



**GOVERNOR'S ADVISORY COUNCIL FOR EXCEPTIONAL CITIZENS (GACEC)  
GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING  
7:00PM June 20, 2023  
HYBRID MEETING**

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Al Cavalier, Nancy Cordrey, Bill Doolittle, Ann Fisher, Cory Gilden, Tika Hartsock, Kristina Horton, Genesis Johnson, Jessica Mensack, Molly Merrill, Beth Mineo, Maria Olivere, Trenee Parker, Jennifer Pulcinella, Stefanie Ramirez, Brenné Shepperson, Meedra Surratte and Erik Warner

**OTHERS PRESENT:** Nicole Topper/Department of Health & Social Services (DHSS), Erin Rich/DHSS, Kathleen Stephan/Delaware Department of Education (DDOE)

**STAFF PRESENT:** Pam Weir/Executive Direction, Kathie Cherry/Office Manager and Lacie Spence/Administrative Coordinator

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** Matt Denn, Karen Eller, Thomas Keeton and Erika Powell

Chairperson Ann Fisher called the membership meeting to order at 7:01pm. It was announced that a quorum was present. Jennifer Pulcinella **made a motion** to approve the June agenda with flexibility with Erik Warner **seconding the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.** Nancy Cordrey made a **motion to approve** the May meeting minutes and Trenee Parker **seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.** Nancy Cordrey **made a motion** to approve the May financial report, with Jennifer Pulcinella **seconding the motion. The motion passed unanimously.**

**PUBLIC COMMENT:**

Eileen Reynolds provided public comment. Eileen noted concern that more and more parents have felt pressured to enroll their hard of hearing students in special schools early on in life. Eileen thought Delaware had made some progress regarding this issue, but if the family elects to stay on an IFSP versus an IEP with the District, they will automatically be served by the School for the Deaf/Statewide Programs, which Eileen feels are one in the same administratively, financially and agenda wise. Eileen is concerned that even after DDOE has heard about the many concerns, they have said that anyone choosing to use the regional Birth to Three Program will automatically be connected to the staff from the School for the Deaf. Eileen was under the impression that districts could provide family education with their own specialists. Eileen does not agree with the School for the Deaf being responsible for the district's specialist. Those

specialists get filtered information based on their desire and their politics. It is no longer about how they can do their job better, but how they can be sold into a larger monopoly. Eileen thinks this is a civil rights violation and that the State of Delaware is setting themselves up for a huge problem. There are three to four times the number of children in the special school in Newark compared to the National average, according to Eileen. The districts should have more influence. Eileen wonders why the regional program cannot use the local specialists. If they can work with Christina school district, why can't they work with the child's neighborhood school district? Ann Fisher thanked Eileen for her public comment. The Infant and Early Childhood Committee may ask Eileen to meet with them to work on next steps to improve upon the issue. Tika Hartsock recommended that if the Committee does have Eileen back, they may also want to reach out to the districts for some more insight, because they do employ Teachers of Deaf or hard of hearing (TODs), who provide some of the services Eileen was referring to.

## **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

### **ADULT AND TRANSITION SERVICES COMMITTEE:**

Erik Warner reported that the Committee met with Kathleen Stephan, Educational Associate for Secondary and Transition at DDOE. The Committee spoke about the topic of student voice involving our agency partners at the transition age (such as Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR), Division for the Visually Impaired (DVI), Division of Developmental Disabilities Services (DDDS) and Adult Transition Supports). Erik stated that conversation was had regarding ways to promote the DelDHub website. Kathleen added that the GACEC will have ten minutes dedicated on the agenda at the Transition Cadre meetings. Erik would like to ensure we take advantage of that opportunity to promote the DelDHub, the Adult and Transition Services Committee, and GACEC membership. Kathleen is working on next year's meeting schedule.

