

SPECIAL EDUCATION ADVISORY COUNCIL
Minutes – August 9, 2013
 9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

PRESENT: Jyo Bridgewater, Bob Campbell, Debbie Cheeseman, Annette Cooper, Shari Dela Cuadra-Larsen, Gabriele Finn, Martha Guinan, Tami Ho, Barbara Ioli, Deborah Kobayakawa, Bernadette Lane, Eleanor MacDonald, Dale Matsuura, Zaidarene Place, Barbara Pretty, Kauai Rezentes, Susan Rocco, Melissa Rosen, Ivalee Sinclair, Tom Smith, Jan Tateishi, Cari White
EXCUSED: Brendelyn Ancheta, Tammy Bopp, Shanelle Lum, Stacey Oshio, Lani Solomona, Mike Tamahaha
ABSENT: Dan Ulrich
GUESTS: Waynette Cabral, Brian De Lima, Leila Hayashida, Lyndsay Pinkus, Melissa Sahl, Steven Vannatta, Francine Wai

TOPIC	DISCUSSION	ACTION
Call to Order	Ivalee Sinclair called the meeting to order at 9:14 a.m.	
Announcements	Shari Dela Cuadra-Larsen announced that Ronn Nozoe was unable to attend the meeting due to health reasons, and Lyndsay Pinkus would be presenting information on the implementation of the ESEA Waiver. Eleanor MacDonald announced that the U.S. Senate is proposing changes to the Rehabilitation Act that include moving the Rehabilitation Services Administration from the Department of Education to the Department of Labor. She and many others are concerned that the move may negatively affect students with disabilities who are transitioning from high school to adult services.	Eleanor encouraged members to learn more about the Workforce Investment Act of 2013 (S. 1356).
Introductions	Ivalee asked members to introduce themselves and state why they are a part of SEAC and what they would like to accomplish. Guests also introduced themselves: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brian De Lima, Vice Chair of the Board of Education; • Leila Hayashida, Acting Assistant Superintendent for the Office of Curriculum, Instruction and Student Support (soon to be the Office of College and Career Readiness); • Melissa Saul, Professor at West Oahu College; • Francine Wai, Executive Director of the Disability and Communication Access Board; • Waynette Cabral, Executive Administrator for the Developmental Disabilities Council; and • Steven Vannatta, Administrator of the Community Children’s Council Office. 	

<p>Department of Education’s Report: Superintendent’s Priorities for SY 13-14</p>	<p>Shari Dela Cuadra-Larsen provided a brief description of the Department’s initiatives for the current school year—Complex Area Support Teams, Common Core State Standards, Educator Effectiveness System and Strive HI Performance System. She also relayed the Superintendent’s request to SEAC to assist the Department through two broad activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Responding to the Department’s focus areas: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Listing parent and community groups that serve families of students with disabilities and describing the differences between groups; ○ Recommending how the Department can reach out to new parents; and • Providing feedback to the Department on presentations regarding actions the Department is taking to meet the needs of students with disabilities. <p>Shari clarified that these presentations could include topical information requested by SEAC (for example, information on DOE’s budgeting process).</p> <p><u>Questions/comments from members</u></p> <p>Q. Will there be feedback from the Department once SEAC has provided input? A. Yes, we want to close the loop and explain why we chose the path of action.</p> <p>Q. How is the list of parent and community groups going to be used? A. We want to get a landscape of what is out there in order to shore up resources. We’d like to hear about good things as well as concerns.</p> <p>C. One of the things that will come up later in the agenda is that the Coalition for Children with Special Needs is meeting with the Department, and the same request for information has been made of that group.</p> <p>Q. Are other groups undertaking the same task? A. We will be making a presentation to the Hui for Excellence in Education, too.</p> <p>C. It is important to know what resources exist for each community.</p> <p>Q. Are you asking that SEAC, in addition to the Coalition, compile a list of resources? Are we duplicating the efforts of the Coalition? A. SEAC can decide how to work with other groups.</p>	<p>Copies of the Superintendent’s letter dated August 5, 2013 were distributed to members.</p>
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<p>Department of Education’s Report: Superintendent’s Priorities for SY 13-14 (cont.)</p>	<p><u>Questions/comments from members (cont.)</u> Q. Who heads the Coalition? A. (Ivalee) The Coalition is about seven years old and is made up of family-based organizations that represent the needs of children with disabilities. It was created for legislative cohesion and typically meets during the legislative session. Its purpose is to have key players at the table to see that policies and legislation addresses the needs of children and families in a positive way. I am the Coalition Chair. Q. Is it SEAC’s primary responsibility to provide the information? A. Yes. Under the IDEA, SEAC is the advisory group to the Superintendent. Q. I assume that the Department already knows about parent groups. Are you asking us to update your list and look at differences between the groups? Is there a reference list you will provide that we can cross check? A. The Department will figure how to put a list on-line. C. Sometimes the resources change hourly; by the time the Department prints a list, one resource is gone and many others have come on board. C. I suggest you start with the agencies listed by SPIN for the 2013 SPIN Conference participants; the list was updated in the Spring.</p>	
<p>Department of Education’s Report: Results Driven Accountability/State Systemic Improvement Plan</p>	<p>Shari reminded members that the Office of Special Education Programs is moving from mere compliance with IDEA regulations to quality outcomes for students with disabilities. They are calling their new direction Results Driven Accountability (RDA). A centerpiece is a new monitoring indicator (Indicator 17) called the State Systemic Improvement Plan. All states must report on their SSIP February 1, 2015. This school year, Hawaii must conduct a data analysis to determine potential areas of improvement and declare a focus for improvement. <u>Questions/comments from members</u> Q. SEAC was one of a small number of organizations to provide input on OSEP’s proposed RDA plan last June. Have you heard whether any of our comments impacted the final plan? A. OSEP plans to post these comments in the federal register soon. Shortly thereafter, it will post the final proposed State Performance Plan/Annual Performance Plan requirements. The public will then have another 30 days to comment.</p>	

