected abuse in the home, Mrs. Hibbs asserts that additional training is needed. Educational professionals need more training about suspected abuse observed in the school environment.

- Mrs. Robin Blackwood from Greenville submitted a public comment via email for the chair to read. She has a 15-year-old son with Fragile X Syndrome. She would like to see the South Carolina Department of Education create Special Education Advisory Councils at the district level.

Sub-Committee Meetings:

Committees met in breakout sessions.

Sub-Committee Reports:

Preschool:

Sherri Evans presented a draft of the preschool report to the committee. She will work on feedback for the January meeting. The committee worked on a vision statement for the EC Inclusion State Leadership Team (SLT). The committee will meet virtually to move the project forward.

Professional Development:

The committee had a fruitful discussion about statewide literacy initiatives following Senator Goldfinch's visit in August. There will be a paring down of reading screeners. LETRS training is moving into higher education. SCDE will be launching a new web site, and the new parent training videos with the partner organizations will be linked there. Parents in Greenville County Schools are pushing to create a parent advisory council.

Transition and Self Advocacy:

The committee continued working on the transition tip sheet, which helps parents understand the different levels of high school completion, which they are now calling educational opportunities. The committee focused on including QR codes and links.

Safe Schools/Social Emotional Learning:

Nicole Hamm presented on the Handle with Care notification system which helps coordinate student mental health needs from community to school. OSES provided an update on the final draft guidance for seclusion and restraint for districts. Mindy Allen presented information regarding the Eco-Healthy Child Care Program endorsement focuses on prevention of lead poisoning / environmental hazards in childcare facilities.

OSES Updates:

Indicator 18

- The indicator deals with the timely correction of noncompliance.
- Indicator 18 monitors 6 indicators:
  - 4B (Suspension and Expulsion)

- 9 (Disproportionate Representation)
- 10 (Disproportionate Representation in Specific Disability Categories)
- 11 (Child Find)
- 12 (Early Childhood Transition)
- 13 (Secondary Transition)
- Any other findings of noncompliance

Indicator 8

- There has been a low-response rate to the parent survey.
- OSES has attempted to address barriers. They have shortened the survey, translated it into multiple languages, and distributed it to a representative sample of the state.
- OSES is searching for ideas to increase response rates.
- Suggestions from the Advisory Council:
  - Can QR codes be reintroduced? The QR code could be given to parents immediately after an IEP meeting.
  - Perhaps there would be more parent participation if OSES were to follow up later. Parents could leave contact information once the survey is complete to receive feedback at a later time.
  - Parents often complain that they do not know about the survey. Could schools use School Improvement Councils to disseminate the information?
  - A 6-year sampling might work better due to survey fatigue.

IDEA Part B Program Review Process

- OSES explained the IDEA Part B program review process.
  - This year, 15 school districts are under review.
  - The review is an extensive process that consists of reports, interviews, on-site visits, survey, records reviews, and etcetera.
- OSES explained the program review report and findings of noncompliance.
  - LEAs are informed about noncompliance.
  - LEAs are required to provide evidence that the noncompliance has been addressed.
  - OSES will conduct a record review to verify that systemic issues have been fixed.
- OSES explained the correction process after a program review.
  - Individual student corrections and systemic corrective activities must be made within 8 months of the issuance of the findings packet to allow time for verification and sustaining compliance review.
  - All corrections, including systemic corrective actions and sustaining compliance verification, must be completed as soon as possible but no later than one year from the date of the findings letter.

EDPlan SC

- There are fewer issues now.
- Four districts stayed with Enrich this year (Anderson, Greenville County Schools, Florence 1, and Spartanburg County School District 6).
- Two districts are split between Enrich and EDPlan SC (Newberry and Laurens 55).

Organization / Program Briefing:

South Carolina Partnerships for Inclusion (SCPI)

- SCPI is a technical assistance center that facilitates inclusion for young kids with disabilities.
- SCPI supports school districts to help meet IDEA indicators for SPED services in early childhood education.
- SCPI provides universal supports, targeted support, and intensive support.

Announcements:

There were no announcements.

Motion to adjourn:

Kerri Kannengieser moved to adjourn. Melissa Griffin seconded. Meeting adjourned at 2:32 p.m.

Next Advisory Council meeting: Friday, January 31, 2025