**Autism Commission, Birth to Fourteen Years Old**

**Subcommittee Meeting**

March 13, 2019 10:00am – 12:00 pm

25 Kingston Street, Boston MA

Present: Co -Chairs Russell Johnston and Michele Brait, Zac Huston, Shari King, Julia Landau, Alexis Glickman, Sarah Richmann, Rob Polsinelli, Carolyn Kain, Dianne Lescinskas.

Members participating by phone: Michele Poulin, Diana Perry, Julianne Kelly

Russell Johnston called the meeting to order and welcomed all members of the Birth to Fourteen Years Old subcommittee meeting, Dr. Johnston noted that the meeting was subject to the Massachusetts Open Meeting Law, and present members needed to vote to allow non-present members to participate via telephone. Subcommittee members physically present voted unanimously to allow remote participation.

Dr. Johnston read the agenda and meeting norms. The approval of the minutes from the January 9, 2019 meeting was rescheduled for the next subcommittee meeting so that all members could review them.

**Feedback on draft Recommendation to DESE for new electronic IEP**

Members present and on the phone were asked to give feedback on the draft recommendations to DESE that was sent out prior to the meeting. Comments and suggestions in the discussion included:

* Removing the sentence “the term parents….” in paragraph one in the memo.
* Changing the words “informed” to “reminded “in paragraph two in the memo.
* #1. Interpretation and Translation Services: Adding the words “in the primary language spoken in home” after the word “verify”; replacing the word “requested” to “accepted by the parent”; adding “and the timelines were met for providing these in the primary language of the home” after the word “provided” in the last sentence. Interpreter services to be offered to the family in the language of the IEP.
* Could the offer of use of an interpreter be sent with the invitation to the IEP meeting?
* #2. IEP Form: Could emphasis be put on the purpose of the meeting to be to develop goals, objectives and placement?
* #3. IEP reflection of primary and secondary diagnosis: add “and document” after the word “confirm”
* Could the 7 areas of need for autism be taken out of a check list format, to allow for more descriptive documentation of what specifically is being done to address each need, and document why an area would not be addressed for a student? Could DESE maximize the visual interface of the seven areas so they are present throughout the document for the IEP meeting for discussion?
* Could there be an explanation of the seven areas sent out prior to the IEP meeting to the parents with premeeting documents and to staff for consideration before the IEP is drafted?
* #6. For students 14-22 years of age”: Could language be added that asks “has the student’s information been shared with adult services state agencies? “Has info on adult services been shared with the family? “Have relevant representatives of those agencies been invited to the meeting? “
* Could documentation be added regarding the student’s participation at the meeting, whether the student was invited, if the student attended, if the student was prepared for the meeting?
* Include prompt to document how the sexual education was/would be addressed.
* Add the words “employment skills” after “pre-employment skills”.
* #7. Goals area and objectives- add “and generalization across settings, in school and community” after the word “independence”.
* Could language be added to describe how a goal that was not mastered and is going forward on the new IEP will be addressed?
* Could the question “Have the goals and objectives been developed at the IEP meeting?”
* Could the timeline for having school assessments/reports available to parents in the language of the home be expanded beyond two days prior to the IEP meeting?
* #8 MCAS Alt: Could emphasis be placed on the Alt being the exception to MCAS which should be the default test.
* Can a prompt be added to have an annual consideration of MCAS/Alt for the student?
* Can parents be informed about the impact taking the MCAS Alt with regard to achieving a diploma?
* #9 Service Delivery Grid: Can a flow chart be created to assist the TEAM?
* Regarding AAC/ AT: should it be mentioned at the disability related issues section of the IEP to address it early?
* Can it be addressed in premeeting documents, to be sure assessments have been done prior to the IEP?
* Can a separate section be added for AAC to prompt questions regarding assessments, devices, generalization of use of devices to home, community and employment by staff?
* Regarding Behavior Intervention Plan: Can it be made clear that the FBA and BSP are part of the IEP document to ensure they become part of the student file and travel with a student to a new school setting?
* Regarding staff to student ratio: Can there be clarification regarding grouping of students and who is giving direct instruction to the student in the general education and special education setting?
* Regarding extended school year and extended day: can whether there will be transportation be specifically stated?
* The ESY should match the placement of the student during the school year (regarding inclusion level), can there be prompts for considerations to create an appropriate ESY program in the LRE?
* Regarding placement: Can changes be made to have the TEAM better determine the LRE?
* Can the LRE discussion annually include documentation of what general education modifications and adaptations could be made prior to movement to a more substantially separate setting?
* Can these considerations be given for ABA services as well?

Ms. Kain, Ms. Lescinskas, and Ms. Brait will be making edits to the first draft to DESE based on the above, and the revised draft will be sent out to the subcommittee for comments. Ms.Kain asked that members submit their feedback to the revised draft prior to April 4th, so that a final draft can be completed for our next subcommittee meeting in May.

After this discussion, due to time constraints, the subcommittee agreed to carry over the agenda items of the Autism evaluation/ diagnosis update and the ABA surveys review until our next meeting.

Dr. Johnston mentioned that he would like to have some outreach to get more diversity on the subcommittee, and welcomed members to share suggestions with the co-chairs and Ms. Kain.

He also would like to contact current members of the subcommittee who have not been participating in meetings, to see if they are interested in remaining on the subcommittee.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:00pm.