



State Advisory Council on Special Education (SACSE)

Annual Summary
2023 – 2024

Message from the Chair

C.J. Webb

SACSE had a large number of new members for this year. Time was initially spent talking about the advisory council process and connecting new members with long-standing members to mentor and provide guidance throughout the year. New members sometimes grapple with their role within the council and sharing their voice, and the Executive Committee discussed connecting new members with existing members to help ease them into the process. From those I talked with, this was a helpful process.

The work of SACSE ebbs and flows, based on local community needs, districts' needs, and Oregon's needs. As the new Chair, finding the balance with the roles of the council, membership, and the community has been fairly smooth due to the support and guidance from the previous Chair, Heater Olivier, and SACSEs facilitator, Jeremy Wells. The collaboration worked to guide our meetings and the times between meetings to go smoothly and stay focused on our mission and goals.

Some of the highlights during the past year are:

- Membership mentorship to ensure everyone has their voice at the table.
- Work groups were developed to dive into a topic to see if SACSE should provide advice to ODE.
- Beginning to diversify the membership to people who do not use English as their first language.
- Continued partnership with State Interagency Coordinating Council.
- Members reaching out to discuss constituency reports as awareness is the first step to submitting them

The challenges in education for students with disabilities continue, and SACSE is a way to assure all challenges are addressed in the best way possible to have students grow and learn to their capacity.

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Federal Guidelines for SACSE

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) requires that each State establish and maintain an advisory panel for the *purpose of advising the State special education staff regarding the education of eligible children with disabilities*. Federal regulations define the responsibilities of the State Advisory Panel as follows:

The advisory panel must –

- a) Advise the SEA of unmet needs within the State in the education of children with disabilities;
- b) Comment publicly on any rules or regulations proposed by the State regarding the education of children with disabilities;
- c) Advise the SEA in developing evaluations and reporting on data to the Secretary under Section 618 of the Act;
- d) Advise the SEA in developing corrective action plans to address findings identified in Federal monitoring reports under Part B of the Act; and
- e) Advise the SEA in developing and implementing policies relating to the coordination of services for children with disabilities.

Purpose of SACSE

To provide policy guidance with respect to special education and related services for children with disabilities in the State (34 CFR 300.167).

Function of SACSE

Advise the State of unmet needs in the education of children with disabilities, comment publicly on any rules or regulations proposed by the State regarding the education of students with disabilities, advise the State in developing evaluations and reporting data to the U.S. Office of Special Education, advise the State in developing corrective action plans to address findings identified in federal monitoring reports and advise the State in developing and implementing services for children with disabilities (34 CFR 300.169).

Subcommittee Work

Executive Committee

Responsibilities

The purpose of the Executive Committee is to review the bylaws annually, review and set the agenda for each meeting of the council, and any other administrative functions. Executive Committee members are the Council's Officers (Chairperson, Chair-Elect, and Past Chair) and one Council representative.

Executive Goal:

The Executive Committee will increase member participation, retention, and outreach by utilizing available technology. (Measurement: an increase of constituent reports and public comments at meetings of at least one per meeting)

Highlights 2023-2024

Prior to the first meeting, the Chair reached out to membership to ask about areas that have significance that membership would either be concerned with, interested in hearing more about, or had some significance for our role as an advisory council.

A few of those topics were:

- Child and Family Behavioral Health unit at OHA has regular topics that come up in regard to special education and children with special health care needs, and children and both visible and invisible disabilities. Some examples given were:
 - Need for stigma reduction around children who “disrupt classrooms with their behaviors”
 - The intersection of racism and behavior and how bias impacts exclusionary discipline practices, and the higher rates impacts students of color and receiving special education services
 - Language barrier to Spanish-speaking families with special education needs and refusal to accept Mexican Doctor's information
 - The need for families to have easy access to resource lists.

Executive Committee continued

- Segregated Special Education classrooms not teaching reading, decision making, and financial math skills, leaving students/youth dependent on others.
- Building a shared understanding of Long-Term Care and Treatment (LTCT) Education Programs
 - Funding
 - Existing programs across Oregon
 - Eligible vs Non-Eligible programs
 - A day in the life of a student in a treatment program...
 - How students access these programs (insurance, district placements, OHA, etc.)
- Identifying misunderstandings or misconceptions of treatment program options
- Identifying gaps in the system
- Ultimate goal: Recommendations for ODE/OHA/DHS and other state partners or legislators to address gaps and misinformation

The latter point guided many discussions throughout the year.

