



**GOVERNOR'S ADVISORY COUNCIL FOR EXCEPTIONAL CITIZENS (GACEC)  
GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING  
6:00PM September 16, 2025  
HYBRID MEETING**

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Al Cavalier, Nancy Cordrey, Bill Doolittle, Karen Eller, Ann Fisher, Tika Hartsock, Jessica Heesh Mensack, Molly Merrill, Beth Mineo, Trenee Parker, Erika Powell, Jennifer Pulcinella, Stefanie Ramirez, Brenné Shepperson and Meedra Surratte.

**OTHERS PRESENT:** Dale Matusевич/Delaware Department of Education (DDOE).

**STAFF PRESENT:** Pam Weir/Executive Director, Kathie Cherry/Office Manager, Lacie Spence/Administrative Coordinator and Theresa Moore/Administrative Support Specialist.

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** Kristina Horton, Thomas Keeton, and Maria Olivere.

**Call to Order**

Bill Doolittle called the meeting to order at 6:03 PM. A quorum of members was present.

**Approval of Agenda**

Bill Doolittle called for approval of the agenda. The agenda was approved by unanimous consent of all members present. *(Karen Eller and Stefanie Ramirez were not present at time of the vote.)*

**Approval of August Meeting Notes**

Bill Doolittle called for approval of the August meeting notes. The notes were approved by unanimous consent, with Nancy Cordrey and Al Cavalier abstaining. *(Karen Eller and Stefanie Ramirez were not present at time of the vote.)*

**2025–2026 Regular Meeting Schedule**

Ann Fisher made a motion to accept the 2025–2026 regular meeting schedule. Trenee Parker seconded the motion. The motion passed with unanimous consent. *(Karen Eller and Stefanie Ramirez were not present at time of the vote.)*

**Letter to Dr. Joey Melvin**

“On behalf of the R&S/SRO Ad hoc Committee, Al Cavalier made a motion to send a letter to Dr. Joey Melvin, Executive Director of the Delaware Comprehensive School Safety Program, requesting (a) the names of all of the Delaware public schools (including charter schools and vocational-technical schools) that use school resource officers and/or constables and

(b) copies of their memoranda of understanding/agreement or interagency contracts with the law enforcement agencies that provide them.” The motion passed with unanimous consent. *(Karen Eller and Stefanie Ramirez were not present at time of the vote.)*

## **CHAIR REPORT:**

### **Chair’s Opening Remarks**

The Chair opened the meeting by encouraging participants to jump in as needed, while also noting the importance of keeping early discussion brief to allow ample time for the strategic planning portion of the agenda.

He referenced the letter he shared during his candidacy for Chair, reaffirming that his goals have not changed. His primary objective for this term is to dramatically improve the Council’s impact on the lives of individuals with disabilities, with a particular focus on the birth-to-age-26 population.

To help achieve this goal, he is prioritizing efforts to enhance administrative efficiency across the Council’s work.

### **Council Membership & Onboarding**

A key priority is bringing Council membership back to full capacity. Thanks to an active partnership with Boards and Commissions, that process is underway. While there are approximately 20 potential new members in the pipeline, not all may still be active or eligible. Still, significant progress has been made.

As part of this process, a more formal onboarding experience is being developed, led by Al Cavalier and Jessica Heesh Mensack and their committee. The Council will also be seeking mentors to support and guide new members as they join and engage in Council activities.

### **Work Plan Development & Process Formalization**

The Chair emphasized the need to formalize the Council’s work planning process to improve execution and accountability. Going forward, each work plan will include, at a minimum:

- Champion(s) – Individual(s) responsible for leading and driving the work
- Resources – Funding, tools, or other assets needed to support the effort
- Partners – Internal or external stakeholders involved in the work
- Tasks – Specific actions or steps to be completed
- Timelines – Realistic deadlines and milestones
- Any other critical elements necessary to move the work forward effectively

This structure will help ensure that projects stay on track. And if progress slows, the Council will be able to identify delays earlier and respond accordingly, rather than allowing issues to linger. The overall goal is to increase effectiveness and alignment in how the Council operates.

### **Project Management & Workflow Tools**

As part of improving administrative efficiency and formalizing the Council's processes, the Chair shared that work planning and tracking will be supported by a computer-based critical path management system. While the term sounds complex, the Chair clarified that it's simply a software tool to help manage projects, their interdependencies, associated resources, and timelines.

