

The Arc Michigan Education Committee
Meeting Minutes
June 6, 2024

The meeting came to order at 10:00 am via Zoom.

Present: Andrea Beachnau, Kelsey Biswanger, Michelle Driscoll, Kim Faiman, Hayley Cason, Grobbel, Kenya Harper, Emily Henderson, Sherry Kenworthy, Sue Lind, Tina Miller, Khalilah Montgomery, Darlene Heard-Thomas, Debbie Whitford.

Approval of Meeting Minutes: Meeting minutes from May were previously sent out to committee members and approved with no changes.

Governmental Affairs/Legislative Update:

Emily Henderson, Governmental Affairs Consultant and Lobbyist for Arc Michigan with McCall Hamilton.

There is not a lot going on legislatively. HB5549 is the new version of the school safety bill. Members from the Arc MI Education and Governmental Affairs Committees met with the bill sponsor, Representative Kelly Breen. She was open to receiving our recommendations for changes to the bill. Haven't received any updates from Representative Breen. She could not promise changes due to legislative makeup and deadlines.

Conferees (6 members chosen to finalize budget). Budget is a priority so that is why bills are moving slow. Budget should be done by July 1.

General funds have more money than estimated in January. School Aid funds are down \$60million. Governor Whitmer proposed universal pre-k and free lunches. Just keeping an eye out of what budget will be at this point.

House members will be campaigning all summer. Election year dictating schedules this year! Emily will share more updates at the Arc MI Policy Seminar in June.

SEAC Report Summary:

Kelsey Biswanger, Arc Michigan SEAC Representative

LEGISLATIVE UPDATE - Dr. Sheryl Kennedy, MDE Legislative Liaison

- *Literacy/Dyslexia package has worked its way passed the Senate and on 6/4 they had their first hearing in the House Education Committee and next hearing is scheduled for 6/11/24*
 - *Teri Rink: the processes within the bills are best practices effective for children who are struggling to read, but should not be used as a delay to FAPE—a special education evaluation should still be done if a child is struggling even if the district is doing said processes*
- *Impact of the upcoming elections*

**PRIORITIES 1 & 2: LEAST RESTRICTIVE ENVIRONMENT –
Teri Rink, EdS, Director - Office of Special Education (OSE)**

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- *LRE Monitoring*
 - *MDE OSE is working with SEAC to help understand district practices for LRE*
 - *June 13, virtual meeting with ISDs to roll out to the public what the LRE monitoring will look like and which ISDs will be involved (cohort one)*
 - *6 of the 10 ISDs volunteered*
 - *Was originally going to start in Spring, but pushed back to Fall*
 - *MDE OSE LRE Technical Assistance Provider will be hired for each cohort*
 - *Data profiles will be provided to each cohort participant*
 - *Will include a graph demonstrating the continuum of placements currently being used*
 - *Pre Monitoring Activities*
 - *Each cohort participant will be asked to prepare a detailed description in response to three specific questions related to the LRE requirements. What system is in place to:*
 - *Ensure everyone knows the LRE requirements*
 - *Determine whether districts are implementing the requirements currently*
 - *Provide the appropriate technical assistance for improvement*
 - *MDE OSE will host a virtual meeting with Cohort One*
 - *Importance of using parents as a part of feedback*
 - *Conversations with PAC as a focus group will not lead to non-compliance*
 - *Concerns with PACs not always meeting, not having enough participants, so MDE SE telling ISDs to start now and provide incentives (childcare, food, etc.)*
 - *MDE SE is preparing banners to put on the wall with the exact language with IDEA and LRE, which will be left with the school*
 - *Special Education is not a place*
 - *Should further the understanding of accommodations and supplementary services for students with disabilities in the LRE*
- *Logistics*
 - *All record reviews will be completed electronically and with the Cohort participant*
 - *This review may also include a review of policies and procedures*
 - *All interviews will be conducted onsite and in any relevant local district as is reasonable, at the ISD and in collaborate with the Director of Special Education*