- Constituency reports: information shared at September 2023 meeting; clarifications about the form in November 2023; one Constituency Report about foster kids in February 2024; and discussion about getting more at the May 2024 meeting.
- Public comments: information shared at September 2023 meeting; no public comments in November 2023, February 2024, or May 2024.

Public Policy Committee

Responsibilities

The purpose of this committee is to follow legislative activity on bills that may affect special education and report to SACSE on the effects and progress of identified bills. This committee can advise SACSE on the outcome of the bills. Bylaws updated annually.

Goal:

The Public Policy Committee will increase feedback from the SACSE members and public stakeholders on ODE proposed rules and regulations, which address unmet needs in the education of children with disabilities. Rethink process for rule/regulation advisement to ensure SACSE fulfills the obligation to provide feedback on proposed rules, policies, and regulations (Increase comment on rules and regulations to at least once per meeting each year documented through meeting minutes).

Highlights 2023-2024

This committee had a leadership change and during this short session had less opportunity to address specific bills. They discussed their purpose and supported needed from ODE to track bills throughout the legislative sessions. ODE provides SACSE with bill tracking information. This bill tracking guides the work they will do for the current year.

Membership Committee

Responsibilities

The purpose of this committee is to ensure council membership in accordance with federal and state requirements.

Goal:

The Membership Committee will recruit members representing individuals who experience disabilities, members representing communities of color, traditionally marginalized individuals, and parents of children with a disability (specifically father figures) to apply to and become members of SACSE in an effort to match the diverse communities in Oregon. Additionally, the membership committee will encourage student voices through Constituency Reports. (Measurements: an increase of membership to include 51% (at a minimum, parents of children with disabilities and individuals with disabilities representing the geographic and ethnic diversity of the state documented in the membership roster, meeting minutes documenting each member's attendance at $\frac{3}{4}$ meetings per year)

Highlights 2023-2024

This committee focused on SACSE membership throughout the state. Some areas of the state only have one member or have a member that will be termed out. Membership committee members reviewed the "zone" document and took on tasks to reach out to people in those counties. This committee also requested other language of the membership flyer and application to be posted on the SACSE webpage.

Meet the SACSE Membership

Name	Representation and Affiliation
Adam Henning	Juvenile Corrections Agency Representative OYA
Bryan Cichy-Parker	Associate Professor of Special Education at Pacific University
C.J. Webb	ODHS/Youth Representative – Vocational Rehabilitation
Callie Kackley	Parent
Carrie Salehiamin	Children’s Policy Analyst, ODHS-ODDS
Catherine Stelzer	ODHS/Child Welfare Program Representative
Christy Zeringue	Department of Corrections
Damaris Elix	Parent
Elaine Fox	Administrator
Erica Gordon	Parent
Fran Pearson	OHA/Health System Division
Heather Olivier	Parent
Holly Kerns	Parent
Jamie Chambers	Parent
Kevin Blanco	Parent
Kim Brick	Parent
Lena Ajay	Parent
Lydia Dennehy	Parent
Meghan Nilsen	Teacher
Melissa Glover	Administrator
Maya Nair	Person with a Disability
Rachel Hampton	Administrator
Stacy Fields	Parent
Stephanie Boyd	Parent
TBD	McKinney-Vento Representative
Oregon Department of Education Staff	
Eric Wells	Director, Office of Enhancing Student Opportunities
Jeremy Wells	ODE SACSE Facilitator

External Committee

SACSE members were appointed to the following committees:

- State Interagency Coordinating Council
- Dispute Resolution Committee
- Parent Survey
- Oregon Early Childhood Inclusion State Leadership Team

Summary of Accomplishments

A full text of SACSE Minutes for 2023-2024 can be found [here](#).

