



Governor's Advisory Council for Exceptional Citizens (GACEC)



**State Transition Task Force for Emerging Adults with Disabilities and
Special Health Care Needs Meeting
February 25, 2013, 9:30 AM to 11:30 AM
Office of the Insurance Commissioner, First Floor Conference Room
841 Silver Lake Boulevard, Dover, DE 19901**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Wendy Strauss, Task Force Co-Chair and Executive Director of the Governor's Advisory Council for Exceptional Citizens (GACEC); Terri Hancharick, Task Force Co-Chair and Chairperson of the GACEC; Blake Bossert, Self-Advocate/Center for Disabilities Studies (CDS); Dale Matusevich, Transition Services, Delaware Department of Education (DOE); Al Rose, Delaware Developmental Disabilities Council (DDC) and Co-Chair of the Housing/Transportation Work Group; Brian Freedman, CDS; Andrea Guest, DVR and Chair of the Employment Work Group; Marissa Band, Disabilities Law Program (DLP); Kyle Hodges, Executive Director, State Council for Persons with Disabilities (SCPD); Cory Nourie, A.I. DuPont Hospital for Children (AIDHC) and Co-Chair of the Health Work Group; Pat Maichle, Parent Advocate and Executive Director of the DDC; Meg Comeau, Boston University Catalyst Center; Sybil White, Parent Advocate; Chris McIntyre, Division of Services for Children, Youth and their Families (DSCYF); Ellen Coulston, Parent Advocate;

ATTENDING VIA TELECONFERENCE: Pat Maichle, Parent Advocate and Executive Director of the DDC; Meg Comeau, Boston University Catalyst Center

MEMBERS ABSENT: Bobbie Jo DeHaven, self-advocate; Larry Henderson, Independent Resources; Sarah Celestin, DOE; Vivian Rapposelli, Secretary of the Delaware Children's Department; Steve Tull, Parent Advocate; Marie-Anne Aghazadian, Executive Director of the Parent Information Center (PIC) of Delaware; Diann Jones, DDC Chairperson; Linda Nemes, Senior Insurance Research Analyst, Delaware Department of Insurance; Ann Phillips, Delaware Family Voices (DFV), Jennifer Lecomte, D.O., Christiana Care; Bhavana Viswanathan, Department of Public Health (DPH); Jerry Galucci, Delaware Health and Social Services (DHSS) Medical Director; Howard Shiber, Parent Advocate and GACEC member; Haley Shiber, Self-Advocate

OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE: Kristin Cosden, GACEC

Co-Chair Wendy Strauss called the meeting to order at 9:33 AM, and introductions were made around the room. Wendy thanked the Task Force and all of the Work Group members for their hard work.

EDUCATION WORK GROUP UPDATE:

Wendy serves as Co-Chair of the Education Work Group with Dale Matusevich, so she asked Dale to join her in reporting on the activities of the Education Work Group. Wendy and Dale reported on the process that the Education Work Group has been implementing with the goal of providing a final report and recommendations by to the full State Transition Task Force by late March to early April, 2013.

Wendy reported that the Education Work Group met last week to narrow down and group together the list of priorities identified and listed at the last Education Work Group meeting. Wendy noted that some of the priorities identified by the Education Work Group overlap with the Housing/Transportation Work Group priorities, and that the Education Work Group would defer to the Housing/Transportation Work Group to address those issues. Regarding the Education Work Group report, Wendy reported that there are two groups who will be working on writing the final report. Group 1 will consist of Wendy Strauss, Jack Jadach, Terri Hancharick, Marie-Anne Aghazadian and Kristin Cosden. Once Group 1 has completed their draft, they will hand it off to Group 2 for editing and rewriting. Group 2 members include Education Work Group Members Debbie Scott, Jennifer Holdsworth, Amy Haughey and Sybil White. The final report from all Work Groups is due to State Transition Task Force Co-Chairs Wendy Strauss and Terri Hancharick by April 12, 2013.

