

**State Special Education Advisory Committee  
(SSEAC)  
Holiday Inn Select  
Richmond-Koger South Conference Center  
Richmond, Virginia**

**Thursday July 17, 2008**

	<b>Present</b>	<b>Absent</b>	<b>Members</b>	<b>Present</b>	<b>Absent</b>
Judy Averill		x	Anne Fischer	x	
Mike Behrmann	x		Melodie Henderson	x	
Suzanne Bowers	x		Mona Holmes	x	
Bob Chappell		x	Tamara Temoney		x
Mary Ann Discenza		x	Jacqueline Nelson		x
Christina Draper	x		Peter Squire	x	
Sharon Duncan	x		Carletta Wilson		x

<b>Department of Education Staff</b>							
Doug Cox	x	Pat Burgess	x	Gloria Dalton	x	Karen Trump	x
Pat Abrams	x	Marianne Moore	x	Judy Douglas	x	Anu Upahadaya	x
Judy Hudgins	x	Paul Raskopf	x	Debbie Pfeiffer	x		
Cathy Pomfrey	x	Phyllis Mondak	x				

<b>Guests</b>			
Kathy Maybee (PEATC)	Ann Hughes	Nikki Moore	Karen Purcell
Cherie Takemoto (PEATC)	Joan O'Brian	Dana Yarbrough	Nancy Robbins
Kathy Wittig	Gail Holloman	Michael Asip	
Mary Anne Huband	Cheryl Ward		

## **Call to Order**

Dr. Mike Behrmann, vice-chair called the meeting to order in the absence of Ms. Anne Fisher, Chairman who was attending the Board of Education (BOE) meeting with Mr. Doug Cox. Ms. Fisher was presenting the SSEAC's comments to the BOE concerning the proposed *Regulations Governing Special Education Programs for Children with Disabilities in Virginia*. Dr. Behrmann welcomed everyone and asked for introductions. He stated that Mr. Bob Whytal and Ms. Susanne Conroy, SSEAC secretary, have resigned from the committee. Mr. Peter Squire was named as acting secretary for the current meeting.

Dr. Behrmann introduced Dr. Patricia Burgess, Specialist at the Virginia Department of Education (VDOE). Dr. Burgess announced that Ms. Melodie Henderson was named the winner of the 2008 Virginia Education Association Award for Teaching Excellence.

## **Presentations**

### **Speech-Language Services**

Dr. Patricia Burgess

Dr. Burgess reported on Speech-Language Services in Virginia. She reviewed the revised guidelines for Speech Language Pathology Services in Schools. Discussion followed:

- VIP-SLP Incentive
- Local Incentives
- Collaboration with Universities
- Members were asked to contact Marie Ireland at VDOE with any further questions at 804-786-9775 or [marie.ireland@doe.virginia.gov](mailto:marie.ireland@doe.virginia.gov) .

### **Resources for Services to Students who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing**

Dr. Debbie Pfeiffer

Ms. Ann Hughes

Ms. Ann Hughes of the Technical Assistance Program for Deaf and Hard of Hearing at the Partnership for People with Disabilities, VCU was introduced by Dr. Debbie Pfeiffer, VDOE. They presented a summary of initiatives being funded by VDOE to improve academic outcomes of students who are deaf or hard of hearing. Initiatives have included: collaborating with other state agencies to develop the Virginia Guide by Your Side (parent matching) Program, a Hearing Aid Loan Bank, and a curriculum to promote awareness of the communication needs of individuals who are deaf; revision of Guidelines for Working with Students Who Are Deaf or Hard of Hearing in Virginia Public School and implementation trainings; grant funding and supervision for professional development of educational interpreters who do not meet state qualifications; assessment of professional development needs of teachers of the deaf and hard of hearing through an online survey; professional development opportunities in the field of deaf education through Radford University's summer trainings, regional trainings in Visual Phonics, several trainings in use of auditory verbal strategies, and an annual statewide conference; and provision of onsite training and consultation for LEAs through VNOC (Virginia Network of

Consultants for professionals working with students who are deaf or hard of hearing.)

### ***Break***

### **Virginia Schools for the Deaf and Blind**

Dr. Karen Trump

Dr. Karen Trump, Director of the Office of State Schools provided an update on the consolidation of the two Virginia Schools for the Deaf and the Blind and described directives from the General Assembly since 2003 and the subsequent actions of the Board of Education and the Department of Education. A conceptual design was shared of the campus at the consolidated site in Staunton and floor plans that have been developed to date.

### ***Business Session***

#### **Approval of Minutes**

Members reviewed the minutes. Ms. Suzanne Bowers moved the minutes be accepted and Ms. Melodie Henderson seconded. The minutes were approved. Mr. Peter Squire abstained.