- The system selected is Microsoft Project, which will allow the Council to monitor progress and ensure alignment across various initiatives.
- The implementation of this system is already underway, though the Council is still waiting on the software to be delivered.
- For most individual members and committee chairs, engagement with the system will be simplified using an updated Work Plan Template. This template will collect all necessary information in a user-friendly format.
- Staff is currently finalizing updates to this template and coordinating with DTI (Department of Technology & Information).

The Chair noted that once the system is in place, it will help the Council better coordinate, document, and track progress, while reducing delays and improving strategic execution.

### **Communication Practices & Decision-Making Processes**

The Chair emphasized the importance of improving clarity and transparency in both internal and external Council communications. Where possible, the goal is to prepare written drafts of proposals or motions in advance, especially for matters expected to come before the Council. These drafts can be shared visually (e.g., projected or displayed) during meetings to:

- Support shared understanding
- Allow real-time editing
- Promote thoughtful discussion and reduce confusion

This practice is intended to give members time to process proposals, rather than making decisions too quickly without fully understanding their implications. The Chair acknowledged that he, too, has experienced situations where a motion was introduced with good intent, but without full clarity or understanding of the potential impact.

### **Member Dialogue & Open Discussion Time**

The Chair announced a new standing agenda item to be included in future full Council meetings: a dedicated period at the end of each meeting for open discussion among Council members.

This time will be used to:

- Share issues and trends members are observing in their communities
- Highlight best practices and emerging strategies
- Create space for informal dialogue and peer learning
- Strengthen connection and collaboration across the Council

The Chair emphasized the value of learning from each other's experiences and expertise. While similar conversations have occurred informally or within committee settings, this will now become a regular, structured opportunity for whole-Council engagement.

To accommodate this, the formal meeting agenda may be extended slightly, potentially running until 9:30 p.m. in future sessions. This does not mean the full time will always be used, but the extra flexibility will be built into the schedule to allow meaningful discussion when needed.

### **Strengthening Interagency Collaboration**

The Chair underscored the critical need to reduce duplication and enhance coordination among partner agencies and councils. While collaboration has long been a foundational value of the Council, current efforts are focused on elevating these partnerships to a more strategic and impactful level.

### **Affirmation of Leadership Committee Decisions by Full Council**

To ensure transparency and procedural clarity, decisions made by the Leadership Committee will be presented for affirmation during full Council meetings. This process serves as a formal safeguard, aligning with statutory requirements and minimizing the risk of decisions being later challenged or questioned.

While largely technical in nature, this step reinforces the Council's commitment to accountability and proper governance. It is not expected to require significant time or effort during meetings but will provide important procedural legitimacy moving forward.

### **Informational Requests by Committees**

The Chair clarified a return to a previous practice regarding informational requests initiated by committees. While this process had previously fallen out of regular use, it remains permissible under the Council's bylaws and offers a more efficient way to gather necessary data for the Council's work.

Moving forward:

- **Committees may initiate informational requests** without needing full Council approval, provided the request is non-substantive and does not involve taking a formal position.
- **All such requests must be vetted and authorized by the Council Chair**, and will typically be issued under the Chair's signature, reflecting the committee's input.
- This process allows committees to remain nimble and responsive, without bypassing governance oversight.
- **If a request involves taking a policy position or making a formal recommendation**, it must still be brought before the full Council for discussion and approval.

This approach is intended to streamline operations while maintaining appropriate oversight and alignment with the Council's bylaws.

### **Participation in External Stakeholder and Decision-Maker Meetings**

To ensure clarity and maintain the integrity of Council representation in external meetings, a formal process has been established:

- All meetings with outside stakeholders or decision-makers conducted on behalf of the Council will include at least one Council member and one staff member.

- This approach helps distinguish Council work from the personal or professional roles that members may hold elsewhere, ensuring that Council business is clearly represented as such.
- Additionally, Council members with interest or relevant expertise in the subject area—or those who have an existing relationship with the individual or organization involved—are encouraged and welcome to participate in these meetings.

This process supports transparency, inclusivity, and strengthens the Council's collaborative presence with external partners.

