

Meeting Minutes

Iowa Special Education Advisory Panel

October 18, 2024

Present (In-Person): Joy Barlean, Lori Janke, Laura Liese, Pam Litterer, Keri Osterhaus, Karen Thompson and Joel Weeks

Present (Zoom): Wendy Andersen, Josh Bowar, Rhonda Haitz, Tami Hoffman, Mary Jackson, Lee Longmire, Stephanie Smith and Rebecca Torres

Absent: Casey Force, Amy Llewelyn, Lee Longmire, Kim Neal, Sarah Norvell, Sonia Reyes, Sandra Smith and Derrick Willis

Department Staff Present: Barb Guy, Nancy Hunt, Beth Buehler-Sapp.

Public Comment: Laura Hinkeldey provided comment and described her experience as a parent advocating for her children with IEPs.

Welcome/Introductions

The meeting was called to order by Rhonda Haitz, Chair at 9:05 a.m.

Panel members were offered the opportunity to join via Zoom due to a shortened meeting agenda.

Josh Bowar is new to the Panel and is serving as a representative of a private school or public charter school. He was not able to attend the first meeting. Josh is in Sioux Center Iowa and has experience in non-public education. He has served as a 5th grade classroom teacher, as an assistant principal and as Head of School at Sioux Center Christian School.

Approve Agenda

A motion was made to approve the agenda by Wendy Andersen. The motion was seconded by Mary Jackson. Motion carried.

Consent Agenda

Minutes were reviewed by the panel members. Rebecca Torres made a motion to approve the minutes from the September 2024 meeting. Keri Osterhaus seconded the motion. Motion carried. The minutes were approved with no suggested changes.

High School Graduation Requirements Overview – Kelsey Teeter, Iowa Department of Education ([Slide Deck](#))

Kelsey provided an overview of the state's high school graduation requirements. Beginning in 8th grade, IEP team is responsible for developing a pathway for the student to achieve their high school diploma. Districts may establish policies and procedures that permit students receiving special

education services to complete requirements in unique, individualized manner. The pathway must meet requirements of Iowa law and the Iowa Academic standards must be addressed. Individualized graduation requirements should align with the necessary courses, activities, services, and supports needed to achieve the student's Postsecondary Expectations (PSEs). IEP Team may add additional requirements for graduation beyond those required by either the state or the district, if necessary for a free appropriate public education (FAPE). The district may provide a certificate of completion or attendance to those students receiving special education services who do not achieve graduation requirements. In this case, students retain eligibility for FAPE as determined by the IEP team, until age 21.

State Graduation Requirements in Code and Rule:

Satisfactory completion of:

- 4 years of English Language Arts
- 3 years of Math
- 3 years of Science
- 3 years of Social Studies
- 1 unit Physical Education, one-eighth unit per semester (Unless/until student meets excusal and/or exemption criteria)
- Complete a certification course for CPR by the end of grade 12 (Unless student meets exemption criteria)

Any additional graduation credits or units are locally determined.

Kelsey is part of a legislative task force that is reviewing the state graduation requirement. She asked for feedback from SEAP on the following questions that she can take the comments to the task force to inform the review:

- What clarifying questions do you have around graduation requirements?
- What have your experiences been around the development of a course of study for students to achieve a diploma?
- In what ways have you seen IEP teams align a student's graduation requirements with the student's PSEs?
- In what ways could the state's graduation requirements be improved to better support districts in preparing students for life after high school?

Public and Nonpublic School Collaboration - Barb Guy, Iowa Department of Education

Barb's presentation focused on components of [HF2612](#) and the requirements for the Department. A new position was created with HF2612 to address this work but that position has not been filled yet. This is the first conversation around this topic with more to follow. The Panel broke into groups and discussed the subsections 15A-15G of the bill, asked questions and provided [feedback](#).

Input: AEA Accreditation Standards – Barb Guy, Iowa Department of Education

The Panel focused on the changes to 273.11 Standards for accrediting area education programs in HF2612. The special education division is now more involved within the standards and accreditation process. The Panel reviewed the added and deleted language in the bill. For an AEA to be accredited, they must meet all of the standards listed in the bill. If there are one or more standards in question, the AEA is conditionally accredited.

The work is just beginning and the feedback from SEAP is going to inform how the Department will approach this work. The planned approach for monitoring is in the following phases:

Phase 1 – Program Audit Data Review: Department reviews data around the standards

Phase 2 – Virtual Clarification: meet with the AEA virtually to discuss the data and request additional data as needed.

Phase 3 – On-site Visit

Phase 4 – Final Clarification and Verification: Report and recommendation to the Board (the intention is to eventually bring in the general education for an integrated report

Plan to pilot the new process in two AEAs with the intent of completing Phase 1-3 in January. All nine will experience the process this year with draft reports by June.

Barb asked members to provide input on any questions or concerns around the process. The Panel formed small groups to discuss what the Department should be looking for during the process.

Announcements

Nancy provided instructions for completing the travel reimbursement form due to new guidelines.

Future Agenda Items

Chronic absenteeism administrative rules

Emerging Issues

None

Adjourn

Joel Weeks made a motion to adjourn the meeting and Karen Thompson seconded the motion. Meeting adjourned.

2024-25 Upcoming Meeting Dates

November 22, 2024

January 10, 2025

February 28, 2025

April 11, 2025

May 16, 2025