



GOVERNOR'S ADVISORY COUNCIL FOR EXCEPTIONAL CITIZENS (GACEC)
Leadership Committee Meeting
6:00 PM, October 17, 2023
VIRTUAL MEETING

MINUTES

MEMBERS PRESENT: Al Cavalier, Bill Doolittle, Ann Fisher, Tika Hartsock, Molly Merrill, Trenee Parker, Jennifer Pulcinella, and Erik Warner

STAFF PRESENT: Pam Weir/Executive Director, Theresa Moore/Operations Support Specialist

MEMBERS ABSENT: Jessica Mensack

- I. Call to order:** This meeting was called to order at 6:09 pm by Vice Chair, Erik Warner. A quorum of the Leadership Committee was present, which represented more than 50 percent of persons with a disability or parents of children with disabilities.

- II. Administrative Actions:** Molly Merrill made a motion to approve the October Leadership Committee meeting agenda. The motion was seconded by Bill Doolittle. The motion was unanimously approved. Jennifer Pulcinella made a motion to approve the September Leadership Committee meeting minutes. Ann Fisher seconded the motion. The vote passed unanimously with Beth Mineo and Tika Hartsock abstaining. Conversation took place about the attendance tracker for meetings and the attendance policy that is currently in draft. It was discussed that the attendance tracker is shared as a tool to aid in implementing the attendance policy if need be. Members agreed that this is not something we need to discuss in detail at every meeting, but that can be used for reference and to keep everyone informed. Pam will share the draft policies with the Leadership Committee to review and provide feedback.

- III. Old Business:**
 - GACEC staff will finalize the 2024 goals and disseminate them to Council
 - Pam asked the Committee to provide their suggestions for updating the GACEC mission statement.
 - Jennifer Pulcinella noted that at the GACEC retreat, Pam wanted to gauge the level of Council members' knowledge of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). Jennifer thought a survey would be helpful and suggested that the Parent

Information Center (PIC) may have a quiz or something similar to help gauge that. Tika Hartsock shared some websites that provide IDEA training and quizzes. Al Cavalier will share some information as well. Bill Doolittle thought it would be helpful to reach out to the program for training special education directors and see if they do a pre-analysis. Pam wants to make sure everyone has the opportunity and access to professional development materials to have a basic understanding of IDEA and develop a deeper understanding over time. Al liked Tika's idea about the IRIS modules, but more for training, not as assessments. Pam asked that the Committee continue to send her ideas of what they would like to add.

IV. New Business:

- Bill Doolittle wanted to discuss the Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) State Education Agency (SEA) compliance guidelines. Bill believes that this is one of the most important documents received from OSEP in years. It is important that we incorporate this into our work. Bill pointed out that the document made it very clear that it is the SEA's responsibility to monitor and address issues beyond the Indicators. Any time the SEA is made aware of a possible compliance issue, it is meant to go through a very formal process. Bill stated that the GACEC needs to decide how we will handle this process. Pam also wonders how the Delaware Department of Education (DDOE) can work with Council to flesh through this. Pam asked if the Leadership Committee would like her to schedule a meeting with Dale Matusevich and his team to see what changes are going to be made as result of the new guidance. Pam noted that we could record the meeting for Council members who are unable to attend. Bill also suggested that we submit questions to Dale ahead of time. Pam will reach out to Dale letting him know that Council would like to discuss the new guidance from OSEP. We will get back to him with some very specific questions about it and then during upcoming meetings we could provide our advisement as the State Advisory Panel (SAP). Pam asked that the Leadership Committee send their questions to her by October 27th.
- In addition, Pam will reach out to Dale to get more information about the audit schedule from OSEP.
- Al Cavalier wanted to discuss requiring attendance of chairpersons of GACEC ad hoc committees and GACEC workgroups at Leadership Committee meetings. He thinks it is important for the Leadership Committee to stay informed of what the ad hoc committees or workgroups are deciding on, what their progress or lack of progress has been and what their needs are. Al thinks it could be helpful to create a general policy to create an expectation that the Chairs have a responsibility to attend to share information and guidance. Molly suggested that she would give them the option to submit their updates in writing if they are unable to attend. Discussion took place on having staff members attend Committee meetings to help take notes for Committee reports. Ann suggested that Committee meetings be recorded to go back to and create minutes. Bill noted that GACEC staff obtain an additional monitor for the conference room for running virtual meetings.
- Discussion took place on the functionality of Microsoft Teams. Trenee Parker made a motion for Pam to reach out to DTI and get a statement about what virtual platform

- we are allowed to use as an agency that falls into the state agency system. Bill amended the motion to include asking what alternative platforms they recommend if it is not functional for all of our members. Tika Hartsock seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously with Ann Fisher abstaining.
- Pam reminded the Committee to complete and return the Retreat Evaluation form if they have not already done so.

- V. **Adjournment:** Trenee Parker made a motion to adjourn the meeting and the motion passed unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 7:32 pm.

New Action Items:

- Update the mission statement as a draft for further discussion at next Leadership Committee meeting- Pam Weir/Al Cavalier
- Reach out to Dale letting him know that Council would like to discuss the new guidance from OSEP, and we will get back to him with some very specific questions about it and then during upcoming meetings we could provide our advisement as the State Advisory Panel (SAP). Pam asked that the Leadership Committee send their questions to her by October 27- Pam Weir and Leadership Committee members
- Share updated versions of draft policies for feedback- Pam Weir
- Reach out to DTI and get a statement about what virtual platform we are allowed to use as an agency that falls into the state agency system and ask what alternative platforms they recommend if it is not functional for all of our members- Pam Weir
- Reach out to Dale to get more information about the audit schedule from OSEP- Pam Weir

Action Items Carried Forward from Previous Board Meetings:

- Send list of current councils, committees, etc. that GACEC members currently attend and ask for updates- GACEC staff
- Narrow the focus and provide specific details as to what we need DDOE to present on at future meetings- Leadership Committee & GACEC staff
- Improve plan for supporting newly appointed members- GACEC Leadership Committee/GACEC Staff
- Find ways to increase communication regarding updates from each of the Issues Committees- GACEC Leadership Committee/GACEC staff
- Work on the prison education piece of our mandate- Pam Weir and ATS Committee

- Disseminate membership survey once finalized- further discuss what format the survey will be sent in- Membership Committee