### **Expectations for Council Representation in External Meetings**

As part of our ongoing efforts to strengthen the Council's engagement with external stakeholders and decision-makers, the Chair shared the following expectations and guiding principles for Council members serving in representative roles:

- **Open Communication:**  
Council members are welcome to reach out to the Chair or staff if they have questions or want to discuss how best to approach an issue. These informal check-ins are encouraged.
- **Goal of Formal Updates:**  
While recognizing the challenge of coordinating schedules, Bill's goal is to move toward more regular, formal updates from members involved in external work to ensure alignment and transparency.
- **Active Participation Expected:**  
Members serving in designated roles or participating in external meetings on behalf of the Council are expected to actively engage, using their best understanding of Council priorities to inform their contributions.
- **Representing Council Interests:**  
Members should aim to reflect the Council's mission and the interests of children and youth with disabilities, especially when speaking in external settings.
  - If there is an official Council position on a matter, members may cite it directly.
  - In most cases, however, representation will rely on general alignment with the Council's priorities, rather than quoting specific positions.
- **Need for Clearer Guidance:**  
There has not previously been formal guidance around these responsibilities. These current expectations are intended to offer clarity, with the understanding that further formalization may occur in the future.

### **Bylaws Update and Modification Needs**

Bill Doolittle expressed the need to update and clarify several key aspects of the bylaws through the formal modification process. Areas identified for revision include:

- **Process for Calling Special Meetings:**  
Currently, there is no defined procedure for calling special meetings, which needs to be established to ensure clarity and responsiveness.

- **Hierarchy of Authority:**  
The bylaws lack a clear hierarchy of authority, which is essential for smooth governance and decision-making.
- **Membership Definitions and Counts:**  
There is ambiguity around membership criteria, particularly regarding the required percentages (e.g., the 51% or 50% counts) of parents and individuals with disabilities. Clear definitions and methods for calculating these counts are necessary.
- **General Clarifications and Clean-up:**  
Other technical and procedural details require revision to ensure that all members and stakeholders are aligned and have a shared understanding of governance rules.

These bylaw revisions will provide a stronger foundation for transparent, consistent, and effective Council operations.

### **FOUNDATIONAL PLANNING: (strategic planning)**

#### **Discussion on Council Priorities and Mandates**

The importance of reviewing the language that governs the Council’s work, specifically highlighting two key areas:

- **Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) Composition Requirements** – The IDEA composition code calls for representation from certain populations, such as youth in foster care. While the Council currently includes a representative from foster care (Trene Parker), the topic itself is not reflected in the Council’s goals or areas of focus. It was noted that the Council does not currently address foster care as a specific priority. Additionally, there is an open seat intended for a McKinney-Vento representative (focused on students experiencing homelessness). The concern was raised about whether that individual would also lack a defined area of focus within the Council’s work. These observations suggest that the Council could consider aligning its priorities with its required composition, potentially elevating foster care and homelessness as areas of focus.
- **IDEA Regulatory Responsibilities** – The IDEA regulations, while in some areas vague, do contain specific mandates. One example mentioned was the requirement to work with the State Education Agency (SEA) on corrective action plans and similar activities. These responsibilities could be better integrated into the Council’s agenda.

The recommendation was made to ensure that the Council prioritizes fulfilling all federally mandated responsibilities before taking on additional initiatives.

**The floor was then opened for thoughts, questions, or comments from the members.** What would you like to see Council do or what work needs to be accomplished by Council?

#### **Discussion on Discipline and Educational Rights for Youth in Foster Care**

Discussions raised concerns regarding the national issue of over-representation of youth in foster care in school disciplinary actions. It was noted that while the Council often discusses discipline

in the context of students with exceptionalities, there may be a need to specifically examine discipline rates among youth in foster care to determine if they experience disciplinary actions more frequently than their peers.

Additional concerns were expressed about the use of homebound instruction for youth in foster care, highlighting that this practice may infringe upon their right to a free and appropriate education. Additionally discussed and acknowledged that while educational surrogate parents are appointed to advocate for these youth, there may be limitations in their training and engagement. For example, surrogate parents often attend only the Individualized Education Program (IEP) meetings and may lack ongoing involvement, particularly in disciplinary or appeal processes.

It was further emphasized that the importance of understanding and addressing disciplinary decisions that result in homebound placement, noting that families and advocates may not be adequately informed about appeal rights or procedures, potentially leading to missed opportunities to challenge such decisions.