### **CHILDREN AND YOUTH COMMITTEE**

Tika Hartsock asked if the data workgroup was still meeting because they had some requests for them. Jessica Mensack replied that the group has not met recently but Jessica is going to reach out again to coordinate a meeting. The Children and Youth Committee is requesting that the previous DDOE data request regarding Disproportionality on May 17, 2017 be re-sent due to never receiving a response. Al added that the Committee agreed to simplify and focus the request more on priority data. Tika added that the Committee talked about breaking it up into separate requests. The Children and Youth Committee **made a motion** to update and modify the existing Disproportionality data request letter and re-send it to DDOE. The **motion passed** unanimously.

### **INFANT AND EARLY CHILDHOOD COMMITTEE**

Jennifer Pulcinella reported that in a recent Delaware Perinatal Quality Collaborative(DPQC) meeting they discussed the 2022 Maternal and Child Death Review Commission: Annual Report

Review to Action, <https://reviewtoaction.org/state-resource/2022-maternal-and-child-death-review-commission-annual-report>. Delaware loses one infant per month to unsafe sleep practices. This has been a consistent statistic for years and should be looked at more closely as a social determinant issue. The Committee discussed how the transition stakeholder meetings are going with Kristina Horton, as well as personal experiences in the meetings.

### **POLICY AND LAW COMMITTEE:**

Beth Mineo reported that the Policy and Law Committee is recommending adopting the actions outlined in the Disabilities Law Program (DLP) Legal Memo. The Committee endorses adopting all of the recommendations in the memo aside from HB167. Regarding HB167, the Committee recommends neither endorsing nor opposing, but would like to express substantial reservations about the disproportionately negative consequences for students with disabilities or intersectional identities related to race and disability related to the use of School Resource Officers. The Committee recommends that HB167 be tabled for the time being in the interest of convening stakeholders to define concerns and solutions more fully. Discussion ensued. The Policy and Law Committee **made a motion** to adopt all the recommendations made in the Legal Memo, aside from HB167. As for HB167, the committee is recommending that concerns be shared and request that time is taken to identify a variety of steps to be taken moving forward to enhance the likelihood of effectiveness of the proposed legislation. The **motion passed unanimously** with Erik Warner, Trenee Parker and Molly Merrill abstaining. Commentary from the Legal Memo was as follows:

### **Proposed DSAMH Regulations – Credentialing Mental Health Screeners and Payment for Voluntary Admissions, 26 Del. Register of Regulations 1023 (June 1, 2023)**

DSAMH (Division of Substance Abuse and Mental Health) is proposing to amend existing regulations published at 16 Del. Admin. C. § 6002, which governs the credentialing of mental health screeners. Delaware’s civil commitment statute, codified at 16 Del. C. § 5000, et seq., requires credentialed mental health screeners to make the underlying determination authorizing the emergency detention of an individual with a mental health condition as part of the civil commitment process. The proposed amendments would strike all existing language and replace it with significantly streamlined and reorganized regulations. The proposed amendments would create a requirement for psychiatrists to register with DSAMH in order to act as a mental health screener; under the existing regulations no credentialing or registration is required for psychiatrists licensed to practice medicine in Delaware. Under the proposed amendments, the Division would then have discretion to deregister a psychiatrist for failure to comply with law, regulation or policy.

With respect to training of screeners, the proposed amendments simply state that to be eligible for credentialing an applicant must complete “the Division-required training,” with no further description of what this training entails. The existing regulations are relatively detailed with

respect to how many hours of training applicants of various types (depending on whether the applicant was a physician, or a licensed or unlicensed mental health professional) for both initial credentialing and renewal of a credential. The synopsis of the proposed regulations states that the amendments “[r]emove[] burdensome and unnecessary regulatory requirements mandating the number of hours required for credentialing and renewal.” While the previous regulations may have been wordy, it is not clear from the language of the proposed regulations how many hours of training will be required or whether training requirements would be at all different for applicants of various types. Given the nature of the interventions that a screener has the authority to order, it seems essential that screeners be thoroughly trained. **More specific rules and transparency about training for mental health screeners may be warranted.**