<p>Department of Education’s Report: ESEA Waiver Implementation</p>	<p>Lyndsay Pinkus, Ronn Nozoe’s Chief of Staff, shared information about Hawaii’s Strive HI Performance and Accountability System. When Congress failed to reauthorize No Child Left Behind, the Obama administration allowed states to apply for waivers to make improvements to their accountability plans. Hawaii’s plan was approved on May 20th of this year. The Department had to move quickly to put pieces of the new system in place for this school year. Lyndsay invited Leila Hayashida, Acting Assistant Superintendent of the Office of Curriculum, Instruction and Student Support, to share in the presentation. Members were briefed on the new performance index that looks at four key pieces of data: achievement, student growth, readiness, and the achievement gap between the high needs group and the low needs group. Schools will be classified into one of five categories based on their performance data (from high performing to low performing)—Recognition, Continuous Improvement, Focus, Priority and Superintendent’s Zone. For this school year, no school will be designated as being in the Superintendent’s Zone, and schools will not be able to attain the highest classification, Recognition School, if their special education students are not achieving. Continuous Improvement Schools must describe in their Academic/Financial (ACFIN) Plan how they are meeting the needs of subgroups (ELL, Disadvantaged and SPED). Priority Schools have to meet the subgroup achievement goals in order to improve their classification. Improvement strategies built in to Strive HI include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Formative Instruction/Data Teams • Common Core State Standards • Induction and Mentoring • Comprehensive Student Supports • Educator Effectiveness Systems and • Academic Review Teams. <p>The support structure includes a State Support Team and Complex Area Support Teams. Each team has a lead for each of the six improvement strategies above.</p>	
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<p>Department of Education’s Report: ESEA Waiver Implementation (cont.)</p>	<p><u>Questions/comments from members</u></p> <p>C. Your chart on academic goals and targets doesn’t include the performance of special education students which is 50-60 percentage points below their non-disabled peers. It would be helpful for us to visualize the goals and targets you are setting for students with IEPs.</p> <p>C. Your Strive HI Step System has a bit of institutional racism in that it makes some school communities very desirable and accepts that for low performing schools, getting to high performance later is fine.</p> <p>C. I’m very concerned that the chronic absenteeism rate be a measure of school readiness for ALL schools—not just elementary schools. It looks as if the Department amended Board policy without informing us.</p> <p>C. The absenteeism rate is being used as a proxy for college and career readiness in elementary school, because there are not easily attained assessments for that in those grades.</p> <p>Q. Is it true that there are no more supplemental services or school choice for students at under performing schools this school year? A. Yes.</p> <p>Q. Does the on-time graduation rate relate to the promotion policy in middle school? Would retention in 6th Grade keep a student from graduating “on-time”? A. No, on-time graduation only refers to the cohort from 9th to 12th Grade.</p> <p>C. With special education data, we have found problems in the data collection system that affect reliability. Q. Do you have mechanisms in place to ensure your data is accurate? A. The issue of data quality is huge. We are taking steps to address it with a data literacy campaign and an emphasis on data input in the new SASA accountability training by the Office of Fiscal Services.</p> <p>Q. Are federal IDEA funds being used for Response to Intervention? C. If so, more accountability is required. A. Only Hawaii District is using IDEA funds for early intervention.</p> <p>C. In reference to your State Support Team and Complex Area Support Teams, my experience as a parent is that those folks are usually the “nay sayers”, not resource people.</p>	<p>Leadership will brief SEAC in the future on the following: 1) the six priority strategies, 2) the results of the Strive HI system (using the school view data portal tool from Colorado) and 3) Common Core parent and community outreach and public campaign.</p>
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<p>Department of Education’s Report: ESEA Waiver Implementation (cont.)</p>	<p>C. I agree, these folks have traditionally been advocates of the system, not the student. C. That slide [#10] looks like adding another level of gatekeeping. C. As a teacher, I have been on IEP teams where we try to put a service in the IEP for the student, and we’re told by the complex that the money for the service will have to come out of our budget. It is frightening. C. Your support structure sounds like you are doing the same thing, but calling it something different. A. (Shari) the State Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP) moves us from basic compliance and allows a shift in culture. C. In other states that have implemented the Common Core State Standards, the first assessment scores are very low.</p>	
<p>Department of Education’s Report: Side Discussion on Geographic Exceptions</p>	<p>Brian De Lima shared that he had received a complaint that Geographic Exceptions (GEs) were automatically denied when a parent of a special education student makes the request. Barbara Ioli added that when she applied for a GE for her grandson, she was told that because she checked off “special needs,” it was given to the special education complex person who routinely denied such requests. Dale Matsuura stated that her school used to exclude special needs requests until about five years ago when the Complex Area Superintendent stopped the practice. Leila Hayashida, who was a principal at Waihee Elementary, specified that it is not a common practice of the Department to deny requests based on special education status. GEs are determined by the date received and space available. Many parents of students with disabilities don’t indicate their special needs on the form. Bob Campbell maintained that the problem lies in the definition of “space.” Many principals consider special education as a separate grade or placement rather than accepting a student based on age. Unfortunately, many educators still see special education as a place and not a service. Ivalee added that another option for students with an IEP is for the IEP team to make a programmatic placement at another school.</p>	<p>Ivalee tabled further discussion, but marked GEs as a “Bin” item for future attention.</p>
<p>Department of Education’s Report: SPIN/SEAC Contract</p>	<p>Shari reported that the Deputy Superintendent has extended the contract from SY 12-13 for six months. He is looking at the supports needed in the parent community with his work group and will develop a new contract for the rest of the school year and beyond. Ivalee added that in building the</p>	