### **Strategic Planning Discussion**

Discussions further stated the importance of strategic planning, noting that it typically involves reviewing the organization's mission, establishing a vision (which in this case is currently lacking), and analyzing the current position. For the GACEC, this includes consideration of Council and the overarching goals for the coming year.

Further emphasized was the need to set clear strategies, goals, and objectives. Each committee, ad hoc group, and work group would then be responsible for developing their own action plans or work plans to achieve these objectives. Implementation should include monitoring mechanisms, as touched on earlier in the meeting.

Additional perspective was offered, some of the initial priorities within strategic planning should include establishing a clear governance framework. While acknowledging that this may not currently be a top priority for the group, wished to officially record that governance should be prioritized.

### **Governance Framework and Strategic Planning Infrastructure**

It was emphasized that establishing a strong governance infrastructure must precede all other efforts. Further noted was the importance of having this foundation not only for the group collectively but also to clarify individual roles and responsibilities, stating that without this clarity, there is confusion about the Council's purpose and function.

Further highlighted was the need to "level set" and understand why the Council exists and what its role is, ensuring that members are operating within their capacity. Furthermore, it was stressed that the importance of having a sound process in place to address Council needs, acknowledging that the group may not yet have reached that point.

Additionally expressed was the view that Council must first identify its needs clearly and determine how to move forward effectively, and it was suggested that this current discussion represents the beginning of that process.

Also raised was the possibility of engaging an external party to assist with the strategic planning process, including identifying needs and facilitating planning, while also considering whether this could be done internally. Regardless, it was emphasized the necessity of being grounded with the appropriate infrastructure before continuing forward.

This was concluded by noting that these reflections come from personal experience as a Council member.

### **Discussion of Unmet Needs – Workforce Challenges**

Discussion identified workforce as one of the greatest current unmet needs. Concern was expressed over the severity of existing vacancies, describing them as “very distressing,” and emphasized that these staffing shortages have daily, tangible consequences for students.

It was further noted that while there are numerous ways these impacts manifest—which could be discussed at length—the Council should focus on understanding the root causes of the workforce challenges. This includes ensuring that individuals receive adequate training well before entering the workforce.

It was further stressed that the importance of reviewing and strengthening recruitment and retention practices, ensuring they are sound and competitive with those in neighboring states. Discussion additionally, underscored the need to support all categories of educational personnel—teachers, related service providers, administrators, and paraprofessionals—in adopting a student-centered mindset and in using effective, legally compliant practices.

### **Equity, Accessibility, and Respect within Council Operations**

Discussions raised concerns about equity within Council operations and suggested that Indicator 4 (related to discipline and disproportionality) presents a meaningful starting point for broader equity discussions.

It was observed that a recurring pattern of disrespect among Council members, including a lack of respect for one another’s time. This significantly inhibits the Council’s ability to function effectively. Further discussion expressed frustration that a substantial portion of each meeting is spent discussing procedural issues rather than making substantive progress.

Discussion additionally cited specific examples of unprofessional behavior, including comments made on hot microphones and snide remarks between members. Without a baseline level of mutual respect, the Council will not be able to move forward productively.

Additionally, it was pointed out the Council's own structural requirement that over 50% of members be caregivers or individuals with disabilities. There was further concern that the Council has not adequately prioritized accessibility—both in terms of time and space—to support the participation of all members. This feedback was offered with full respect for the contributions of all members present.

### **Council Functionality**

Additional discussion reflected the importance of having clear direction and purpose in the Council's work. It was emphasized that while there is recognition and appreciation of the value of listening and learning from fellow members, this member experiences a lack of clarity regarding the Council's objectives.

It was noted that some members are accustomed to structured processes that include learning targets, measurable objectives, and built-in opportunities for reflection and course correction. In contrast, uncertainty was expressed about the goals or intended outcomes of the Council's current work.

Comment further affirmed a belief in the importance of the Council's mission and expressed a strong desire to continue contributing. Council members voiced a need to ensure that the time invested—particularly time spent away from family—is aligned with meaningful outcomes and a clearly defined purpose.

### **Council membership and capacity**

Discussion raised concern about the current makeup of the council. Specifically, the concern was not about staff, but about the full Council membership — the individuals who are meant to be represented across roles and stakeholder groups and expressed that if more of those seats were filled, and with broader representation, it would significantly strengthen the Council's ability to carry out its responsibilities effectively.