Notably the existing regulations contain a provision related to payment to hospitals for voluntary and involuntary admissions, which would require independent review of forms and documentation by a psychiatrist designated by the DHSS to approve state payment. Per the existing regulations, “[t]he review’s specific purpose will be to confirm that: the admission represents the most appropriate and least restrictive treatment for the client in crisis; that the duration of stay for the admitted client is reviewed and deemed appropriate, and that the State is the payer of last resort.” **This requirement is absent from the proposed amendments and no explanation is provided for why this language is removed.**

→**Conclusion/recommendations:** Council should consider the following,

- Council could encourage increased oversight of the psychiatrists performing screenings as provided for in the proposed amendments.
- The Council may wish to question the relative vagueness of the proposed amendments about required training for mental health screeners and recommend that they be solidified.
- Council may want to recommend that the language in the existing regulations about payment for treatment and related oversight be carried into the revised regulation.

## **I. PENDING LEGISLATION**

### **Senate Bill No. 153 – Proposed Amendments to Titles 12, 14, 16, and 29 of the Delaware Code Relating to Behavioral Health**

This bill’s stated purpose is to make changes to code provisions related to behavioral health and DSAMH “to reflect current practices.” The bill strikes various provisions that are no longer consistent with today’s norms (e.g., provisions around involuntary and voluntary sterilization), code sections concerning programs that no longer exist (e.g. Governor Bacon Health Center), or provisions that are both defunct and not consistent with today’s norms (e.g., mental hygiene clinics that examined individuals who were (not DLP’s language) “mentally retarded.” **Removal of outdated and prejudicial language and procedures is consistent with Councils’ missions, and Council should consider generally supporting this legislation.**

However, there are several provisions Council may wish to make specific note of:

- One section of Title 16 being removed is a requirement that each DHSS institution and agency prepare a public report annually (current § 5109). Some specific divisions within DHSS do prepare annual reports, e.g. Health Facilities (16 Del.C. § 9220), Personal Attendant Services (16 Del.C. § 9404), Public Health (16 Del.C. § 2003) and others. DHSS, the department broadly, is required to make annual reports available to the General Assembly and the public, and this provision (29 Del.C. § 7926) is unaffected by this bill. **Council may wish to encourage the General Assembly to add a provision to this bill requiring all DHSS Divisions and institutions to complete annual public reports specific to their divisions/institutions, if they are not already otherwise required by law to make such reports publicly available.**
- This bill removes all provisions of Title 16, chapter 53, relating to the Governor Bacon Health Center, presumably due to the facility's closure. However, review of these provisions raised a concern that provisions around Delaware Hospital of the Chronically Ill (DHCI) may need updating. Notably, clear clinical admission criteria to DHCI, and appeals procedures, are absent from both statute and regulations<sup>1</sup>. **Council may want to advocate now, or in the future, that the General Assembly give DHSS the responsibility to develop clinical admission criteria/procedures as well as appeals procedures, subject to public notice and comment.**
- Finally, the bill removes from Title 29 section 7921 provisions concerning “the Governor's Council on Health and Social Services”, which appears to no longer exist: <https://governor.delaware.gov/boards-commissions/>. DHSS may be too large for such a Council. Some DHSS divisions have instead developed their own advisory councils, e.g. the Division of Developmental Disabilities Services<sup>2</sup>. **Council may wish to advocate for advisory councils for any specific divisions or programs that do not have one, which Council believes would benefit from such councils.**

➔**Conclusion/recommendations:** Council should support this legislation as it removes procedures that are harmful to people with disabilities. However, Council may wish to:

- encourage the General Assembly to add a provision to this bill requiring all DHSS Divisions and institutions to complete annual public reports as well, if they are not already otherwise required by law to make such reports publicly available.
- advocate now or in the future, that the General Assembly give DHSS the authority and responsibility to develop clinical admission criteria/procedures as well as appeals procedures, subject to public notice and comment.

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<sup>1</sup> 31 Del. C. § 2822 has very broad eligibility requirements that focuses on financial eligibility and §2823 excludes individuals with “a mental condition” and permits discharge if a patient “becomes incorrigible,” which may have discriminatory impact.

