

# Meeting Minutes

## Iowa Special Education Advisory Panel

### February 23, 2024

**Present:** Jennifer Anderson, Joy Barlen, Dawn Bonsall, Carrie Champine, , Shawn Datchuk Casey Force, Lori Janke, Rhonda Haitz, Tami Hoffman, Mary Jackson, Amy Knupp, Laura Leise, Pam Litterer, Amy Llewellyn, Anne Michelle-Pedersen, Sandra Smith Stephanie Smith, Karen Thompson, Rebecca Torres, Joel Weeks.

**Absent:** Wendy Andersen, Carole Cherne, Johnna Deaton-Davis (resigned), Andrew Dewein (resigned), Jimmy Graham, Jessica Iverson, Lee Longmire, Kim Neal, Sarah Norvell, Keri Osterhaus, Sonia Reyes, and Rachel Terry.

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

**Public Comment:** None

#### **Welcome/Introductions**

The meeting was called to order by Dawn Bonsall, Chair at 9:05 AM. Doug Wolfe has taken a new position within his agency. Laura Leise will take his place on the Panel for the rest of the year.

#### **Approve Agenda**

A motion was made to approve the agenda by Joel Weeks. The motion was seconded by Anne Michelle-Pedersen. Motion carried.

#### **Consent Agenda**

Minutes were reviewed by the panel members. Joel Weeks made a motion to approve the minutes from the January 2024 meeting. Lori Janke seconded the motion. Minutes were approved.

#### **Deaf and Hard of Hearing Happenings – Tori Carsrud, Iowa Department of Education** **([Slide Deck](#))**

Tori Carsrud presented on services for the deaf and hard of hearing across the State of Iowa.

- Iowa has one School for the Deaf
- There are 10 school districts who employ a teacher of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing.
- There are 82 Teachers of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing.
- There are 2 Assistant Teachers of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing.
- There are 49 Educational Audiologists in the State of Iowa.
- 47 of these are staffed within AEAs throughout the state and 2 of them are employed at DMPS.
- There are 98 Educational Interpreters throughout the state with 16 of these positions

covered by the private sectors.

- The University of Iowa has 1 program major as an Audiologist and 1 program major as an Interpreter.
- There are approximately 3,025 learners age 0-21 with hearing deficits in Iowa.

The Deaf & Hard of Hearing Advisory Board was created in the fall of 2021 and meets twice a year. Tori is the chair and members are parents, professionals, IDOE staff, deaf community members and deaf & hard of hearing individuals. The agenda includes topics for learners aged 0-21.

The Board has established a multi-year plan with three priorities.

1. Use relevant data to make timely decisions at all levels of the educational system.
2. Ensure services and supports are provided by personnel informed of the impact of hearing loss in order to enhance the educational environment, including transition.
3. Support early and ongoing language development, including expressive and receptive language milestones in a variety of communication modes.

We are currently working on a DHH database that will be in the similar system as ACHIEVE This new system will: be a statewide system for all daily functions; contain all learners whom are screened or tested by an audiometrist and/or audiologist; replace the current masterlist process; be used to meet the requirements of HF 604 and more. They system is not live yet. Tori provided wireframes of the new system. It will be considered an ACHIVE tool but has a different database on a different server with different permissions.

There is a shortage of teachers everywhere and also at the Iowa School for the Deaf. Tori explained the Grow Your Own Incentive Program. The program allows a current licensed Iowa teacher to become a teacher for the Deaf and hard of hearing through the program. The Iowa Department of Education will pay 80% of their tuition & fees to complete the coursework to get the endorsement to be teacher for the deaf and hard of hearing. We have a very similar program with the blind and visually impaired. The DE is also working with UNI on the development of a Teacher for the Deaf program with plans to start in the fall of 2024

There is a new training just for educational interpreters available through the AEA online learning system called Educational Interpreting and Special Education. The purpose is to provide a foundation for new educational interpreters in the field of special education.

Iowa School for the Deaf has provided \$200,000 for Family Support Mentors. A coordinator has been hired. This position will be located in Central Iowa and will serve all learners who are DHH and who are not attending the Iowa School for the Deaf.

The last priority is to support language by increasing the use of language assessments from birth to 21 and increase access to fluent ASL instruction, when applicable (no formal progress yet).

Tory discussed the requirements of House File 604 – Lead-K which was signed into law by the Governor on May 24, 2022. The bill targets learners who are DHH between the ages of birth to 8.

## Legislative Update – Thomas Mayes, Iowa Department of Education

Thomas provided a summary of the Department bills. All legislative priorities for the Department have survived the funnel, and therefore still available for debate. See the [handout](#) for details on the bills.

A version of the AEA realignment bill has made it through each chamber so both bills are still alive. The Governor, Senate and House bills are different so the bills are now going through the negotiation process. Increased Department of Education oversight is a common thread throughout all three versions of the bill.