It was further noted that many individuals currently on the Council seem stretched thin, and uncertainty in what more to say beyond emphasizing the need for additional members.

Additionally expressed was that this concern was especially evident within the Adult and Transition Services Committee, which has struggled to recruit enough members to share the workload. It was observed that a small group of participants are trying to manage a considerable amount of responsibility.

Further noted was that one of the Council's goals this year is to better function as a clearinghouse of information, particularly for families navigating services related to Individualized Education Programs (IEPs). The challenge emphasized is ensuring that families can access information about services such as Delaware Authority for Regional Transit (DART), Division of Developmental Disabilities Services (DDDS), Division of Vocational Rehabilitation

(DVR), and various advisory committees and events like the LIFE Conference, without needing to already be well-connected or highly informed.

Also expressed was appreciation for the staff's efforts, acknowledging the volume of requests and communications they manage. As well as often wondering how the staff keep up with the demands and offered sincere gratitude, thanking them warmly for their continued dedication.

This area of discussion concluded by reiterating that filling the Council's vacant seats would significantly enhance its capacity and strengthen the impact of its work moving forward.

### **Organizational Transition and Growing Pains**

It was reflected on the broader context of organizational change, noting that Council is experiencing a period of "growing pains" following the departure of long-standing leaders. Additionally described was this transition as creating an "extreme vacuum" — a loss of institutional knowledge, deep connections, and informal pathways for getting things done, which has impacted Council's momentum.

Further highlighted that other Councils are experiencing similar challenges as they adjust to leadership changes and attempts to reestablish their footing. These comparisons suggest that GACEC's current struggles are not unique, but rather part of a broader trend among advisory bodies navigating leadership turnover.

Despite the challenges, Council is now in a better position to move forward. Additionally, confidence was expressed in the Director's leadership, noting that she has been in her role long enough to be both comfortable and effective in providing direction and support. Appreciation was shared for the dedication and effectiveness of the staff and acknowledged the Chair's contributions and ideas as valuable to Council's progress.

Additionally, it was noted how virtual formats have changed the dynamics of meetings. In-person conversations that used to occur before or after meetings, often triggering ideas, reflections, or follow-ups are largely missing. These informal moments were important for processing discussions and fostering collaboration, and their absence has impacted how ideas are generated and shared.

In closing, it was acknowledged that progress may not be happening as quickly as desired but emphasized that part of the challenge is adjusting to a new reality, both in terms of leadership and the evolving nature of engagement.

### **Council Processes, Forms, and Functionality**

Several concerns were shared regarding the functionality and structure of Council's internal processes, particularly those related to documentation and the use of time.

It was pointed out that the goal forms and reporting forms are confusing and overly complex. The reporting form used after meetings includes sections that are largely irrelevant, with an estimated 80% of it going unused. Similarly, the goal forms were described as excessively long and difficult to complete.

Additionally emphasized was that, as an advisory Council to the Department of Education (DOE), efforts should begin by focusing more clearly on DOE-related topics. The Council's role is not to make policy changes, but to advise, follow developments, provide comments, and reflect that in official records and the final report.

Further expressed was the concern that Council spends too much time onboarding, reviewing processes, and re-identifying priorities, which detracts from meaningful discussion and productivity. There was a sense that members' time is not treated as valuable, especially considering Council is composed of volunteers. While members are told the expected time commitment is about 10 hours per month, the actual workload often feels more like 20 hours or more, which many feel is unreasonable.

The speaker also commented on committee participation challenges and stressed that low participation limits progress. It was acknowledged that virtual access has improved the ability to attend more meetings, but still, the overall system can feel overwhelming, especially for volunteers. They felt strongly that Council's work has been made more complicated than necessary, and a simpler, more focused approach would help reclaim time and improve outcomes.

Finally, pointed out was that Council should be more aware of legislative activity that impacts children and education. Further referenced were upcoming meetings, such as IRMC (Interagency Resource Management Committee), and topics like foster care and school transportation, which directly affect the populations that Council is intended to serve. These issues should be more intentionally integrated into the Council's ongoing work.

### **Member Engagement and Strategic Alignment**

Perceptions of Council engagement have shifted over time. Initially, the understanding of participation was more general, but came to realize that member engagement is largely driven by personal or professional interests and areas of passion or expertise that each member brings with them.