<sup>2</sup> <https://dhss.delaware.gov/dhss/ddds/dac.html>; 29 Del. C. § 7910.

## **HB 167: AN ACT TO AMEND TITLE 14 OF THE DELAWARE CODE RELATING TO SCHOOL RESOURCE OFFICER FUNDING.<sup>3</sup>**

House Bill 167 (HB 167) seeks to amend Chapter 17, Title 14 of the Delaware Code relating to state appropriation for public education by adding § 1716H, which would add a new school resource officer (SRO) unit for the employment of SROs.<sup>4</sup> HB 167 does the following:

1. Establishes SRO units to fund school resource officers in all Delaware public schools;
2. Funds one SRO in each school in every district and charter school;
3. Funds an additional SRO for schools with over 1,000 students, including a fractional unit for the percentage of students above 1,000 that are insufficient to meet the threshold for an additional unit; and
4. Allows a school district to refuse the funding.

The bill was assigned to the House Education Committee which met on May 7, 2023.<sup>5</sup> Despite strong objections from Representative Morrison and an indication from the bill's sponsor that HB 167 would be amended, it was voted out of committee. Rep. Shupe, HB 167's sponsor, indicated that the purpose of the bill was to reduce the burden on local school districts and charter schools (collectively, "LEAs") for funding SROs – instead, HB 167 would allow those LEAs to use the local funds currently paying for SROs for other services for students. Other concerning alternatives were discussed at committee meeting.<sup>6</sup>

Funding for the SRO units would be shared between state and local funds with the state paying a maximum of 70% of the annual salary rate and other employment costs. The remaining 30% would be paid with local funds. This bill would generate approximately 239 full-time SRO units with an average personnel cost to the state of \$111,465 and \$40,766 from local funds for each unit. This does not include the annual per unit equipment and maintenance cost of approximately \$25,000 or one-time vehicle and equipment costs per unit of \$110,000.<sup>7</sup> To implement this bill, the total cost is approximately \$69 million in FY 2024,<sup>8</sup> \$45 million in FY 2025, and \$46 million in FY 2026. Because this year's budget is tight and Joint Finance

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<sup>3</sup> <https://legis.delaware.gov/BillDetail?legislationId=140420>.

<sup>4</sup> Sponsors: Reps. Shupe & K. Williams and Sens. Lawson & Walsh; co-sponsors: Reps. Bush, Collins, Gray, Parker Selby, Ramone, Michael Smith, & Yearick and Sens. Buckson, Hocker, Pettyjohn, & Wilson.

<sup>5</sup> <https://legis.delaware.gov/MeetingNotice/33114>.

<sup>6</sup> Rep. Shupe stated during the committee meeting that he would be amending HB 167 to include constables. Rep. Shupe stated that substituting constables for SROs would reduce the fiscal note from \$44 million to \$19 million. Rep. K. Williams then questioned why the funding provided by the state could not be at the level of funding needed for constables, with the LEAs making up the difference. She noted that this would lower the fiscal note attached; however, Rep. Shupe expressed concerns with this approach and that it may lead to LEAs choosing between constables or SROs. According to the fiscal note attached to the bill, the September 2022 unit count showed that Delaware had approximately 195 schools with less than 1,000 students, 25 schools with 1,000-1,999 students, 4 schools with 2,000-2,999 students, and 1 school with more than 3,000 students.

<sup>7</sup> Equipment and maintenance costs are assumed to be fully funded through state funds.

<sup>8</sup> Includes state one-time cost of approximately \$26 million.

Committee is already over, HB 167 will likely not get out of appropriations this year with the 70/30 split; however, it may move forward next year. Rep. Shupe shared that he spoke with Governor Carney, and he supports the bill but would not include it in the recommended budget.