Panel members interested in tracking legislation, can follow the education [bill tracker](#) located on the Department’s website and sign up for [email updates](#).

## State Performance Plan and Annual Performance Report – Barbara Ohlund, Iowa Department of Education ([PowerPoint](#))


All states are required to submit an Annual Performance Report (APR) to the Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) by the first week in February. Barbara Ohlund gave an overview of the data provided in the APR. The report includes an update on the progress of special education, and the impact of Iowa’s System of General Supervision and related work to support learners with disabilities statewide.

There are 17 total indicators of the health of our system; 5 are compliance indicators, and 11 are performance indicators (Iowa does not report on B10). Barbara provided an overview of each indicator, including: indicator definition, the previous year’s progress data, the current reporting period set target and current progress data, as well as indicator status (met/not met).

All data are from the 2022-23 year, with the following exceptions: Graduation Dropout, Suspensions/Expulsions and Post-Secondary Outcomes. These indicators are based on data from the 2021-22 year.

| Overview                                   |         |          |  |         |          |
|--|---------|----------|--|---------|----------|
| Indicator                                  | 2021-22 | 2022-23  | Indicator                                    | 2021-22 | 2022-23  |
| B1. Graduation                             | Not Met | Not Met  | B8. Parent Involvement- Preschool            | Met     | Met      |
| B2. Dropout                                | Not Met | Not Met  | B8B. Parent Involvement- School Age          | Not Met | Met      |
| B4A. Suspension Expulsion                  | Met     | Met      | B9. Disproportionate Representation          | Met     | Met      |
| <b>B4B. Suspension Expulsion</b>           | Met     | Met      | B11. Child Find                              | Not Met | Not Met  |
| B5A. LRE 80%                               | Met     | *Not Met | B12. Early Childhood Transition              | Not Met | Not Met  |
| B5B. LRE 40%                               | Met     | Not Met  | B13. Secondary Transition                    | Met     | Met      |
| B5C. Separate placement                    | Met     | Met      | B14A. Post-School Outcomes (PSO) Higher Ed   | Not Met | Not Met  |
| B6A. ECProgram                             | Not Met | *Not Met | B14B. PSO Higher Ed or Employed              | Not Met | *Not Met |
| B6B. Separate Placement                    | Met     | Not Met  | B14C. PSO Higher Ed, Other PS Option, Empldy | Not Met | *Not Met |
| B6C. In Home                               | Met     | Met      | B15. Resolution Sessions                     | NA<10   | NA<10    |
| B7A1. Preschool Outcomes (PO): SEGrowth    | Not Met | Not Met  | B16. Mediation                               | NA<10   | NA<10    |
| B7A2. PO-Social Emotional Age Expectations | Met     | Met      | B17. State Systemic Improvement Plan         | Met     | Met      |
| B7B1. PO-Academic Growth                   | Not Met | Not Met  |  |         |          |
| B7B2. PO-Academic Age Expectations         | Met     | Met      |  |         |          |
| B7C1. PO-Behavior Growth                   | Not Met | Not Met  |  |         |          |
| B7C2. PO-Behavior Age Expectations         | Not Met | Met      |  |         |          |

*\*Not Met indicates that this indicator did not meet the target, but did not experience a slippage of more than 1 percentage point in the measure from the previous year's data.*

| Performance on State Assessments  |         |        |       |          |             |        |       |        |
|--|---------|--------|-------|----------|-------------|--------|-------|--------|
| Indicator  | READING |        |       |          | MATHEMATICS |        |       |        |
|  | 21-22   | Target | 22-23 | Status   | 21-22       | Target | 22-23 | Status |
| B3A. Participation rate for children with IEPs   |         |        |       |          |             |        |       |        |
| GRADE 4  | 98.52   | 95     | 99.09 | Met      | 98.58       | 95     | 99.23 | Met    |
| GRADE 8  | 96.74   | 95     | 97.28 | Met      | 96.96       | 95     | 97.62 | Met    |
| GRADE 11   | 93.35   | 95     | 95.22 | Met      | 93.78       | 95     | 96.56 | Met    |
| B3B. Proficiency rate for children with IEPs against grade level academic achievement standards                      |         |        |       |          |             |        |       |        |
| GRADE 4  | 29.25   | 28.79  | 28.52 | *Not Met | 32.82       | 31.44  | 36.69 | Met    |
| GRADE 8  | 26.85   | 24.82  | 28.44 | Met      | 23.03       | 24.97  | 26.89 | Met    |
| GRADE 11   | 22.08   | 20.80  | 20.20 | Not Met  | 13.64       | 15.36  | 17.27 | Met    |

