



Special Needs Subcommittee Meeting Minutes for June 22nd, 2010

12:00-3:00pm

Ohio School Boards Association
8050 North High Street
Columbus, OH 43235

Members in Attendance

Robyn Essman, Chair
Thomas Babb
David Huelsman
Jan Kennedy
James McClure
Dr. Jan Osborn
Dr. Roger Saurer

Members Not in Attendance

Dayvenia Chesney
State Rep. Randy Gardner
Ann Sheldon

Staff

Dr. Dan Fleck
Daria Shams
Emily Nemeth
Carey McDonald

Opening

Chair Essman began the meeting at 12:07p.m. and asked for approval of the minutes. Mr. Babb moved to approve the minutes, the motion was seconded by Dr. Saurer and approved without objection.

Mr. Babb provided a formal statement from Constellation Schools (available on the Council's document sharing site at <http://groups.google.com/group/sfaccdocshare>).

English Language Learner (ELL) Education Discussion

Dr. Saurer facilitated a discussion regarding the funding goals for ELL education and the components of Ohio's EBM which address ELL funding. Dr. Saurer recognized two individuals who aided in his presentation: Dr. Fleck, Educational Employee Consultant, Educational Employee Consultant at Ohio Department of Education (ODE) and Carol Striskovic, TESOL certified teacher in Mentor Public Schools.

Dr. Saurer provided a handout to members on identifying and assessing students whose home/native language is not English, providing supplemental language support services for students identified as ELL, providing qualified staff and equitable resources for programming, and monitoring and evaluating programs on an ongoing basis. Dr. Saurer noted there is not a large lobbying statewide group for ELL education capable of lobbying and coordination activities, unlike other special needs groups.

Subcommittee members considered two ways to fund ELL education: 1) base funding on data collected from a cost-based study of school districts, or 2) create funding factors or multipliers, similar to gifted and special education.

Ms. Striskovic talked about her experience as an in-service, TESOL certified teacher. She highlighted the specific needs of ELL students in her school setting and the guidelines she is required to follow in working with this population. Dr. Saurer added there is a high demand for TESOL certified teachers, but that are not enough teachers to meet the need.



ODE's ELL Advisory Council, chaired by Dr. Fleck, will be asked to investigate actual expenditures being spent at the district level and reflect upon the costs identified by the subcommittee. Subcommittee members discussed the value of considering any findings in the advisory committee's research, as this information will not be available until the ELL Advisory Council members have the time to collect the data.

The subcommittee recommended that members of the School Funding Advisory Council formally solicit the feedback of professionals working in special needs areas regarding any recommendations made in the subcommittee's final report.

Special Needs Discussion

The subcommittee discussed Ohio's EBM funding component for special education and considered the differences between standard-based costs versus actual expenditures. The subcommittee members continued to express their desire to reconsider the ratio of 1:20, which is currently a funding component in Ohio's EBM.

Subcommittee members posed the question of who should be responsible for recalculating the special education weights. Members expressed an interest in a collaborative effort between OCECD, ODE and professional staff.

Subcommittee members recommended a comprehensive study of special education weights which prioritizes the federal mandate: placement neutral funding.

Closing

Chair Essman reviewed the format of the subcommittee report and encouraged members to think about how the subcommittee's work could be presented before all members of the School Funding Advisory Council. Dr. Osborn moved to close the meeting and was seconded by Ms. Kennedy, and the meeting was adjourned at 3:08pm.