For the reasons discussed below, **Council may wish to oppose, in its entirety, this bill and any effort to expand the use of police in schools.** Of concern, according to a 2022 opinion piece in the Hechinger Report,<sup>9</sup> “[r]esearch has shown that policing in schools disproportionately affects children of color, LGBTQ+ youth and students with disabilities. Black and Latinx students, who are already overrepresented among students suspended and expelled, make up more than 70 percent of all students referred to law enforcement. While LGBTQ+ youth comprise only 6 percent of the total youth population, they represent about 15 percent of the young people in juvenile detention. In some states, students with disabilities were arrested nearly three times as frequently as their peers.”

This is consistent with the data collected in the 2017-18 Civil Rights Data Collection (CRDC) which found that Delaware was not only among the top 10 in referrals to law enforcement but was the **first** in the nation for disproportionately suspending minority students and students with disabilities.<sup>10</sup> Delaware’s own data reporting (the School Discipline Improvement Program Statewide Summary Report) mirrors the CRDC data in showing that students of color and students with disabilities are suspended or otherwise subject to discipline at much higher rates than their white and non-disabled peers.<sup>11</sup>

One of the concerning aspects of these numbers is that one of the most common reasons for school-based arrests of students is for disorderly conduct.<sup>12</sup> This infraction is so broad and subjective which has historically led to it being disproportionately imposed upon students of color. In referring these students to law enforcement or otherwise imposing school-based discipline, schools are criminalizing normal youth disruptive behavior. These subjective discipline policies, which divert students away from school-based discipline and toward law enforcement, are major contributors to the school-to-prison pipeline. Moreover, despite a decrease in crime generally, arrest rates at schools with SROs are 3.5 times the rate of arrests at schools without SROs – and in some states the rate is as high as 8 times.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> <https://hechingerreport.org/opinion-more-police-in-schools-are-not-the-answer-its-up-to-educators-to-make-schools-safe/>.

<sup>10</sup> <https://ocrdata.ed.gov/estimations/2017-2018>.

<sup>11</sup> [https://education.delaware.gov/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/20.21\\_discipline\\_improvement\\_report.pdf](https://education.delaware.gov/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/20.21_discipline_improvement_report.pdf). See also <https://data.delaware.gov/Education/Student-Discipline/yr4w-jdi4>.

<sup>12</sup> <https://www.usccr.gov/files/pubs/2019/07-23-Beyond-Suspensions.pdf>.

<sup>13</sup> <https://www.aclu.org/report/cops-and-no-counselors>.

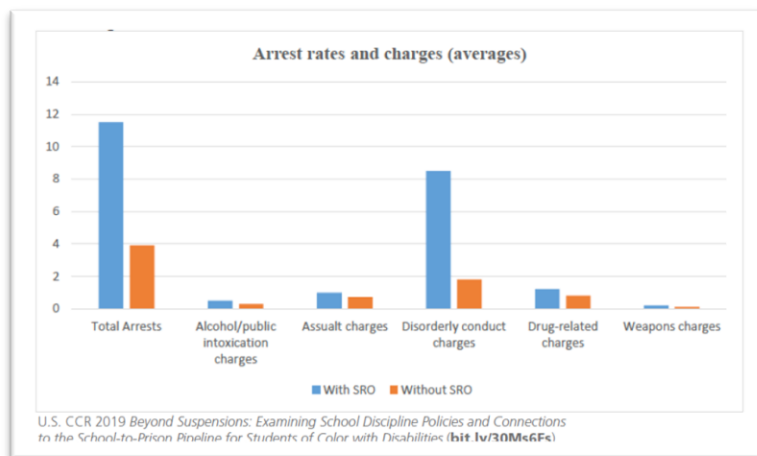


Table pulled from the Education Civil Rights Alliance and American Federation of Teachers’ report *Police in Schools: A Background Paper*.<sup>14</sup>

Instead, state funding could and should be used for strategies that actually decrease discipline infractions in school or may otherwise lead to an increase in academic gains for students. These strategies could include:

1. funding for at least one social worker at each school, to increase the number of student wellness centers, to expand facilities or otherwise increase staffing to reduce teacher-to-student ratios;
2. removing subjective discipline from the Delaware code and regulations (including infractions such as disorderly conduct, disrupting the educational process, disrespect to staff or student);
3. requiring restorative justice and positive behavior intervention supports to be used at each LEA;
4. removing SROs from elementary and middle schools;
5. developing specific guidelines for when it is appropriate to involve an SRO in a disciplinary issue on school grounds.

