



GOVERNOR'S ADVISORY COUNCIL FOR EXCEPTIONAL CITIZENS (GACEC)
Leadership Committee Meeting
6:00 PM, April 2, 2026
VIRTUAL MEETING

MEMBERS PRESENT: Al Cavalier, Bill Doolittle, Tika Hartsock, Kristina Horton, Jessica Heesh Mensack, Molly Merrill, Trenee Parker, Erika Powell, and Jennifer Pulcinella.

STAFF PRESENT: Pam Weir/Executive Director and Theresa Moore/Operational Support Specialist

GUESTS PRESENT: None

MEMBERS ABSENT: Beth Mineo

ADMINISTRATIVE ACTIONS:

Bill called the meeting to order at 6:01 pm.

PUBLIC COMMENT: No public comment tonight

MOTIONS:

Motion: Approve the sending of the letter and direct the authors to consider the discussion tonight and make any adjustments. Consistent with the discussion tonight, before sending it?

- (This is in reference to the CPAC letter from the Individuals with Complex Medical Conditions and Education Ad Hoc Committee)
 - Moved by: Bill Doolittle
 - Seconded by: Molly Merrill
- Vote:
 - No objections.
- Result: Motion carried.

DISCUSSION:

1. CPAC Data Request Discussion

- The group discussed whether to direct a data inquiry to CPAC (Child Protection and Advocacy Committee) or DOE (Department of Education).
 - Al and Jessica clarified the intent is **not to request raw DOE data**, but to determine whether CPAC's **existing organized data systems** can answer questions about children with complex medical conditions.
 - DOE had previously been approached without success.
 - CPAC may provide broader cross-agency insights (e.g., DSCYF, Medicaid), though its scope may be limited primarily to foster care populations.
 - **Decision:** Proceed with sending a **collaborative inquiry letter to CPAC**, while notifying DOE of the effort.
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2. CPAC Data Access & Scope

- Discussion clarified limitations of CPAC's data (primarily foster care).
 - Identified gaps in current dashboards, particularly regarding **medical complexity indicators**.
 - Consideration of additional data sources:
 - DSCYF systems
 - Medicaid data
 - **Next Step:** Explore feasibility of cross-agency data integration.
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3. Medicaid Data Collection Expansion

- The group discussed expanding Medicaid data collection for children in foster care beyond the current scope of the CPAC dashboard. Trenae explained that while most foster children have state Medicaid or Medicare through SSI, gathering data for youth in juvenile justice placements might be challenging due to different custody arrangements and data privacy restrictions. The team considered reaching out to the Division of Management Support Services and potentially broadening the data collection to include youth in juvenile justice custody. Bill moved to authorize sending the letter to CPAC with instructions for the authors to consider the discussion and make adjustments before sending it.
 - **Action:** Consider outreach to Division of Management Support Services.
 - **Motion:** Approved sending CPAC letter with revisions based on discussion.
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4. DOE Document Feedback

- Agreed to request a **markup summary** of changes to the dispute resolution documents from DOE.
 - Markup summary **or**

- Confirmation that no changes were made from prior version
 - Feedback will include:
 - Parent perspectives
 - Technical/legal analysis
 - **Timeline:**
 - Submit feedback by **April 21 Council meeting** or **May 1 deadline**, depending on DOE response.
 - **Action:** Pam to draft request letter.
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5. Legislative Draft Review Planning

- Five pre-draft legislative topics to be reviewed.
 - **Deadline:** April 10
 - **Plan:**
 - Pam to distribute topics to Council
 - Office hours scheduled (Tues–Thurs)
 - Members to **volunteer for topic ownership**
 - Open participation encouraged
 - Bill to coordinate logistics.
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6. FOIA & Strategic Planning

- FOIA system noted as inefficient but **no anticipated cost impact** to Council.
 - (DOE) Secretary to present **strategic plan** at April 21 meeting.
 - Council to review with emphasis on **special education priorities**.
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7. Organizational Planning & Retreat

- Identified challenges:
 - Communication gaps
 - Ineffective retreat formats
- Proposed:
 - Summer planning session
 - Revised retreat structure
 - Possible alignment with **statewide professional development (October)**
- Opportunity identified for **legislator training on disability issues**.

8. IDEA Duties Implementation

- Follow-up from meeting with leadership on IDEA responsibilities.
 - Progress noted, but further clarification needed.
 - **Action:** Bill to draft follow-up letter outlining proactive responsibilities.
 - **Plan:** Quarterly meetings (or more frequently if needed).
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ADJOURNMENT:

The meeting was officially adjourned at 7:15 pm.

NEW ACTION ITEMS:

- Jessica/ICMCE authors: Review the CPAC letter based on tonight's discussion and make any necessary adjustments before sending; send updated version to Pam by Tuesday or Wednesday
- Pam: Send CPAC letter (after receiving from Jessica) to Kelly Ensslin and Mary Dugan, and notify DOE leadership (Michael Saylor, Dr. Monica Gant) that the letter is being sent
- Pam: Send out the five pre-draft legislation topic areas to full Council
- Pam: Set up office hours next week (Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday) for Council members to review and discuss the five pre-draft legislation areas
- Council members: Review the five pre-draft legislation topics by end of weekend and indicate which areas they will engage with
- Bill: Write thank you letter to Chief of Staff and further explain concept of proactive oversight
- Jessica: Send one-pager (cover letter removed) of ICMCE document to Pam for distribution to Dale, Michael and Monica at DOE
- Bill: Write brief to sponsors of House Bills 300 and 301 expressing concerns about criminalization of student behavior
- Tika: Send reminder about elections for upcoming meeting on the 21st