#### **Membership Term Review**

It was announced that Ms. Susanne Conroy, parent representative from Region 7 and Mr. Bob Whytal, representing local directors of special education had resigned from the SSEAC. Dr. Behrmann reviewed the vacancies and term endings on the SSEAC membership list. He indicated that Mr. Doug Cox was presenting membership appointments at the BOE meeting. The appointments included vacancies and reappointments of those members whose terms will end in 2008. As the resignation of Ms Conroy came too late to be considered, the position of Region 7 parent representative would remain vacant until presented to the BOE at a future date.

#### **Subcommittee Assignments**

The executive committee had reviewed the Ad Hoc and standing subcommittee list. It was determined that the Data and Reports committee would be disbanded and Mr. Paul Raskopf would present any data reports and information at quarterly meetings as necessary.

It was recommended that a new committee, Looking at Response to Intervention (RTI) be established and the members on the Data and Reports committee be transferred to that committee. As the chair will make appointments to each subcommittee, members were asked submit their preferences for committee assignments to Ms. Fischer.

#### **Nomination of Officers**

It was noted that Ms. Susanne Conroy held the position of secretary as well as head of the nominating committee. The executive committee moved that Ms. Mona Holmes will be the new at-large member on the executive committee and will also chair the nominating committee. Ms. Jacqueline Nelson was nominated to be secretary. Ms. Melodie Henderson moved that the nominations be closed. Ms. Sharon Duncan seconded. The individuals were accepted in the

positions.

### **Announcements**

Ms. Judy Hudgins told members that this is the third year for the parent survey. Packets are being sent out and she asked people to please share information. The survey needs to be returned by August 22 and people should contact Judy Hudgins with any additional questions.

### **Public Comment**

- Nancy Robins – Chair of Chesterfield SEAC provided an update of what the Chesterfield SEAC has been doing such as public forums.
- Dr. Mike Behrmann read a letter received from Sheree Brown Kaplan commenting to the SSEAC concerning the proposed revision of Virginia’s special education regulations in her position as the chair of the Fairfax County Council of PTAs (FCCPTA) Special Education Committee and as the representative of the FCCPTA on the ACSD (the Fairfax County LAC).
- Karen Purcell spoke on issues regarding teacher training, due process and the proposed special education regulations.

Ms. Anne Fisher returned from the BOE meeting. Mr. Peter Squire moved that the chair be turned back to her. Ms. Christina Draper seconded; the motion passed.

### **Lunch**

### **Presentations**

#### **More Secondary Transition Resources**

Ms. Marianne Moore

#### **Youth Leadership Forum**

Ms. Mary Ann Huband

Ms. Moore provided a brief update on the Youth Summit. She introduced Ms. Mary Ann Huband, Director, Self Determination project for Chesterfield schools who talked with members about the Youth Leadership Forum and her son John. She showed members an example of a graphical organizer created for her son and demonstrated how it had helped him.

#### **Transition Interactive Project**

Ms. Dana Yarborough

Ms. Christina Draper

Ms. Dana Yarborough and Ms. Christina Draper were introduced. They demonstrated the Transition Interactive project – “A Life for Me” program, an interactive web tool directed towards middle school students with disabilities who are planning to graduate high school with a

special diploma or a certificate of program completion. It's a place online where students with disabilities can share things they're good at or find out more about things they really like to do.

### **College Quest Activities**

Ms. Kathy Wittig  
Ms. Joan O'Brien

### **College 4 U - [www.vacollegequest.org](http://www.vacollegequest.org)**

Ms. Kathy Wittig, Program Specialist, Transition at VDOE's Training & Technical Assistance Center at VCU, talked about "College 4 U" a program aimed at college-bound high school students with disabilities and their parents.

### **A College Preview Program for Rising 9<sup>th</sup> Graders**

Ms. Joan Lovegren-O'Brien, Program Specialist, Secondary Transition at VDOE's Training & Technical Assistance Center talked about the program held at Longwood University in Farmville. The program is intended to motivate students as they begin high school.

### ***Break***

### **Review of Special Education Annual Performance Report**

Mr. Paul Raskopf

Mr. Paul Raskopf gave an update on the State Performance Plan/Annual Performance Report (SPP/APR). VDOE is ready to post state level and school division performance data on the DOE Web site. This report shows state and school division performance measured against the state targets for certain SPP/APR indicators. VDOE is also ready to inform school divisions of their Determination status based on the division data reported for certain indicators.

Mr. Raskopf also gave the Committee information on the special education data profile. State profile data will be presented to the SSEAC at the October meeting.