➔**Conclusion/recommendation:** Because of the disastrous impact that SROs have on the school climate and environment, especially with respect to those students of color and students with disabilities, Council may wish to oppose HB 167 in its entirety.

**HB 188: AN ACT TO AMEND TITLE 14 OF THE DELAWARE CODE RELATING TO THE PUBLIC EDUCATION EQUITY OMBUDSPERSON PROGRAM AND THE EDUCATION EQUITY COUNCIL**

This bill codifies portions of the Equity Ombudsman program, established as a result of a settlement order in the school funding lawsuit, currently operating as the Delaware Public

<sup>14</sup> <https://edrights.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/PoliceInSchools-by-ECRA-and-AFT.pdf>.



Education Ombudsperson Program through the Parent Information Center of Delaware.<sup>15</sup> This program provides students and families with advocates to assist them when encountering inequity within the school system, such as disparate discipline and denial of educational opportunities. This bill also establishes an Educational Equity Council, for the purpose of providing input and oversight to the Education Ombudsman Program and to “study and recommend solutions to ongoing or systemic equity.”

Education equity advocacy is sorely needed in Delaware. According to Delaware’s Every Student Succeeds Act (“ESSA”) Plan<sup>16</sup>, 64% of low income students, 85% of English language learners and 86% of students with disabilities did not meet the state standards in grades three through eight for English Language Arts established by the state; similarly 74% of low income students, 81% of English language learners and 89% of students with disabilities did not meet the state’s math standards in those grades. Statistics based on race and ethnicity are similarly concerning - data compiled by Propublica shows significant racial disparities in our state’s education: Black students are 3.5 times as likely to be suspended than white students and Hispanic 1.5 times as likely as White students, whereas white students are 2.1 times more likely to be enrolled in at least one or more AP class and 2.5 times more likely than Hispanic students.<sup>17</sup> In Delaware, where 31% of our students are Black and 46% are white, 57% of our out-of-school suspensions are for Black students, compared to 24% for White Students; expulsion rates are similar (56% vs. 30%).<sup>18</sup> In at least one Delaware district discipline rates were reported as 5.1 times higher for Black students, compared to white students, coupled with an achievement gap of as much as 2.8 grades (Brandywine School District).<sup>19</sup>

This bill would continue a program intended to combat those disparities. That said, there are some problems with the bill. Terminology is not consistent – in some places the program is called the Equity Ombudsman program and in others the Education Equity Ombudsperson Program. **This inconsistent terminology should be corrected.** With this bill, the Education Equity Council (EEC) would have a minimum of 17 voting members and 9 non-voting members, which may be unworkably large and difficult to maintain. The EEC responsibilities may overlap some with the GACEC, specifically relating to making recommendations to the legislature and Department of Education to improve equity in public education, and also requesting data from the Department of Education. **Council may wish to advocate that one of the voting member seats be reserved for a member of the GACEC, to ensure that the GACEC and ECC are not duplicating effort. At the very least, GACEC may wish to participate with the ECC or otherwise collaborate in some fashion.**

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<sup>15</sup> See bill synopsis and <https://picofdel.org/public-education-ombudsperson-program-dpeop/>

<sup>16</sup> Available at <https://education.delaware.gov/community/funding-contracts/federal-and-state-programs/essa/>.

