

WAPSD

Wyoming Advisory Panel for Students with Disabilities

2015-2016 ANNUAL REPORT

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MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIRPERSON

It has been an honor to serve as the chairperson of the Wyoming Advisory Panel for Students with Disabilities (WAPSD). The strength of this panel is in the passion of the panel members who represent diverse interests. We started the year with each panel member giving their “two cents worth,” or what they need from this panel to continue participating. This resulted in discussion and recommendations regarding:

1. Family Engagement
2. Screening and Eligibility
3. Stakeholder Communication
4. Transition Planning

It has been a priority of this panel to continue our parent and student representation. This year we were fortunate to add the insight of a high school student with special needs. The perspectives of parents and students on our panel adds much depth and meaning to our conversations about “where the rubber meets the road.”

Communication and Education with our State and Local Legislators is vital to solving key challenges for students with disabilities. WE were fortunate to have two legislators attend our meetings last year to listen and to share their insights. This year, we had the unique privilege of communicating with the two candidates for Superintendent of Public Instruction, Jillian Balow and Mike Ceballos. The dialogue helped inform “our” knowledge and “theirs”. We continued to provide members with a tour the Capitol and legislative proceedings with the goal of education and improving advocacy efforts for our students. The panel has realized and requested the need for WDE to provide updates on bills and topics moving through the legislature. In the past, members tried to tackle this challenge and it proved to be very difficult. With this change, the WAPSD panel members will be able to do their job in providing advice and guidance in important legislative areas.

In order to advise the WDE, The panel increased their knowledge base through various presentations. The Wyoming Department of Education (WDE)/Behavioral Health Division provided us with updates on the State Systemic Improvement Plan and Annual Performance Report, (6 year strategic plan to the federal government for special education priorities). The Federal Technical Assistance Provider, Mountain Plains Regional Resource Center, delivered our new members with an orientation including the purpose and function of the panel. Several post-secondary entities provided information regarding the successes and challenges with their students. WDE leadership provided insight on the priorities of the new Superintendent of Public Instruction, Jillian Balow, as well as a listening ear to what this panel needs from WDE to become more effective in the coming years. Important information and perspectives were shared during a joint meeting with our State Early Intervention Council. These presentations have helped the panel to look at our role from a systems perspective.

The panel has increased their visibility and communication of panel purpose by providing a presence at the Mega Conference, Wyoming Leadership Symposium, School Improvement Conference and through Facebook posts.

I have thoroughly enjoyed the challenges and rewards of serving as chairperson of the advisory panel. The WDE leadership changed hands during the year. The State Superintendent changed from Cindy Hill to Jillian Balow. The State Special Education position was vacant for approximately 6 months during this past year. I would like to thank Tiffany Dobler for her role as Special Education Director for the short time she was there as well as Leslie Bechtel Van Orman and Janine Cole for stepping up in Tiffany's absence. I am excited for our state with the addition of Lisa Weigel as the New Special Education Director. Her knowledge of Special Education in the state and the needs of our students has already provided the leadership and guidance necessary to move this state and our panel forward in a professional and positive direction. A very special thank you is reserved for Barb Yates, who retired this year after providing assistance to this panel since 2003. She is a kind, gentle and professional achiever who has touched many hearts and whose presence will never be forgotten.

The students in our great state of Wyoming are fortunate to have this special group representing their interests on this panel. I leave this panel in the very capable hands of Donna Crandall and I thank you for the opportunity to serve.

Lori Morrow

WAPSD Panel Chair

MISSION & VISION

The mission of WAPSD, as a diverse group, is to raise a common voice to advise the State Superintendent of Public Instruction on the unmet needs of the students with disabilities by advocating for and commenting on the improvement of education opportunities.

The vision of the WAPSD is to provide guidance on education policies for all students with disabilities that create opportunities for them to become compassionate, productive and contributing citizens of their communities.

WAPSD achieves the above by providing the following functions, as outlined by Congress:

- Advise the State Education Agency of unmet needs within the State in the education of children and youth with disabilities (CFR300.169(a))
- Comment publicly on any rules or regulations proposed by the State regarding the education of children with disabilities (CFR300.169(b))
- Advise the State Education Agency in developing evaluations and reporting on the data to the Secretary under 618 (CFR300.169(c))
- Advise the State Education Agency in developing corrective action plans to address findings in identified federal monitoring reports (CFR300.169(d))
- Advise the State Education Agency in developing and implementing policies relating to the coordination of services for children with disabilities (CFR300.169(e))
- Waiver of nonsupplant requirement. State must consult with Advisory Panel regarding provisions of FAPE (CFR300.164(c)(4))

ABOUT THE PANEL

The purpose of the Wyoming Advisory Panel for Students with Disabilities (WAPSD) is to advise the Director of the Wyoming Department of Education in ways that promote services for children and youth with disabilities. The Wyoming Advisory Panel exists under the authority of the Code of Federal Regulations. The Panel shall serve as a forum by which issues and benefits regarding current and potential services to individuals with disabilities may be discussed by consumer, public, private, professional, and lay interests.