### **Inclusion and Collaboration**

Reports were provided by Dr. Pat Abrams, Director of Special Educational Instructional Services, VDOE; Ms. Phyllis Mondak, Specialist, VDOE; Ms. Gail Holloman with the Parent Resource Center in Fairfax

### **Inclusion and Collaboration**

Dr. Pat Abrams

- Personal experience for why some one is not included in the general education room.
- Handout on Current Inclusion Resources Summary

## **Early Intervention Services**

Ms. Phyllis Mondak

- Early Childhood Priority Project
- Presentation at state early childhood organizations on inclusive practices
- Shining Stars Conference – Inclusion emphasis
- Inclusive Placement Opportunities for Preschoolers (IPOP) program
- Professional Development Activities  
Institutes of Higher Education, Early Childhood Programs Council Activities

Ms. Gail Holloman

- The inclusion toolkit
- [www.storylineonline.net](http://www.storylineonline.net)

***Meeting Adjourned***

**Friday, July 18, 2008**

	<b>Present</b>	<b>Absent</b>	<b>Members</b>	<b>Present</b>	<b>Absent</b>
Judy Averill		x	Mona Holmes	x	
Mike Behrmann	x		Mary Ann Discenza		x
Suzanne Bowers	x		Jacqueline Nelson		x
Bob Chappell		x	Peter Squire	x	
Sharon Duncan		x	Carletta Wilson		x
Anne Fischer	x		Christina Draper	x	
Melodie Henderson	x		Tamara Temoney		x

<b>Department of Education Staff</b>							
Doug Cox	x	Judy Douglas	x	Kent Dickey	x	Pat Abrams	x
Paul Raskopf	x	Cathy Pomfrey	x	Pat Burgess	x		
Judy Hudgins	x	Anu Upahadaya	x				

Kathy Maybee (PEATC)	Nikki Moore	Gail Holloman
Cherie Takemoto (PEATC)		

***Presentations***

**State Special Education Funding**

Mr. Kent Dickey

Mr. Dickey, assistant superintendent VDOE Finance provided an overview of state funding for special education.

- Handout provided on the overview of state special funding for special education.
- SOQ Funding
- Other state funding streams considered to be special education-related, although some students served with this funding may not be in special education such as:
  1. Special Education Regional Program Tuition
  2. State-operated Programs
  3. Special Education for Students in Foster Care
  4. Homebound
  5. Special Education in Local/Regional Jails
  6. Special Education Endorsement Program
  7. Special Education/Vocational Education

***Business***

## **Future Meetings**

There was discussion regarding future dates for meetings. It was decided to change the January meeting to February. Other dates remained the same.

October 23 -24, 2008 - Winchester or Warrenton

February 5-6, 2009 - Richmond

April 23-24, 2009 - Williamsburg

## ***Assistant Superintendent's Report***

Mr. H. Douglas Cox

Mr. Cox provided updates and information on several items.

- Recommendations were made to the BOE regarding membership. The BOE met and appointed new members filling all positions with the exception of region 7.
  1. Larry Blevins - Parent Representative Region 3
  2. Eva Aikens - Parent Representative Region 6
  3. Robin Glass - Parent Representative Region 8
  4. Jennifer O'Berry-Ham - Representative of Private Schools
  5. Frances Goforth - Representative of Local Directors of Special Education
  6. Michael Behrmann - Representative of an Institution of Higher Education
  7. Peter Squire - Person with a Disability
  8. Mary Ann Discenza - Representative of a State Agency
  9. Tamara Temoney - Representative of the State Foster Care System
  
- Ms. Anne Fischer presented the SSEAC recommendations regarding the proposed special education regulations to the BOE. Following her report there were questions and discussion about the issues of parent consent, and hearing officers. Mr. Cox commended Ms. Fischer for an excellent job.
  
- Information was provided about a special education leadership program, the "Aspiring Special Education Leaders Academy." The initiative, sponsored by the Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) is designed to help prepare aspiring leaders for future administrative positions in special education, thereby assisting school divisions and state-operated programs with succession planning. Mr. Cox noted there was a great deal of interest, as there were 90 applicants for 30 spaces in the year-long program. Dr. Pat Addison, assistant professor at George Mason University and president of the Addison Leadership Group, will serve as project director for the Academy.
  
- Mr. Cox spoke about an invitation for school divisions to participate as 2008-2009 Response to Intervention (RtI) pilot sites. Fifteen school divisions who are willing to pilot up to two elementary schools focusing on reading and mathematics interventions beginning in the 2008-2009 school year were chosen. They have just participated, very enthusiastically in a

week of training.

