



GOVERNOR'S ADVISORY COUNCIL FOR EXCEPTIONAL CITIZENS (GACEC)
Leadership Committee Meeting
5:30 PM, September 7, 2023
VIRTUAL MEETING

MINUTES

MEMBERS PRESENT: Al Cavalier, Bill Doolittle, Ann Fisher, Molly Merrill, Jessica Mensack, Trenee Parker, Jennifer Pulcinella, Meedra Surratte, and Erik Warner

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

MEMBERS ABSENT: Tika Hartsock

- I. Call to order:** This meeting was called to order at 5:31pm by Chair, Ann Fisher. 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:** Bill Doolittle made a motion to approve the September Leadership Committee meeting agenda. The motion was seconded by Jennifer Pulcinella. The motion was unanimously approved. Jennifer Pulcinella made a motion to approve the June Leadership Committee meeting minutes. Al Cavalier seconded the motion. The vote passed unanimously with Bill Doolittle and Molly Merrill abstaining.
- III. Old Business:**
 - Pam Weir announced that the GACEC Public Comment Policy and Attendance Policy will be shared with the Leadership Committee in the coming days for them to provide feedback. GACEC staff is developing the form for the public to submit an online request to provide public comment. Pam has created several draft policies and will share with the Leadership Committee via email and add them to the Leadership Committee Teams channel for members to review and provide feedback by September 22nd. The goal is to have at least these two policies in shape to share with the full Council at the Retreat on October 7th.
 - Leadership Committee Meeting Dates/Times- GACEC staff will be sending out a poll to choose the best date and time for this year's Leadership Committee meetings.

- Inclusion Paper- No follow-up has been received regarding the status of the Inclusion Paper. Pam will get back with Cindy Brown, the new Director of the Office of Early Childhood Intervention, under the Early Childhood Support Network
- Sharing Information from Outside Committees- Pam explained that one of the GACEC's performance measurements is outreach and collaboration throughout the State. Pam would like to get a better idea of which councils, committees, meetings, etc. GACEC members attend. Pam stated that we have a list that is included in the Annual Report each year. Pam would like to review that list and see if there are additions or deletions to be made and identify if there are meetings that we would like someone from the GACEC to be a part of to help inform the GACEC of statewide initiatives. The staff will be sending out a survey to determine the councils and committees GACEC members participate in. Pam clarified that GACEC members representing the GACEC on outside committees, council, etc. need to be approved by the Chair and/or Director.
- With the addition of the new DelDHub contractor, the Biosketches will be added in coming weeks to our social media sites. Please submit your biographical sketches, if you have not already. If you do not want your info posted, please let the GACEC staff know.

IV. New Business:

- Pam would like to share information about the GACEC during the retreat. It would be informative for new members and a refresher for members who have been with the GACEC for several years. During that time Pam will describe what the GACEC is, why we do things the way we do them, our performance measurements and the roles and responsibilities of the committees. She will explain how members can choose a committee and how committees communicate. In addition, Pam thinks it will be helpful to share information on the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). The Leadership Committee agreed and discussion ensued.
- Pam announced that after the Retreat there will be a meet and greet at Frazier's (9 East Loockerman Street, Dover) from 5-7 pm with complementary appetizers and a cash bar.
- Discussion took place regarding the need for more/different council members to join outside committees. We need to have representation on committees and councils that have missions similar to the GACEC and report back on relevant information.
- The Leadership Committee decided that there is no need for Council goals to be dated. They discussed that reviewing the goals once a year, then only revising them as needed would be sufficient, rather than updating them every year. See the Goals below to view the recommended changes made in red. The Leadership Committee will present the Council goals to the full Council for the changes to be approved at the Retreat.

GACEC Goals ~~2022-2023~~

GOAL 1: To improve the academic, social-emotional, and health outcomes of **all students with exceptionalities.**

- a: To improve the delivery of special education, related services, and other whole child services supported by evidence-based practices.
- b: To increase the degree to which these services are delivered in the least restrictive and most natural environments.

GOAL 2: To improve the quality of life of **all persons with exceptionalities.**

- a: To establish, promote, and enhance sound policies and adequate funding that permits access to inclusive childcare, health, independence, community living, housing, transportation, employment, and recreation by persons with exceptionalities.
- b: To establish, promote, and enhance programs that provide access to inclusive childcare, health, independence, community living, housing, transportation, employment, and recreation by persons with exceptionalities.
- c: To improve legislation and corresponding regulations for persons with exceptionalities.
- d: To effectively communicate and collaborate with legislators, professional organizations, and other agencies, councils, stakeholders, and relevant entities.

GOAL 3: To increase and enhance the voice of **all persons with disabilities in relevant decision making of state governmental agencies.**

- a: To establish mechanisms ensuring that the voices of students with exceptionalities and their families are included and meaningfully considered in decision making of **Local Education Agencies (LEAs) ~~school districts~~** and the Delaware Department of Education.
- b: To establish mechanisms ensuring that the voices of persons with exceptionalities are included and meaningfully considered in relevant decision making of other state governmental agencies.

GOAL 4: To mitigate the negative impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on **all students, their parents, educators, and administrators.**

- a: To establish, promote, and enhance programs that assist in re-establishing the knowledge and competencies of students with exceptionalities that decreased as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

b: To establish, promote, and enhance services that support the social-emotional well-being of students, their parents, educators, and administrators that diminished as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

V. **Adjournment:** Bill Doolittle made a motion to adjourn the meeting. The meeting was adjourned at 7:13 pm.

New Action Items:

- Update the mission statement as a draft for further discussion at next Leadership Committee meeting- Pam Weir/Al Cavalier
- Resend the Federal Guidance (released July 24, 2023) for the states on their responsibility and implementation to the Leadership Committee- Pam W
- Send list of current councils, committees, etc. that GACEC members currently attend and ask for updates- GACEC staff

Action Items Carried Forward from Previous Board Meetings:

- Narrow the focus and provide specific details as to what we need DDOE to present on at future meetings- Leadership Committee & GACEC staff
- Decide on the option for the public comment/request resource mailbox- GACEC Staff
- Share updated version of the attendance policy and public comment policy- Pam Weir
- 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