

2004 – 2005 Annual Report



Colorado Special Education
Advisory Committee

Colorado Commissioner of Education
William J. Moloney

Deputy Commissioner
Roscoe Davidson

Director, Exceptional Student Services
Lorrie Harkness

Notes

Table of Contents

What is CSEAC2
Purpose of CSEAC2
Mission Statement of CSEAC 2
Reflections from Co-Chairs3
Committee Highlights.....3-8
CSEAC Membership 2004-2005 9
Schedule of Meetings 2005-200610
Additional Highlights11

What is CSEAC

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 educational services.

2004-05 Additional Highlights

In addition to those highlights noted in the Standing Committee Reports --

- A Vision Statement was developed: “All learners are respected and challenged with high expectations, their needs are met, and student aspirations for success are fulfilled.”
- A position statement regarding mental health issues and students with disabilities is in the final stages of being edited.
- The Parent Focus portion of each meeting was utilized as a vital forum for input and guidance.
- CSEAC meetings incorporated celebrations of student achievements and successes.
- CSEAC has evolved into a viable organization to which there are numerous applications for membership, thereby requiring a selection process.

Scheduled Meetings for 2005-2006

September 22, 2005

November 17, 2005

February 15, 2006

April 20, 2006

July 27 & 28, 2006, Retreat

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 visit www.cde.state.co.us/cdesped/CSEAC.asp, contact one of the following persons, or call 303-866-6943:

Cindy Dascher, Colorado Department of Education
Parent and Family Consultant
Dascher_C@cde.state.co.us

Terri Rogers Connolly
Interim Director, Exceptional Student Services
Connolly_T@cde.state.co.us

Reflections from the Co-chairs by Debi Blackwell & Glenda Nash-Buscarello

We, as co-chairs, have found it both rewarding and challenging to represent CSEAC in arenas such as the Pre-collegiate Admissions Standards Task Force and a focus group on state/local control issues for the Colorado Association of School Boards. It has been a tremendous honor to facilitate this group of highly dedicated, diverse individuals in the efforts to enhance special education services while promoting partnerships and collaboration!

Standing Committees

The **Public Policy and Legislation** committee, chaired by Steve Sandoval, pursued three goals: 1) to continue to disseminate up-to-date information related to the newly passed Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEIA) and other pertinent policy & legal information; (2) raise membership awareness of legislation that impacts special education; and (3) increase contact with our state legislator and CSEAC member, Senator Suzanne Williams, to discuss and promote legislative action promoting special education issues.

Other issues that emerged in the legislative discussions included the implementation of CSAP for “gap kids” (students who can easily outperform the CSAP-A, but are significantly challenged by the CSAP), private school services under the new IDEIA, Response to Intervention, and the “early intervening” fund requirement.

The **Communications** committee chair, Karen Rutledge, and her committee members accomplished the following:

1. CSEAC members have continued to use the list serve to update members about legislative issues, information on state-wide conferences, and to solicit feedback about “hot topics;”
2. Updated the CSEAC brochure;
3. Developed a power point marketing piece for CSEAC that was approved at the April 21, 2005 meeting. It has been added as a link on the CSEAC website, and it will be disseminated to special education directors and other interested parties throughout the state. (Gratitude is extended to Elenn Steinberg and Michael Wales for their work on this marketing piece);
4. Met with administrative staff from PEAK Parent Center to talk about collaboration between CDE, CSEAC and PEAK. Suggestions were made to improve the PEAK website and calendar as a state-wide resource;
5. Met with the website developer from CDE and added specific disability resource links to the CDE website under the parent resource section. The committee also learned about the various list serves maintained by CDE that could be used to disseminate information to key people throughout the state;
6. Throughout the year, the committee continued to gather information about special education advisory committees at the district or Board of Cooperative Educational Services (BOCES) level. A vision of this committee is to encourage their development and to serve as a model and a resource.