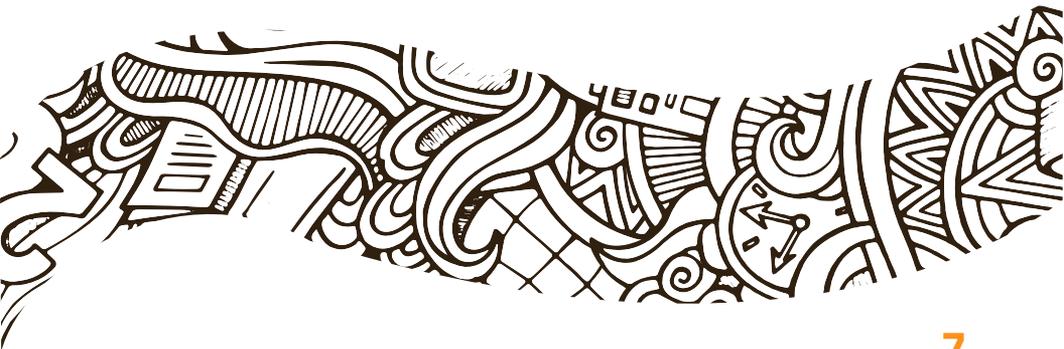
In order to promote issues that will help facilitate services for students with disabilities, the panel identifies barriers and provides advice related to the provision of quality educational services. The panel receives public comment; provides comments on special education rules and regulations; sets priorities; and engages in a variety of educational and public awareness activities around the state.

The panel is effective because of the diversity of members and the passion the members bring to each issue. There continues to be improvement in commitment, desire to serve, enthusiasm and participation in panel work and action. One of the most significant contributions each panel member brings to the panel is his/her representation of a specific constituency.

PANEL FUNCTIONS

A critical component that contributes to the success of the panel is ongoing implementation of the panel functions as outlined in the Individuals with Disabilities Act of 2004, including:

- Advise the State Education Agency (SEA) of un-met needs within the State in the education of children with disabilities.
- Comment publicly on any rules or regulations proposed by the State regarding the education of children with disabilities
- Advise the SEA in developing evaluations and reporting on data to the Secretary under Section 618 of the Act.
- Advise the SEA in developing corrective action plans to address findings identified in federal monitoring reports under Part B of the Act.
- Advise the SEA in developing and implementing policies relating to the coordination of services for children with disabilities.
- Advise on services to eligible students with disabilities in adult prisons. The advisory panel shall also advise on the education of eligible students with disabilities to have been convicted and incarcerated in adult prisons.
- Review any final due process hearing findings and decisions.



PANEL MEMBERS 2015

Donna J. Crandall

Tobey Cass

Randon Lawrence

Jeff Wasserburger

Kathy Escobedo

Jami Clifford

Cadence Johnson

Ann Armel

Malissa Lance

Patrick Lane

Jeffrey Lamb

Lori Morrow

Shannon Buller

Betty Abbott

Susan Abernathy

Andrea Clubb

J.P. Denning

Joe Haney

Brent Heuer

Tina Kirlin

Vickie McMurry

Brianna Sands

Laurie Scharles

Noah Scharles

Anedra Selley

Rebecca Walk

Steve Wake

Pam Zamora

CONFERENCES/TRAININGS ATTENDED

- Adult Basic Education Directors Median and Training
- AHEAD Conference Development
- CEA Leadership Forum
- CEA National Conference
- Correctional Education Association National Conference
- Crisis Prevention Intervention
- DaSy/ECTA Conference
- Employment First Summit
- Affiliation of WASEA with CASE. Help Me Grow Panel
- Jason Foundation Suicide Prevention
- Law Review Conference,
- LRP Conference-Special Education Law
- Mayor's Council for Individuals with Disabilities Employment Fair
- National Disability Policy Seminar
- OSEP Leadership Conference 2015
- Parent Information Center (PIC) Conference
- Perkins Trainings
- Secondary Schools Principals Annual Conference
- WASEA Fall & Spring
- WDE Special Education Leadership Training
- WGCD Youth Leadership Forum (YLF)
- WGCD-MEGA Conference
- Wyoming Employability Training
- Wyoming Leadership Conference 2015
- Wyoming School Improvement Spring & Fall
- Wyoming School Psychologist Conference

PANEL MEMBER CONTRIBUTIONS

The following are just a few contributions from individual panel members during the 2013-2014 school years:

Professional Memberships/Group Affiliations:

- Administrators (WASEA)
- Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD)
- Certified Rehabilitation Counselor
- Child Developmental Services of Wyoming
- Correctional Education Association Executive Board Member
- Council for Exceptional Children (CEC)
- Council of Administrators of Special Education (CASE)
- Developmental Disabilities (AAIDD)
- Developmental Disabilities Advisory Council
- Division for Early Childhood (DEC)
- Early Intervention Council (EIC)
- Eastern Laramie County Education Association
- Governor's Council on Developmental Disabilities
- High School Equivalency National Conference
- National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC)
- National Board Certified Teacher
- National Correctional Education Association – Vice President
- PTSB Member
- Society for Disability Studies
- WIND Advisory Council/COP-T
- Wyoming Association of Special Education
- Wyoming Education Association

WYOMING DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Lisa Weigel

State Special Education Director
August 2012-Present

Kodi Gerhold

Panel Secretary

Missy White

Panel Facilitator

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

For further information about the Wyoming Advisory Panel for Students with Disabilities, please contact us at wapsdchair@gmail.com or visit us online at www.edu.wyoming.gov/programs/special-education-wapsd.aspx

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