State Advisory Panel

May 15, 2019

Minutes

**Present**

Libby Stone-Sterling, Chair

Ann Belanger, DOE Director of Office of Special Services

Erin Frazier – via phone

Courtney Angelousante

Brian Cavanaugh

Catherine Curry

Jodie Hall

Sherreccia Jackson

Nancy Lander

Valerie Mattes

Artulean McKenna

Page Morris \*

Cheryl Neiverth

Leanna Simoa \*

Christine Sullivan

Howard Wright \*

1. **Introductions**
2. **Open Comment**
   1. Howard Wright brought a copy of an article written in the Portland Press regarding special needs students participation in State tests. He would like to see the statistics that are kept on this topic to be broken down as to how many students that participate are special needs students and how many of them are high needs, low needs, etc. It was also discussed that both the Districts and Department of Education (“DOE”) are penalized for students that opt out of these tests. As Ann Belanger pointed out, the federal government regulates these tests. If more than 1% use alternative methods of testing, a waiver must be applied for, however, 95% of the students must participate for the District to be eligible. This often leaves a gap between how many students participate and how many students opt out or use alternative methods.
   2. Sherreccia Jackson advised that Panel that a Department of Corrections (“DOC”) student entered a state writing contest and won 1st place in that contest. Sherreccia also informed the Panel about Project Impact, which is a group that works with DOE to ensure there is communication with the descending schools, as they are still responsible until they are committed to DOC. They also assist in reconnecting students and Districts when they are ready to return to school. It was also discussed that 87% of committed DOC students are currently receiving Special Education Services and 93% of detained students are identified at their schools.
3. **Legislative Update - Ann Belanger, DOE Director of Special Services**

LD 115 *An Act To Appropriate Funds for Home Visiting Services To Provide Child Development Education and Skills Development for New Parents* – opt to pass and is in both chambers

LD 136 *An Act To Establish a Special Education Circuit Breaker Reimbursement Program* – tabled with possible carryover

LD 282 *Resolve, Regarding Legislative Review of Portions of Chapter 101* (Emergency Bill) – opt to pass and is in both chambers

LD 382 *An Act To Fund Services for Blind and Visually Impaired Persons at the Maine State Library* – signed into law by Governor Janet Mills

LD 388 *An Act To Recognize Employee Background Checks Conducted for Out-of-state Schools Eligible for Maine Tuition Assistance* – divided report (12 opt to, 1 opt not to pass)

LD 512 *Resolve, To Create the Task Force To Study and Plan for the Implementation of Maine's Early Childhood Special Education Services* (Emergency Bill) – no further action has been taken

LD 632 *An Act To Promote Free, Appropriate Public Education* – Work session occurred May 15 and is projected as opt not to

LD 642 *An Act Regarding Kindergarten Readiness for Children Who Are Deaf and Hard of Hearing* – opt not to pass

LD 651 *An Act To Facilitate School Access to Federal Title I Funds and Improve the Delivery of Special Education Services -* no further action has been taken

LD *692 Resolve, To Address Reimbursement Rates for Licensed Clinical Social Workers under Maine Care* - no further action has been taken

LD 791 *An Act To Provide School Districts with Full State Funding for Students with High-cost Special Education Needs* – tabled

LD 852 *An Act To Enhance the Coordination of Benefits, Assessments and Expansion of Continuing Education Programs for Young Adults with Disabilities after High School* – opt to pass and is in both chambers

LD 984 *Resolve, To Increase Funding for Children's Behavioral Health Issues in Order To Return to the State Children Who Are Currently Housed in Residential Treatment Systems outside of the State and To Suspend Certain Contracts Related to Psychiatric Residential Treatment Facilities* – no further action has been taken

LD 1007 *An Act To Expand and Enhance Maine's Behavioral Health Direct Care Workforce* (Concept Bill) - no further action has been taken

LD 1012 *An Act To Provide Stable Funding and Support for Child Care Providers* – no further action has been taken

LD 1039 *Resolve, To Establish and Fund Interventions for At-risk Families and Children* – no further action has been taken

LD 1160 *An Act To Transfer the Kim Wallace Adaptive Equipment Loan Program Fund to the Office of the Treasurer of State* – opt to pass

LD 1178 *An Act To Address the Needs of Children with Intellectual Disabilities and Autism Spectrum Disorder* – no further action has been taken

*LD 1370 An Act To Address Violent Behavior in the Classroom* – A work group will convene and revamp the bill as to not conflict with Federal law and to constrict verbiage

LD 1376 *An Act To Direct the Department of Education To Amend Its Rules To Ensure That Physical Restraint and Seclusion Policies Are Followed for Special Education Students and Make Biennial Reports on the Use of Physical Restraint and Seclusion –* A public hearing was held and a work session has not scheduled. The Department of Education testified against this bill.

LD 1418 *An Act To Address Maine's Shortage of Behavioral Health Services for Minors*– no further action has been taken

LD 1486 *An Act To Strengthen Supports for Adults with Intellectual Disabilities or Autism in Crisis* – no further action has been taken

LD 1715 *An Act To Reorganize the Provision of Services for Children with Disabilities from Birth to 5 Years of Age* (Emergency Bill) – public hearing to be scheduled with the proposed CDS removal possess to begin in 2021 with complete removal to occur in 2025. This bill is not sponsored by DOE.

1. **Special Education Eligibility Report – Libby Stone-Sterling, Chair**
2. It was discussed that Maine is above-average in the number of students that receive services under IDEA Part B & C. It was also discussed that Part C is most likely under-identified in Maine and other states due to difficulties in identifying that age group and that the past, Maine may have been generally over-identifying students.
3. There are some inconsistencies in reporting due to there being higher identification rates in areas with service centers readily available to families and the pushing of special education to obtain other related services.
4. Rapid Transition Intervention and Multi-Tiered Support Systems are made to assist in more than just education.

**Open Comment:** It was asked how we know when there is a need and how do we assist with that? The answer discussed was Intervention based on the level of need.

1. **SPDG (State Personnel Development Grant) Opportunity**

There was not a grant made available for this year but there will be an application available for next year. USDOE is doing Webinars to assist in getting these grants**.**

1. **Membership:**

Membership (see April minutes for reference) The Panel does not have a member from Aroostook, Washington or Western Maine. There is a proposed 3-year term membership with plans for a new orientation to occur.

1. **Open Comment:**

Inaugural Meeting of Children’s Cabinet – Libby Attended – Mills is promoting early intervention and helping the older kids in DOC care or in need of intervention. DHHS Commissioner encouraged pediatrician to look across the needs for children. How to get more youth voice? (Youth advisory group? This would not sit by itself, but maybe join this or another panel.) How do we get youth ready for transition?

**Meeting adjourned at 11:34**

**Next meeting at June 12**