

2003 – 2004 Annual Report

CSEAC

**Colorado Special Education
Advisory Committee**

Colorado Commissioner of Education
William J. Moloney

Deputy Commissioner
Roscoe Davidson

Director, Exceptional Student Services
Lorrie Harkness

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What is CSEAC

Notes

The Colorado Special Education Advisory Committee (CSEAC) is a state level committee mandated by federal and state law. Members are interested in the education of children/youth with disabilities. We include parents of, and individuals with disabilities, educational service providers, administrators and representatives from a variety of related agencies. Participation is statewide and representative of diverse disabilities.

Purpose of CSEAC

- Provide input and assistance to the State Board of Education
- Advise the State Director of Exceptional Student Services
- Advocate and promote communication, collaboration and partnership among educational service providers, children/youth, parents and administrators
- Serve as a liaison among parents of children with special needs, local educational agencies and the Colorado Department of Education (CDE), Exceptional Student Services Unit

Mission Statement of CSEAC

Our mission is to actively represent children/youth with disabilities and impact decisions made on their behalf to enhance the quality of education services.

Scheduled Meetings for 2004-2005

September 23, 2004, Red Rocks Community
College
November 18, 2004, Adams 12 Five Star Schools
February 17, 2005, Adams 12 Five Star Schools
April 21, 2005, Adams 12 Five Star Schools

Contact the Exceptional Student Services Unit for
times and locations at 303-866-6943.

For Additional Information

For further information about the Colorado Special
Education Advisory Committee, please contact one
of the following persons, or call 303-866-6943:

Cindy Dascher, Colorado Department of Education
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Karen Rutledge, Communications Committee
Chair
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Lorrie Harkness
State Director, Exceptional Student Services
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Reflections from the Co – Chairs By Nancy Carlson and Laura Merrill

In reflecting upon the activities of the Colorado Special
Education Advisory Committee during the 2003-2004 year,
the committee has taken a leadership role on issues facing
special education in Colorado. There are many challenges
today that the special education “system” must face and
overcome. The advisory committee continues to be a
guiding voice on the direction that Colorado and the nation
will take to meet these challenges.

Standing Committees

The **Public Policy and Legislation** committee, chaired by
Michelle Padilla, pursued two goals: 1) monitor and
disseminate information about the reauthorization of the
Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) 2) raise
membership awareness of legislation that impacts special
education and promote legislative action. These goals were
met through the dissemination of information on the
CSEAC listserv and the presentation of reports at each
meeting. Other issues that emerged in the discussions
following these presentations were election results and their
impact on education in Colorado, and education bills
proposed during the legislative session. Members of the
committee attended a Legislative Breakfast sponsored by
the Colorado Developmental Disabilities Council where
they met and discussed issues with legislators.

A continuing goal of the CSEAC is to facilitate
communication throughout the state of Colorado among
local Special Education Advisory Committees (SEACs),
parents, agencies and other interested parties.

The **Communications** committee chair, Karen Rutledge, and her committee members were invaluable in directing the task of developing more efficient means of communication within our state.

The **Communications** committee members accomplished the following:

- Established a CSEAC listserv, which has provided a vital link among members, especially for the sharing of legislative information on the reauthorization of IDEA, and issues arising from the No Child Left Behind Act.
- Updated and distributed the CSEAC brochure.
- Researched other states' websites and met with web developers to improve Colorado's website.
- Researched school district websites within Colorado and evaluated them on "user friendliness" for parents. Outstanding sites were Cherry Creek, Boulder Valley, Windsor and Eagle School Districts.
- Surveyed special education directors and coordinators to determine how special education information is shared within their districts.
- Began development of a public awareness presentation capturing the theme "When CSEAC Talks, People Listen".
- Began development of an informational bookmark advertising CSEAC.