It was noted that, for example, some members have a strong interest in early childhood, while others are drawn to legal issues, legislative advocacy, or transition services for youth aging out of support systems. Member capacity includes background in classroom management, positive behavior supports, discipline, and social-emotional learning, emphasizing how these areas influence children's emotional regulation and self-control.

It was further suggested that Council productivity could be enhanced by having clear external direction from leadership, particularly from the Department of Education. Delaware's Special Education Director was commended for being more transparent than others in the past but expressed a desire for even more communication around where advice and collaboration from the Council is most needed. It was further proposed that leadership explicitly state the challenges they're facing, and in turn, invite members to contribute where their skills and interests align. This approach could help existing members engage more meaningfully and serve as a strategy to recruit new members by showing how their expertise could be put to use. The member pointed out that data already shared, such as indicator reports presented by Delaware's Special Education Director, demonstrate existing needs. This discussion concluded by emphasizing that while council members should not be overwhelmed, engagement must be driven by personal passion. The Council member viewed this as the most sustainable and effective way to ensure meaningful contributions to the Council's work.

### **Member Reflections on Council Morale, Progress, and Participation**

Staff responded to earlier member comments with appreciation for the open and honest dialogue, particularly acknowledging the difficult reflections shared by members, and stated that it was deeply concerning to hear that members are feeling demoralized by Council's current outputs, and that such sentiments are, in themselves, demoralizing to hear. Additionally expressed were empathy and concern for those who are struggling with how Council's work is unfolding. Drawing on long-standing experience with Council, staff noted that this is not the first time Council has faced challenges, and that periods of growing pains are part of its history.

While recognizing that things may not be progressing at the pace or in the way some members would prefer, there was emphasis that staff believe progress is being made. Importantly, in discussion it reminded the group that the Council is still providing a valuable service to the state and to the children of Delaware, and that this central mission should not be lost amid frustrations.

Staff also reiterated the importance of bringing in new, committed members — individuals who are willing to put in the time, respond in a timely manner, and help manage the Council's significant workload. It was further emphasized the long-standing need to streamline responsibilities and organize people more effectively to address priority areas.

In closing, discussion expressed gratitude to all current members and volunteers, acknowledging the many personal and professional demands they juggle, and thanked those who are actively contributing and reaffirmed the value of the work being done.

### **Enhancing Council-DDOE Collaboration & Meaningful Data Discussions**

Delaware's Special Education Director expressed appreciation for the discussion and stated that, despite not feeling well and considering signing off earlier in the evening, he was glad he stayed on. Further shared was that the last hour of the meeting had been one of the most meaningful conversations he had experienced with Council in quite some time.

Reflecting on the Council's recent work and his time in the position, he acknowledged efforts to shift the direction of the Council's engagement, thanked members for their ongoing feedback and collaboration.

Delaware's Special Education Director referred back to a prior small-group discussion regarding procedural safeguards, in which members had asked what kind of feedback DDOE was looking for, and clarified that DDOE is not seeking legal or technical analysis from Council members — that aspect is already addressed internally by legal teams. Rather, the Department needs insights that reflect whether the information and policies make sense to families, parents, and students. The Council's lived experiences and diverse perspectives are uniquely valuable in ensuring policies are understandable, accessible, and meaningful to the people they affect.

Delaware's Special Education Director emphasized the importance of moving beyond simply reporting on federal indicators, such as those within the Annual Performance Report (APR), and instead having deeper, more strategic conversations about the improvement activities connected to those indicators. Delaware's Special Education Director proposed revisiting an older model from 15–20 years ago, when strategies and actions were embedded directly into the APR and discussed more collaboratively, and gave the example of grouping or batching related indicators, such as:

- Indicator 1: Graduation Rate
- Indicator 2: Dropout Rate
- Indicator 13: Secondary Transition (IEP compliance)
- Indicator 14: Post-School Outcomes

Delaware's Special Education Director suggested using these batches as the basis for focused, strategy-driven discussions where DDOE could present the efforts being implemented at the local education agency (LEA) level to address gaps or improve outcomes. In turn, the Council could offer feedback on whether those efforts are on the right track or whether adjustments should be considered.

Delaware's Special Education Director concluded by recommending that this intentional, collaborative approach be incorporated moving forward, to make the Council's advisory role more practical, aligned, and impactful.

**ADJOURNMENT:** The meeting was adjourned at 8:28 pm.