Wendy asked Terri to join her in reporting on their meeting with Secretary of the Department of Health and Social Services (DHSS) Secretary Rita Landgraf regarding the proposed State Transition Website. Wendy shared that she and Terri informed Sec. Landgraf that the Education Work Group recommends that this website is not limited to the format established for State of Delaware agency websites, which must all have a uniform look. Wendy and Terri informed the State Transition Task Force that Sec. Landgraf is in favor of developing a State Transition Website, but that she cautioned them on seeking legislation which would require a fiscal note. Wendy and Terri stated that they will be meeting with the Cabinet Secretaries of DHSS, the Division of Services for Children, Youth and their Families (DSCYF), the Delaware Department of Education (DOE) and the Delaware Department of Labor (DOL) to explore possible funding opportunities for developing the State Transition Website. Sec. Landgraf recommended that a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) be issued from the Governor's Advisory Council for Exceptional Citizens (GACEC) to the aforementioned agencies. Wendy and Terri stated the Sec. Landgraf feels that the State Transition Website is something which should be implemented as soon as possible.

Discussion then took place regarding whether a State Transition Website should be run by a state agency or whether there should be a contractor hired by one state agency. Some State Transition Task Force members voiced the opinion that the recommendation for a State Transition Website should come from the State Transition Task Force, not from a MOU originating with the GACEC. Questions were raised regarding where the website would be housed and how it would be updated and maintained.

Wendy stated that she spoke with the State of Delaware Department of Technology and Information (DTI), and that they confirmed that all state-run websites must have a uniform look and feel. Wendy shared that the Education Work Group felt that this uniform look and feel would not be the most visually appealing or effective vehicle for the intended purpose of a State Transition Website.

Discussion took place regarding dissemination of information, and how to conduct effective, data-driven surveys regarding what students with disabilities and/or special health care needs and their parents/caregivers know and do not know about transition. The group feels that this will help to best determine content for the proposed State Transition Website, with emphasis placed on the areas that students/parents/caregivers know least about.

Terri shared feedback from a Key Informant Group meeting facilitated by Education Work Group member Staci Forrest. This Key Informant Group meeting was attended by students with disabilities, who were asked their opinion on a variety of topics related to transition. The students attending the Key Informant Group were also asked questions regarding what makes a website appealing to them. For full details of the students' feedback, please refer to the Education Work Group minutes, or see the survey results posted on the State Transition Task Force's Wiggio site.

EMPLOYMENT WORK GROUP UPDATE

Andrea Guest, Chair of the Employment Work Group, reported to the full Task Force on the activities of the group. Andrea stated that the Employment Work Group has completed looking at best practices, and that they will now begin looking at recommendations for their final report at the next Employment Work Group meeting. Andrea shared that one of the Employment Work Group's biggest recommendations is to ensure that there is a Transition Coordinator in every Delaware high school, and to provide a uniform job description for Transition Coordinators statewide. Wendy pointed out that the concern over the lack of a Transition Coordinator in every Delaware High School is already listed as a priority for the Education Work Group. Andrea stated that the Employment Work Group would defer to the Education Work Group on this topic.

Andrea reported that the Employment work Group members discussed the successes enjoyed by students who have a community-based work experience prior to leaving school. Andrea stated that it is one of the Employment Work Group's identified priorities to recommend that all students have at least one community-based work experience prior to leaving school. This work experience must take place in the community with an employer, and may be paid or unpaid.

Brian Freedman stated that he fully supports the Employment Work Group's assertion that community-based work experiences are beneficial to students, saying that he has shared data to back up the assertion that students who have community-based work experiences enjoy greater post-graduation success. Andrea stated that she would like to share some information regarding employment and internship opportunities for students with disabilities which she has gleaned from another employment group that she chairs. Terri reminded the Employment Work Group to keep in mind that Sec. Landgraf would like to see emphasis placed on successful careers, not just jobs, for persons with disabilities.

Due to funding restrictions, Andrea said that she would like to see more existing resources utilized. Currently, resources such as the Student Success Plan (SSP) and Career Scope are being under-utilized in schools. Dale Matusевич stated that DOE is offering trainings for SSP and Career Scope, but that they are not seeing many educators take advantage of the trainings. The group stated that this may be due to the perception held by many educators that they already have enough on their plate. Due to the positive Delaware Comprehensive Assessment Standards (DCAS) test results and Delaware Professional Assessment Standards (DPAS) that educators are held to, compliance is many educators' primary concern. Since SSP and Career Scope are not tied to DCAS and DPAS, many educators feel that they are simply not a priority. Andrea shared the opinion that SSP should be activated in junior high school, noting that by the time the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) reaches many students with disabilities, they are in their senior year.