- The Virginia Accessible Instructional Materials Center (AIM-VA), part of the Helen A. Kellar Institute for Human disabilities at George Mason University is assisting VDOE to implement the National Instructional Materials Accessibility Standards (NIMAS) regulations under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). Many orders have been received.
- The United States Department of Education has announced that it will no longer grant exceptions allowing states to exceed the one percent cap on the number of proficient scores on the alternate assessment measuring alternate achievement standards that may be counted toward adequate yearly progress (AYP). VDOE is continuing to work through various issues.
- Mr. Cox informed members that he had met with teachers at James Madison University the end of June at the Content Teaching Academy. The Academy’s goal is to provide high quality professional programs for the educators of Virginia by offering in-depth studies in a range of content areas.
- Mr. Cox announced that the Guidelines for School Division Policy Regarding Service Dogs in Virginia’s Public Schools were distributed via Superintendent’s Memo Information 156 July 11.

<b>Constituency Reports</b>		
<b>Name</b>		<b>Comments</b>
Judy Averill	Absent	
Mike Behrmann	Oral	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Disability Navigator</li> <li>▪ Higher education update (Pat Burgess-mentioned evidence-based practices; suggest personnel committee look at evidence based practices colleges and universities)</li> </ul>
Suzanne Bowers	Written	Presented report – 2008 Case for Inclusion; The report finds that people with intellectual & developmental disabilities being served by Medicaid are not getting the community-based supports they need in every state. Virginia continues to be at the bottom of the list. The parents of Region 4, as well as parents throughout Virginia, strive to improve Virginia’s standing.
Bob Chappell	Absent	
Mary Ann Discenza	Absent	
Christina Draper	Oral-Power Point	Video presentation - center for self-advocacy leadership (C-SAL); met with chancellor of community colleges to learn about his grant proposal for foster care young adults to continue education; advocating on young adults with disabilities; discussed ideas on how grant money could give them the tools and door openings to succeed.

<b>Constituency Reports</b>		
<b>Name</b>		<b>Comments</b>
Sharon Duncan	Absent	
Anne Fischer	Written	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Two LEA SEACs made committee recommendations regarding a public comment – One was given to the department; one did not receive school board approval, by abstaining;</li> <li>▪ Norfolk making overhaul to bylaws this summer</li> <li>▪ Extensive Report regarding NCLB, accreditation, and loopholes for student with disabilities</li> </ul>
Melodie Henderson	Written	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Many teachers responsible for VAAP's are still challenged with having to find VAAP material (i.e., binders, plastic sleeves, cameras) out of pocket.</li> <li>▪ Many teachers responsible for VAAP's, VGLAs are working 35-50 hours (outside of contract) per student when organizing final products for review. They would like district leaders to be encouraged to provide professional leave of 2-3 days with paid substitutes to offset some of the extensive hours required to complete binders.</li> <li>▪ VEA is in process of developing a Special Education Cadre in correlation to the national special education cadre. This cadre will address training and other needs in the state regarding special education. They will work along with the VEA special education committee.</li> </ul>
Mona Holmes	Written	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ I have continued contact with 4 SEAC's in my region. Each is trying to increase disability awareness and acceptance. We all struggle with parent involvement with local SEAC's. The Charlottesville public comment meeting in June was well attended. I thought comments were well received by all.</li> <li>▪ Locally we in Fluvanna are celebrating the funding on an additional nurse at our largest elementary school. Also, there has been a request that the SEAC look into the regulations on a service dog for diabetics.</li> <li>▪ Lastly, there are some mixed feelings about the implementation of the International Baccalaureate Program.</li> </ul>
Jacqueline Nelson	Absent	
Peter Squire	Oral	Reinforce comments made by PEATC – attended youth summit; spoke with students – challenges they had being allowed into AP courses; second comment – when taking tests some given answers in one form or another before taking test; questioned whether they took the answers; answers varied.
Tamara Temoney	Absent	
Carletta Wilson	Absent	

<b>Constituency Reports</b>		
<b>Name</b>		<b>Comments</b>
<i>PEATC</i> Kathy Maybee Cherie Takemoto	Oral	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Parent concerns about assessment, evaluation and placement, no contact persons listed on procedural safeguards, lack of common understanding of the IEP process and denial of access to advanced placement and programs</li> <li>▪ Flyers about upcoming PEATC events</li> <li>▪ Update on Latino Outreach Project</li> </ul>

***Review of Public Comment***

Ms. Anne Fisher reviewed the three public comments presented.

Ms. Fisher asked that members return their draft copy of the SSEAC annual report with any comments or additions. She said she would consolidate comments and e-mail changes to each member. The report should be presented at the September BOE meeting.

***Meeting Adjourned***