CSEAC Members 2003-2004

Name	Congressional District
Diane Bassett	4
Bradley Bittan	1
Debi Blackwell	5
Orvin Breningstall	1
Nancy Carlson * Co-Chair	3
Kathy Chase	6
Lisa Schwartz Franklin	6
Dede Landry	1
Lynette Lang	7
Stephanie Lynch	2
Patty Meek	6
Laura Merrill *Co-Chair	7
Glenda Nash-Kirton	1
Paula Norman	4
Michelle Padilla	7
Katherine Poseley	5
Tim Rea	6
Jack Robinson	1
Karen Rutledge	2
Steven Sandoval	4
Tim Sanger	4
Alison Seylor	5
Robin Singer	6
Jean Snoddy	6
Ed Steinberg	4
Elenn Steinberg	1
Lisa Thoennes	6
Menda Warne	4
Representative Suzanne Williams	7

- Opening Doors: Connecting Parents to Special Education Resources – Laura Ayers, parent from the Cherry Creek School District, shared a notebook available in every school in the district.
- Dispute Resolution - Charlie Masner, CDE Senior Consultant: Law and Dispute Resolution, reviewed data on dispute resolution in Colorado.

Informational Updates

The following are just a few of the informational updates the committee received throughout the year:

- Western Slope Technical Assistance Center (WesTAC) – A new Assistive Technology Center is now open in Grand Junction.
- Eligible Facilities – A task force is studying the issues of overall quality, teacher quality and cost implications in facilities.
- Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) – The progress of school districts toward meeting AYP was discussed.
- Schools of Choice – Due to lack of physical access some students are unable to attend a school of choice.
- Deaf Education Regionalization – A task force is studying the feasibility of a regional delivery approach.
- No Child Left Behind Act – The impact of this legislation, particularly in the area of teacher qualifications, will continue to be followed by CSEAC.

The **Membership** committee chair, Dede Landry, and her committee members went through a year long process of recruiting new members for CSEAC. Criteria developed by the committee, which included the required mandates of federal and state law, were used to identify prospective members.

From a pool of 13 applicants, four recommendations were presented to the Colorado State Board of Education. All four applicants were appointed to the committee by the State Board.

The newly appointed CSEAC members are as follows:

- Nella B. Anderson – representing institutions of higher education, Congressional District 3
- Cindy Ucker – representing parents of children with disabilities, Congressional District 5
- Mike Wales – representing Division of Youth Corrections in the Department of Human Services, Congressional District 6
- Ian Watlington – representing a vocational, community or business organization concerned with the provision of transition services, Congressional District 6

The **Bylaws and Procedures** committee, chaired by Diane Bassett, reviewed the bylaws and procedures with the committee members and found that changes were not warranted during the 2003-2004 year.

The **State Improvement Plan** (SIP) committee, chaired by Stephanie Lynch, chose to focus on transitions and post secondary school outcomes.

Of particular interest to the committee were the transition from Part C (infants and toddlers) to Part B (school age students), and tracking the effectiveness of transition from high school to post secondary services. The SIP committee educated the other CSEAC members on the topic of transition. Romie Tobin, CDE Consultant, presented a summary report of the 2003-2004 data collected from the Colorado Transition Outcomes Project (TOPs). TOPs is a self-assessment data collection project districts can choose to engage in to assess the quality of Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) for students in transition (ages 14-21). This presentation has provided guidance to CSEAC.

Committee Highlights

In addition to the many accomplishments listed under the subcommittees, CSEAC also completed the following:

- The Ad Hoc Position Paper committee, chaired by Diane Bassett, completed the paper, Secondary Education for Youth with Disabilities: How Post-School Data Collection Can Improve Services and Supports.

Panel Contributions

The following are some of the contributions from individual CSEAC members:

- Attended the Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) Leadership Conference in Washington D.C.
- Participated on the Individualized Education Program (IEP) Task Force.

- Served on the SLIVER Grant Review Committee.
- Attended the National Association of School Psychologists Conference.
- Attended the Children and Adults with Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (CHADD) International Conference.
- Attended “A Colorado Guide to the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001”.
- Attended the 54th Annual Conference of the International Dyslexia Association “Our Mission to Literacy”.
- Attended the Rocky Mountain Love and Logic Conference.

Presentations

During the year the CSEAC heard presentations around the following:

- Positive Behavior Support (PBS) – Cyndi Boezio, CDE State Improvement Grant Director, reported on Colorado’s PBS Initiative.
- Cyberschools – Laura Freppel, CDE Senior Consultant, Dispute Resolution, presented information on cyberschools and special education.
- Mental Health Panel – Natalie Portman-Marsh, Jefferson Center for Mental Health; Brad Bittan, CSEAC Member and attorney; Margie Grimsley, Federation of Families for Children’s Mental Health; Carol Villa, Empower Colorado; and Barb Bieber, CDE School Psychologist Consultant; discussed mental health issues.