The group discussed the importance of integrating any proposed changes to teacher and Educational Diagnostician (ED) job responsibilities and schedules with as little disruption to their existing duties and schedules as possible. The group feels that teachers and EDs already are feeling overwhelmed due to the large amount of responsibility and accountability which is placed upon them. The group feels that any changes which would "put more on the plate" of teachers and EDs would not be well-received. Therefore, it is of utmost importance to make use of technology and resources which are already in

place. Use of existing technology and resources would also reduce the fiscal impact of any proposed changes.

HEALTH WORK GROUP UPDATE

Co-Chair Cory Nourie provided the Health Work Group update. Cory stated that the Health Work Group has not met since the last meeting of the State Transition Task Force. The Health Work Group plans to meet this Wednesday. The upcoming meeting is scheduled to focus on ancillary services, such as physical therapy (PT), occupational therapy (OT) and speech language pathology (SLP).

Cory reported that the Health Work Group has also held numerous recent discussions regarding confusion over what is happening with the Division of Developmental Disabilities Services (DDDS) and Medicaid/Medicare. Are persons with disabilities allowed to receive services from both DDDS and Medicaid/Medicare? Cory stated that the Health Work Group is planning on addressing these issues with representatives from DDDS and Medicaid/Medicare at a future Health Work Group meeting.

HOUSING/TRANSPORTATION WORK GROUP UPDATE

Housing/Transportation Work Group Chair Al Rose reported for the group, stating that have concluded with their meetings for the time being. Al shared that the Housing/Transportation Work Group has submitted all final recommendations and goals to State Transition Task Force Co-Chairs Wendy and Terri. Al stated that Kyle Hodges of the State Council for Persons with Disabilities (SCPD) has been working on the Housing/Source of Income issue. SCPD Chairperson Daniese McMullin-Powell and Kyle met recently with some representatives from the Delaware State Housing Authority (DSHA), and stated that they plan to hold another meeting in March, 2013. Discussion took place among State Transition Task Force members regarding whether to keep the Housing/Source of Income issue as a gap identified by the State Transition Task Force. The group agreed to keep the Housing/Source of Income issue on the State Transition Task Force's report, but to make note of the fact that the SCPD is also working on this issue.

Al asked the State Transition Task Force members to note that DDC Director Pat Maichle would be testifying at the bond bill hearing today, regarding difficulties with DART Paratransit statewide, and particularly the lack of availability and fixed routes in southern Kent and all of Sussex County. Pat reported that DART proposes to implement fixed routes in Sussex County and in Millsboro by the year 2020. DDC is recommending that fixed routes be implemented in the above-mentioned areas during 2013. Changes for the better should also include more accessible bus service and consideration of curb cuts.

MEETING CONCLUSION

Wendy briefed the group on the process to begin work on each Work Group's final report. Each Work Group's final report is to be included in the full State Transition Task Force report, which is to the Governor and to the 147th Delaware General Assembly in June, 2013. It is Wendy's plan to have every Work Group prepare an Executive Summary, and to also include charts, graphs, photos, statistics and quotes. Jack Jadach will be writing the overarching Executive Summary for the full report. Wendy cautioned Work Group Chairs to cite their sources in a bibliography and/or references page. An

explanation of acronyms and a glossary of terms should also be included. A chart sharing the Work Group's proposed task/action, potential partners and the suggested time frame to complete the task/action should be included in each Work Group's final report as well. Wendy stated that she will be sharing a proposed written report framework with the Work Group Chairs. The deadline for Work Group Chairs to submit their final reports to Wendy and Terri is April 12, 2013.

Due to the large amount of work about to be done by the Work Groups on their final reports, it was agreed to cancel the March 25, 2013 meeting in order to allow time for the groups to meet and complete their reports. The next meeting of the State Transition Task Force will be held on Monday, April 22, 2013 from 9:30 AM to 11:30 AM at the Office of the Insurance Commissioner, 841 Silver Lake Blvd., Dover, DE in the Sussex Conference Room.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:57 AM

Respectfully submitted,

Kristin E. Cosden, GACEC

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