
Special Education Advisory Council
November 1, 2007
Minutes of Meeting

Members Present: Randy Arnold, Tom Danzl, Michelle Hilden, Brianna Inkster, Ann Johnson, Emmett Keenan, Carrie Nash, Heather Nichols, Elisabeth Rogers, Rebecca Schlough, Patty Waletzko

Dr. Rogers began the meeting with a welcome and introductions. The agenda was reviewed and approved.

District 742 Levy

Dr. Rogers reported that she had volunteered to work on the levy phone bank and has been generally receiving positive responses. 6,000 phone calls had been made at this point and of those, 66% were voting "yes". She said that one area that she felt may be misunderstood was the need for the funds for technology. The State is moving toward online testing for State mandated testing, such as the MCA's and the amount of web-based instruction is increasing. A suggestion was made that for those families who attend non-public schools, that they be aware of the amount of support that is provided from District 742 in the areas of health, secondary guidance, English Language Learner's services, special education, and Title I. The group continued to discuss the levy questions. It was noted that the St. Cloud Times does not always print information as it was intended.

Update on InnStep Program Relocation

Randy Arnold discussed the status of the InnStep relocation. He has visited with several representatives from businesses in the community including St. Benedicts, St. Scholastic, Hospital Crossroads, Washington Place, and the Comfort Inn/Old Chicago complex. He mentioned that many were excellent work sites, but lacked the necessary classroom space. He had also spoken to a representative from the St. Cloud Technical College, but as of yet hadn't received a response. Other locations in the community were discussed. Randy said he had spoken to the Chamber of Commerce and received positive support in the transition process.

Update on Third Party Billing

Dr. Rogers reported that YTD for September/October receipts were \$65,000. We are on track to exceed revenues from last year. The 2007-2008 goal is a net revenue of \$200,000. The group was informed that half of the salary for the District-wide nursing position was taken from revenue from third party billing, since she supervises the billable PCA services. \$10,000 was made available from revenues for special education teachers to apply for money for materials for student instruction. There was a discussion about the possibility of reducing the deductible of private insurance by the third party billing process, and the administrative effort of setting up third party billing with a family's private insurance. Randy and Elisabeth discussed the need to improve communications between the Department of Human Health Services and Minnesota Department of Education related to billable services.

Possible Rules Governing Credentialing for Paraprofessionals

Dr. Rogers informed the council that the Minnesota Board of Teaching is in the process of gathering information to develop rules regarding establishing a voluntary statewide credential for education paraprofessionals who assist a licensed teacher in providing student instruction. This may also have a reflection on special education paraprofessionals. She will provide additional information as it becomes available.

New Recommended Due Process Forms

Susan O'Connor-Meyer, Research Assistant attended the meeting to explain changes to the due process forms that are being recommended by MDE. Each item of change was reviewed and discussed. The general consensus from the advisory council was that many of the recommended changes are unclear. Elisabeth stated that District 742, along with many other districts, have not implemented this new form yet, as there are too many unanswered questions that need clarification from MDE. It would also require a significant amount of training for licensed staff prior to implementation and the Student Plans software would need to be updated. Patty W. noted that it would also be necessary to have a clear understanding of the recommended changes in order to instruct students appropriately at St. Cloud State University. Through Get-Set, Brianna I. And Rebecca S. would like to be on the committee that would work on the due process forms clarifications. It was recommended to send the forms with recommended changes to PACER to get their perspective. Members on the council asked for a contact at the MDE, Department of Compliance. Elisabeth said that person is Amy Roberts.

Integrated Service Delivery Model (ISDM)

The question was asked about how we know the integrated service delivery model is working. Dr. Rogers noted that we collect benchmark data in grade K-8 in reading and math. We intervene with students who need intervention. The MCAs that are done district-wide are also an indicator. This was followed by a discussion about the benefits of ISDM, particularly co-teaching.

Program Review

Dr. Rogers explained that in year 2006-07, the EBD program at the secondary level was reviewed. This year, she would like to have a review of the DCD program at secondary and post secondary level to includes ages 14-21. Building and programs involved would be North, South, Tech, Apollo, CO2, and InnStep. One reason for a review is to assure that the program standards are focused on academic instruction and special instruction. She explained part of the review will include having focus groups consisting of parents, teachers, and students. The advisory council was asked if they would like to develop a sub-committee to provide parent perspectives on Best Practice and quality indicators. The sub-committee could plan to meet 2-3 times. Rebecca S., Tom D., Michelle H., and Patty W. volunteered to be on this committee. Elisabeth will send a notice for the first meeting.

Time of Meeting

The committee discussed the possibility of changing the time of day for meetings. Many mentioned that they would not be able to attend the meeting at all if it was outside of the school day. It was decided that the time would remain as it is. Members volunteered to bring any item forward to the committee if a member cannot attend a meeting.

The group was thanked for attending and the meeting was closed.

Next Meeting: January 3, 2008

Submitted by: Sharie Narlock

These minutes are not official until reviewed and approved by the Special Education Advisory Council.