<sup>17</sup> <https://projects.propublica.org/miseducation/state/DE>

<sup>18</sup> *Id.*

<sup>19</sup> *Id.*

The last concerns we will note here are two differences between the Equity Ombudsperson's capacity under the settlement order and the capacity it would have pursuant to the proposed legislation. First, unlike the settlement order, the legislation would most likely not enable the Ombudsperson non-lawyer employees to represent students at hearings. Second, that while the bill allows the Equity Ombudsman to refer matters for legal services organizations or pro bono programs where that is important for protecting a student's rights, the bill would disallow program funds from being used to pay for litigation or other proceedings asserted against the State or its agencies, employees or officials, otherwise than in appeals on the record from administrative proceedings. What this could mean in practice is that legal services could only assist after a student's issue already goes to an administrative hearing, such as a due process hearing, severely limiting what such legal services can do because they could not ensure the facts and evidence necessary for successful resolution of the students' case are part of the record. Indeed, this provision even prohibits funds from being used so that the non-attorney advocates can consult with attorneys, to make sure they are preserving students' legal rights, making the proper claims, and effectively advocating for student through proceedings the non-attorney advocates are bringing on behalf of students. In other words, the non-attorney advocates cannot benefit from the counsel of attorneys, nor can the students directly be represented at hearings, significantly restricting the students' ability to achieve education equity, the very goal of this program. **Council may wish to advocate for these restrictions to be removed through an amendment to the pending legislation or through future legislation.**

**➔Conclusion/recommendation:** Because the settlement of the lawsuit did not result in the education ombudsperson program being established for an extended duration, notwithstanding the above flaws, Council should not oppose this bill as the legislation would ensure the continued existence of the education ombudsperson program, without interruption. Considering the significant educational inequity Delaware students presently encounter, it is important for Delaware students, and consistent with Councils' missions, to safeguard Delaware students with disabilities' access to advocates who can help ensure they receive education equity now and in the future. The above noted concerns can be fixed by an amendment to the pending legislation or by future legislation.

## **MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE**

There were no updates from the Membership Committee for this month.

## **PERSONNEL COMMITTEE**

There were no updates from the Personnel Committee for this month.

## **DDOE REPORT**

Dale Matusевич reported that we should be receiving the State Determination soon. He will reach out to Pam once that is received. Dale added that the percent waiver plan will be up for public comment soon. Michelle Jackson is typically the lead on writing that plan and will likely present to Council in September. In addition, Dale announced Delaware has been chosen as one of four States to receive Technical Assistance from the Swift Center at Kansas University. Delaware will be a model demonstration site through the work. They will be coming on site in July and Dale will share further information as it is obtained. Dr. Dawn Miller along with Carmen Mills will be working with Delaware. Some of the goals are to build capacity development within the State Education Agency (SEAs), as well as the Local Education Agencies (LEAs) and school personnel. They will be looking at supporting and implementing inclusive practices and policies. More goals include increased time and engagement of instructional quality for students and providing the SEAs and LEAs useful knowledge information tools and consultation for implantation of inclusive practices within the equity based school wide Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) model. In addition, they would like to build additional engagement with parents and families. The timeline of this project has the potential to run through 2027 dependent upon the continuation of funding. Dale will keep Council informed. Ann thanked Dale for his presentation.

### **CHAIR REPORT**

Ann Fisher announced the absent members and guests for the evening. Ann advised the Council that they will be receiving information from staff regarding submitting their committee's annual reports.

### **DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

Pam Weir reported that Mindy Failing was announced as the new Director for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing Program. Pam noted that there was a recent press release and Josette Manning will be the new DHSS Secretary and Steve Yateman will be the new DSCYF Secretary. Pam will be reaching out to meet with them. Pam announced that the GACEC's FY 2025 Public Hearing date is set for the fall. Pam advised Council that GACEC staff will be sharing more information regarding the upcoming Annual Retreat in October.

### **OUTSIDE COMMITTEE/ADHOC COMMITTEE:**

There were no Outside Committee reports for this month.

Ann reminded members to contact GACEC staff if they would like to see any of the letters written by the GACEC or responses. Bill Doolittle **made a motion** to adjourn the meeting with Erik Warner seconding. The **motion passed** unanimously, and the meeting was adjourned at 8:14pm.