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

**Subcommittee Meeting**

May 8, 2019 10:00am-12:00pm

25 Kingston St. Boston, MA

Present: Co-chairs Russell Johnston and Michele Brait, Janine Solomon, Sarah Richmann, Rob Polsinelli, Alexis Glikman, Carolyn Kain.

Participating by phone: Michelle Poulin, Julie Kelley, Julia Landau, Shari King, Alan Jacobson, Diana Parry-Cruwys.

Dr. 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. There was a suggested addition to the March 13, 2019 minutes: In the Feedback on draft Recommendation to DESE for new electronic IEP section, bullet three, Interpretation and Translation Services, add “interpreter services to be offered to the family in the language of the IEP”. The subcommittee voted to approve the minutes with this addition.

**Feedback on the draft Memorandum to DESE on the new IEP**

The sub-committee members present and on the phone were asked to review the draft Memorandum to DESE regarding the new IEP. Based on feedback and discussion, the following changes will be incorporated, and the final memo will be sent to DESE from the subcommittee.

* On item 3, to add: That the home language survey needs to be checked prior to the IEP meeting to ensure materials are sent home in the proper language for the family, and that appropriate translation services are offered. This information could be incorporated into the process guide if not the IEP.
* On item 5, add “Has the Team identified and discussed a plan to address the replacement or repair of an AAC device, and how to provide an alternative AAC system for the short term in the event of a technical problem, loss of device or repair needed?”
* On item 6, after the word examine, add the word “thoroughly”; remove “what is currently in place and”; after the word discuss, add “all supports and services that would enable “, remove the words “any additional”;
* Also, on item 6, include ideas for the supports and services to promote inclusion in the IEP guidance materials.
* On item #11, after the word offered add “for example, inclusive learning opportunities”.
* On item #13, after the word “Team” add “with the parents”. Also, as part of the process guide, questions with examples, relating to the seven areas, that are specific to that individual, are to be used as prompts for that premeeting.
* Adding an item 16, “In developing the IEP services, has the Team considered family culture and language issues, particularly with respect to goals?”

**Surveys for BCBAs and District Special Education Administrators**

The sub-committee members present and on the phone were asked to provide feedback on the

survey drafts for BCBAs and Special Ed Administrators, which were sent out to members prior to the meeting. Dr. Johnston noted that the goal of sending the surveys is to gather information on how ABA services are being delivered, who is providing the services, and how recruitment and retention are working.

On the survey draft for BCBAs, the following suggestions were made:

* Question number one, change it to: “How long have you been a BCBA in your current position?”
* Question number nine, change it to: “How much time (of 100% of your day) is spent (A)with students, (B)supervising ABA programs/therapists, (C) with administrative duties.
* Question number twelve, remove the first two sentences. Add after the remaining sentence: “What form does that collaboration take?”
* Question number fourteen, change to “Do you fill out staff evaluations for staff you supervise?” Also, add an answer C, “N/A”
* Question 15, omit.
* Under Benefits, Compensation and Retention, question number 4, add the words: “or unsure” after the word “no” on answer C
* Add to the survey: a question for an overall job satisfaction rating 1-5.
* Add to the survey: Choose between the following open answer questions:
* 1. What ideas do you have for having BCBAs be attracted to and remain in the public schools setting? 2. What ideas do you have for encouraging/ motivating you and other BCBAs to stay working in the public schools setting?

On the survey draft for District Special Ed Administrators, the following suggestions were made:

* Under BCBA Questions, number one: add a choice (C) Both
* Also add the words “For BCBAs” before the word “hired”
* Add a question in this section asking “What experience do you have with ABA in inclusion settings?”
* Add a question in this section that askes “What steps have you done to recruit ABA therapists /BCBAs who are bilingual and have culturally sensitive training?
* Remove the question about satisfaction with services in your setting.
* Under Support Personnel Questions, remove the question about a tiered model of support. Replace with a question: “What is your initial and ongoing professional development training for support staff in ABA?
* Remove the question about satisfaction with services provided by ABA support staff.
* Add a question: “Does the district offer RBT training to staff?
* Add a question: “Can you give an estimate of how many students with ASD have longer days or participate in an afterschool program?
* Add a question: “Have you seen a drop in the number of students with ASD that are provided after school ABA as a result of the ARICA law?

Dr. Johnston stated that the plan was to get the surveys finished and out before the end of June. The next subcommittee meeting will be in July, and we can discuss the results of the survey.

There was a discussion based on a question from Chris Supple, about exploring if students with ASD who require a longer day, could be involved in the community after the school day ended, and have it outlined in the individual’s IEP. Dr. Johnston mentioned that the current data collection system does not provide detailed information about students in longer day settings, but the committee could revisit this topic at a later date.

Dr. Johnston reminded the sub-committee members that we are looking for new members to add to the group and provide more diversity. Anyone on the committee that wanted to refer a potential candidate should get in touch with the co-chairs about it. Several members offered to reach out professionally in this regard.

With no further business to discuss, the meeting ended at 11:55am.