CSEAC Members 2004-2005

Name	Congressional District
Nella B. Anderson	3
Bradley Bittan	1
Debi Blackwell * Co-Chair	5
Orvin Breningstall	1
Nancy Carlson	3
Kathy Chase	6
Lisa Schwartz Franklin	6
Lynette Lang	7
Stephanie Lynch	2
Patty Meek	6
Laura Merrill	7
Glenda Nash-Buscarello * Co-Chair	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 Seyler	5
Robin Singer	6
Jean Snoddy	6
Ed Steinberg	4
Elenn Steinberg	1
Lisa Thoennes	6
Cindy Ucker	5
Mike Wales	6
Menda Warne	4
Ian Watlington	6
Senator Suzanne Williams	7

The **Bylaws and Procedures** committee, consisting of Tim Sanger and Lynette Lang, reports the following activities for 2004-05:

- Reviewed and amended proposed bylaws addition (Article III – Composition – Section 1 ‘Membership Composition);
- Distributed updated bylaws;
- Proposed bylaws changes to meet new requirements of Reauthorization IDEIA 2004 – (Article II – Section 1, Section 2), (Article III – Section 1, Section 5, Composition – Section 1), (Article IV – Section 4), (Article V – Section 11);
- Reviewed and amended proposed bylaws revisions per Reauthorization IDEIA 2004 – (Article II – Section 1, Section 2), (Article III – Section 1, Section 5, Composition – Section 1), (Article IV – Section 4), (Article V – Section 11).

The **State Improvement Plan** committee, chaired by Debi Blackwell, reports the following activities for 2004-05:

- Conducted a survey with Directors of Special Education in the state of Colorado to gain information pertaining to students with disabilities dropping out of school. There was a 30% response rate; sixteen of the fifty-four directors responded. The following factors were ascertained from a compilation of the survey results –
 1. In Colorado, students with disabilities who drop out of school typically do so at 16 years of age or in 10th grade. Rarely, but occasionally, students drop out in 11th or 12th grades.
 2. In Colorado, the percentage of students who enter high school receiving special education services and graduate (i.e. receive a high school diploma or certificate of completion) ranges from unknown to 98%. 38% of the sixteen respondents indicated this information was not available.
 3. Effective models within the state to prevent dropping out include taking a personal interest in those students at risk of dropping out and wrapping community and district resources around these students, implementing work-study programs, using peer tutors, awarding Carnegie Credits for IEP goal completion, and sending at risk students to investigate what is required to earn a GED and the costs of independent living.
 4. Actions taken in school districts within the state to follow-up with students who were receiving special education services but dropped out of school consisted of sending letters to those

students outlining services available, attempting to reconnect with the students through alternative schools, holding a meeting with the student and parent to create alternatives, and utilizing the School-to-Work Alliance Program.

- Collected information from PEAK Parent Center regarding the anecdotal information that agency has collected about the reasons students with disabilities drop out of school. The most common reasons include –
 1. student feels stupid in an academic class,
 2. student is tagged as a trouble maker and encouraged to leave school,
 3. student does not see the relevance of school/ parents do not value education,
 4. school has an unfriendly atmosphere.
- Found that there is not a consistent definition in the nation for a school “drop out” pertaining to students with disabilities. For example, in some states if a student attains a Graduate Equivalency Diploma through the public school, he/she is not designated as a drop-out;
- Identified Clemson University National Drop-out Prevention Center (www.dropoutprevention.org) as a resource for preventing students with disabilities from dropping out of school and as a source for defining “drop out.”

The **Membership** committee chair, Kathy Chase, 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 22 applicants, six recommendations were presented to the Colorado State Board of Education. All six applicants were appointed to the committee by the State Board.

The newly appointed CSEAC members are as follows:

- Jann Clevenger, representing facilities, Congressional District 6;
- Diana Kellner, representing teachers, Congressional District 2;
- Linn Oliver, representing teachers, Congressional District 7;
- Ray Mix, representing parents of children with disabilities, Congressional District 3;
- Paula Christina, representing parents of children with disabilities, Congressional District 2;
- Dani Lisa Arck, representing parents of children with disabilities, Congressional District 1.

Additionally, with the reauthorization of IDEA, two new members were mandated to be part of the CSEAC membership. The two positions will represent State Child Welfare in the area of Foster Care and Homeless children. The Foster Care representative nominee was submitted to and approved by the State Board of Education in May 2005. Mary Griffin, Congressional District 6, will begin her term July 1, 2005. The representative for Homeless children will be recruited in the coming year.