| Performance on State Assessments   |         |        |       |         |             |        |       |          |
|--|---------|--------|-------|---------|-------------|--------|-------|----------|
| Indicator  | READING |        |       |         | MATHEMATICS |        |       |          |
|  | 21-22   | Target | 22-23 | Status  | 21-22       | Target | 22-23 | Status   |
| ↑ B3C. Proficiency rate for children with IEPs against alternate academic achievement standards                            |         |        |       |         |             |        |       |          |
| GRADE 4  | 51.20   | 45.24  | 51.96 | Met     | 21.31       | 17.33  | 20.79 | Met      |
| GRADE 8  | 34.30   | 20.21  | 25.09 | Met     | 21.78       | 10.50  | 15.91 | Met      |
| GRADE 11   | 15.50   | 15.59  | 14.10 | Not Met | 18.47       | 12.22  | 18.10 | Met      |
| ↓ B3D. Gap in proficiency rates for children with IEPs and all students against grade level academic achievement standards |         |        |       |         |             |        |       |          |
| GRADE 4  | 43.56   | 43.83  | 43.42 | Met     | 35.90       | 34.84  | 35.45 | *Not Met |
| GRADE 8  | 47.60   | 48.04  | 46.48 | Met     | 42.63       | 42.65  | 44.19 | Not Met  |
| GRADE 11   | 48.52   | 50.86  | 48.62 | Met     | 45.66       | 43.54  | 46.63 | Met      |

*\*Not Met indicates that this indicator did not meet the target, but did not experience a slippage of more than 1 percentage point in the measure from the previous year's data.*

The handout found at <http://tinyurl.com/IA-APR22> provides more detail of the data.

**Teacher Pipeline Report – Maryam Rod Szabo, Iowa Department of Education**  
 Maryam is not able to join us. This topic will be moved to the April meeting agenda.

## **Continuous Improvement: State Processes – Barb Guy, Iowa Department of Education**

There are several topics that related to continuous improvement that are not ready for discussion. We will bring information to you in the future regarding the commitment to providing parents access to exercise their due process rights and the statewide supports. Many of you have heard that the Department made the decision to not continue to fund the FEP program. The Department was following our typical processes with communication and having conversations with the state directors of special education first. The communication that was sent out was not a formal release from the Department of Education. There was likely a miscommunication in our planning processes and in how that communication would be shared. The Department has not issued anything formal yet; however, it is true that we will not be funding the FEP programs after June 30. We are still committed to providing supports to families to exercise their due process rights. We are in the process of finalizing those plans. That information will be available at our April meeting. The Panel will have time to provide some input and feedback.

Barb was in Washington DC the last several days with staff from the other states that are up for review from OSEP in the 24-25 school year. There was planning and conversations about preparing for the visits. We have been busy in Iowa looking at the policies and procedures we have in place, reviewing OSEP protocols and questions and anticipating the visit.

In preparation for the OSEP visit, please break into groups and think about what we have to celebrate in Iowa. What would you want OSEP to know about us?

**Group 1:** We are resourceful i.e. during Covid we were very adaptable and quick on our feet. We adjusted to different types of instruction: in-person, on-line, hybrid (all three at once). It would be nice to have more resources, but we work with what we have. The entire team, from parents to administrators, are very resourceful in ensuring that the child's educational needs are met- or at least attempting this the best we can.

**Group 2:** Passionate educators and professionals that care about students regardless of what's happening. They always come back, keep showing up, and show that they care.

**Group 3:** We believe that Iowa and google have so many wonderful opportunities for our students in secondary education (i.e. the Central Campus, Hawkeye, Wauke program) and all kinds of opportunities for them to explore career interests. Also, potentially earn college credit leave school having a job (for example, welding), and then make great money. Also, we've got great 4 plus programs, programs that serve students that still need some work with employability skills. Iowa is one of the few states that has an audiology team and OT/PT services that few other states have.

**Group 4:** ACHIEVE - Having a system that provides electronic access to families and educators and continuity for having mobile students that move from place to place. Joel Weeks added, our overall growth in the statewide preschool programs is huge.

Barb let the Panel know that the national technical assistance teams will be talking with SEAP, the PTI and advocacy organizations to get names of parents to talk to about Iowa's special education services. Be honest. We have some good things going on in Iowa and we have places to improve.

Our OSEP state lead will be here in August to help us prepare for the visit. If you are interested in joining as part of SEAP, please let Nancy or the Chair or Vice Chair know so we can plan. The Site visit is planned for early September. The actual date is not yet known.

### **Announcements**

- We will be taking Vice Chair nominations in April. The vote for Vice Chair will take place at the May meeting. Consider nominating yourself or a fellow Panel member.
- [Proposed Meeting Dates](#): 2024-25 – These dates are subject to change based on the OSEP visit.

### **Future Agenda Items**

Information on the changes in the Family and Educator Partnership.

### **Emerging Issues**

None

### **Adjourn**

Joel Weeks made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Rebecca Torres seconded the motion. Meeting adjourned at 2:30 pm.

### **2024 Upcoming Meeting Dates**

April 5, 2024  
May 10, 2024