Focus Area A: Unmet Needs of Children with Disabilities	
Meetings	Discussions
From September 21, 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• New member welcome and discussion about taking time to learn about the advisement role and working with other SACSE members to gain knowledge of our process.• Information provided about the Regional Technical Assistance Providers (RTAP) for new Special Education Directors as there was 70% turnover of Special Education Directors over the last few years.• SB 819 information provided along with a discussion about some of the difficulties around getting parent consent from both the parent and district point of view. Member shared loss of care for students who need homebound services• Discussion about equity in paperwork and a vote occurred to have a few members draft a letter for the Executive Team to consider• Decision made to focus on mental health for students during the joint meeting with State Interagency Coordinating Council (SICC) and SACSE.• Long-term care and treatment education programs. SACSE Members spoke around the need for more support and how the need for partnership with organizations like OHA

Focus Area A: Unmet Needs of Children with Disabilities

Meetings

Discussions

From Joint meeting, November 17, 2023

- State Interagency Coordinating Council (SICC) and SACSE have a joint meeting to collaborate on topics that either crossover our respected children/student age group or work on goals to provide advisement to ODE.
- From ODE, both councils heard about the implementation of IDEA and recent related legislation such as Manifestation Determination and Addressing Information Removal of Students with Disabilities.
 - ODE is working on Early Intervention/Early Childhood Special Education (EI/ECSE) General Supervision Manual, and Guidance.
 - The Office of Enhancing Student Opportunities (OESO) implementations
- Childcare Development Fund State Plan Engagement – Raise Up Oregon 2.0
 - Presented by Gabriel Hernandez, Karina Guzman-Ortiz, and Jordan Pargeter
 - Department of Early Learning and Care is working on strategic plan (2024-2028) and in engagement phase with community partners
 - Funding and policy implications may arise
 - SICC and SACSE review of goals and how to inform implications from these councils
- Long-Term Care and Treatment (LTCT) Education Programs
 - Presented by Sam Ko, Oregon Department of Education, Melissa Glover, Salem Keizer School District, and Amy Marquardt-Dustin
 - Presentation included source of funding, counties with services (16 of 36 Oregon counties), and specific locations and their services
 - Success: funding stabilized, Career Technical Education available, and more
 - Challenges: closure of LTCT programs from 47 in 2015 to 29 in 2023, not all funded by ODE, hard keeping qualified staff, and more
 - A long-standing issue with students accessing to these services
 - Many slides with success at various program were provided
- SACSE Work Session:
 - Discussed possible work group on the LTCT program topic
 - Unmet need of students with SB819 for those attending an online school (technical piece)

Focus Area A: Unmet Needs of Children with Disabilities

Meetings

Discussions

From
February
15, 2024

- Review of SB 992 process, implementation and information about the specific graduation requirements and diploma types.
 - Oregon allows for three diplomas and changes the alternative certificate to a certificate of attendance.
 - Many Oregon Revised Statutes (ORS) were modified due to SB 992
- Update about Parent Survey
 - The survey was translated into 13 languages versus two with the previous one
- The Mental Health subgroup met between meetings and reported that lack of beds is not the reason students cannot access hospital care. SACSE will keep this on the agenda to explore what advice to provide ODE.
- SB 819 subgroup disbanded as changes occurred to address some of the concerns.
- Information about the changes from the long-standing Youth Transition Program with VR to a Pre-Employment Transition Services Agreement.
- Discussion about options for joint goals with SICC

From May
16, 2024
(notes not
approved
until Sept.
2024)

- State School Fund and Special Education
 - Presented by Michael Wiltfong (ODE)
 - Presentation on special education funding (state and federal overview).
- Family network, Central Oregon Disability Support Network (CODSN) provided examples of parent support resources as well as their unique multi-county approach with families
- Culture of Care – Culture Care Coach: The Care Team with High Desert Educational School District presentation about the Summer Institute as well as accomplishments from the previous year.
- Oregon Adaptive Sports Program (Sisters, Oregon) presented on Oregon adaptive sports. A student presented on their experience and now love of skiing and other sports.
- Travel meeting: Bend, Oregon
 - Locations visited: Lava Ridge Elementary School (an inclusive school program) in Bend, Oregon, and StepUP program/schooling (trauma-informed approach to school) in Redmond, Oregon