1% WAIVER DENIAL & STAKEHOLDER INPUT FORECAST - Chantel Mozden, OSE Program Accountability Supervisor

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- *1% is not an IDEA requirement or MARSE, it comes from ESSA (Every Student Succeeds Act), and it means only one percent of students should take alternate assessments*
- *If our state findings are greater than one percent, then we need to apply for a waiver with conditions, one of which is 95% of students with disabilities are participating in assessments*
- *Michigan was denied the waiver last year because we did not hit the 95%*
- *Michigan was also denied the waiver this year on May 10, 2024, which was posted publicly, because we did not meet the 95% in all areas (missed Science, only 94%)*
- *Michigan is no longer in compliance with the ESSA requirement*
- *MDE is asking us to get the message out that it is very important for students to do the assessments as it is their Civil Right (even if it leads to needs of accommodations or behaviors) to take the assessments*
- *Michigan is now seen as not making "significant process" in the percentage of students taking an alternate assessment*
 - *two years in a row were at 1.8 percent*
- *This means that the US Dept of Education can take away our title funding which directly impacts ALL our students*
 - *MDE working across all units because this is not just a special education think*
 - *Coincides with our discussions on LRE*
- *MDE had to submit a new plan after being denied, and the updated plan continued to be denied*
 - *MDE is no updating again and establishing new short- and long-term goals*
 - *To be implemented within 2-6 months:*
 - *Engage with stakeholders on eligibility for alternate assessment participation*
 - *Develop and initiate the use of an IEP team-facing decision-making rubric for organizing and evaluating student information to determine students with the MSCD*
 - *High-leverage practice used by other states, clarifies and reduces the ambiguity in decision making*
 - *Update interactive decision-making tool*
 - *Conduct a thorough data analysis to identify exemplary ISDs and LEAs that are above, meeting, or near 1.0 percent target for alternate assessment use*
 - *By end of 24/25 year*
 - *Facilitate convenings between exemplary districts and districts in Tier 2 and Tier 3 status*
 - *New assessment registration, support, monitoring*
 - *New MDE Professional Learning*
 - *New considerations of best practices*

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- *Representative focus group to review current alternate assessment and identify modification if any*
- *Provided targeted technical assistance to LEAs to increase access to general education curriculum and instruction for students transitioning from the alternate assessment*
 - *Will be seeking SEAC input to see what else we can do to meet the 1%*
- *Speculation as to why the numbers did not improve: in 2023, 7000 more students were tested and more than half of those had students with disabilities*

Message from State School Board of Education, Dr Judith Prichett

- *Appreciation of thanks*

Position Statements

The Arc MI webpage with Position Statements has been updated. Current Position Statements have been translated into Spanish and Arabic. Position Statements can be found here [Arc MI Position Statements](#). Please share. Corrections were made to the Education and School Vouchers Position Statements.

The committee began work on the Position Statement on Child Find. Please add your comments in this google document [Arc MI Position Statement on Child Find](#). Work will continue on this position statement in the summer/fall.

Additional Business:

There are Higher Education Bills at the federal level that Emily will provide updates on as she can. These have no text to review at this time.

- **SB 4379** - A bill to amend the Higher Education Act of 1965 to change certain grant requirements for certain students with disabilities, and for other purposes.
- **SB 4380** - A bill to amend the Higher Education Act of 1965 to promote matriculation, and increase in the graduation rates, of individuals with disabilities within higher education.
- **SB 4283** - A bill to establish grants to provide education on guardianship alternatives for older adults and people with disabilities to health care workers, educators, family members, and court workers and court-related personnel.

Education Committee meetings will resume in September. New meeting dates and a new zoom link will be sent out in August.

The meeting adjourned at 11:15am

Respectfully Submitted,

Michelle Driscoll for Debbie Whitford