<p>Department of Education’s Report: SPIN/SEAC Contract (cont.)</p>	<p>new contract, she hopes that SEAC will have an opportunity to look at it and weigh in on it. She believes that there is not a clear understanding within DOE of the value of SPIN and what it generally does as a state operation. The contract negotiation provides an opportunity to educate and strengthen what we have in place. She wants to acknowledge how lucky SEAC is to have the staff that it has.</p>	
<p>Department of Education’s Report: Request for Notice to Parents Re: Adverse Events at School</p>	<p>Shari reported that she is holding action on this item because she wants clarification on what documents need to be drafted and approved at the leadership level. Ivalee said that there are two kinds of notices: a notice informing parents when something happens at school that is a non-Chapter 19 event and a notice of a sentinel event given to parents by contracted staff. She asked Shari if SEAC should refer the issue to the Board of Education in order to come up with a policy regarding parent notices. Tom Smith volunteered that the Community Children’s Councils have been working on the issue of seclusion and restraint and discovered Board Policy 4201–Use of Force—that requires principals to notify parents when a school employee uses physical force on a student to restrain him or her. Brian De Lima is on a Board subgroup that is undergoing a review of all Board policies. They plan to distribute their draft recommendations to the public regarding amending and/or deleting existing policies in October for action in 2014.</p>	
<p>Department of Education’s Report: SPP/APR Process</p>	<p>Shari reported that Debbie Farmer and her Special Education Section staff will be responsible for the SPP/APR this year. She will confirm the December date of the APR stakeholder meeting with Debbie. Cezar D’Agord from the Western Regional Resource Center will make a presentation on the data. Shari will be working with SEAC on the State Systemic Improvement Plan (Indicator 17) which will be phased in over the next three years.</p>	<p>Susan disseminated a Data Display prepared by OSEP for Hawaii from the 11-12 APR submission.</p>
<p>Review of May 10, 2013 Minutes</p>	<p>The minutes were corrected to show that both Annette Cooper and Tami Ho were present for the meeting.</p>	<p>The 5/10/13 minutes were approved as corrected.</p>

<p>HCR 57 - Family-School Partnerships</p>	<p>Ivalee reported that the Coalition helped to draft a resolution last legislative session to continue the work of the Department and the Board in partnering with family organizations to improve family-school partnerships. HCR 57 outlines remaining tasks including passage and implementation of an amended Board policy (from family involvement to family-school partnerships) and updating the Comprehensive Student Support System policy. Gordon Miyamoto, the Department’s Family Support Specialist, indicated to Ivalee that the work group would be meeting in August. Several SEAC members have participated in previous work groups.</p>	<p>Ivalee will check with Gordon Miyamoto for the schedule of meetings on HCR 57. Members who are interested in participating are asked to contact Ivalee or Susan.</p>
<p>SEAC Annual Report for 12-13</p>	<p>Ivalee re-counted some of the positive feedback that SEAC received from this latest report, including comments from an OSEP State Panel website facilitator, Jan Serak. One of the areas reported on is the gradual decline in the number of special education students served. Ivalee said that SEAC has no data explaining why Hawaii’s percentages are below the national norm, nor data on how many Hawaii students are served under 504 eligibility.</p>	<p>Copies of the report, the Superintendent’s response, a summary of other feedback, and data used to respond to an inquiry generated by the report were handed out.</p>