**Massachusetts Autism Commission**

**Birth to Fourteen Years Old**

**Subcommittee Meeting**

December 9, 2022, 10:00 a.m. - 11:00 p.m.

Via Zoom

Present on Zoom: Co-Chairs Russell Johnston and Michele Brait, Melissa Clark, Julia Landau, Mary Haswell, Beth Jerskey, Emily White, Shari Krauss, Dianne Lescinskas and Carolyn Kain.

Dr. Russell Johnston called the meeting to order and welcomed all members of the Birth to Fourteen-Year-Old Subcommittee. Minutes from the October subcommittee meeting were approved.

The meeting today was to discuss the 2022 subcommittee recommendations that did not get discussed at our previous meeting, due to time constraints.

**Inclusion Data**

Dr. Johnston asked the subcommittee members to review the DESE ASD inclusion data he provided and welcomed feedback with a focus on “I noticed” or “I wonder about”. The following observations were mentioned.

* Data shows a much larger number of males aged 3-5 in the sub separate group
* Data shows more males in age 6-12 group in full inclusion
* The number of students from low-income families was much greater in the 6-22 group
* The number of students of color age 3-5 in inclusion was less than of white students
* Students other than white were included less often
* In the sub separate classes, there was not a big difference in age 6-22 by race
* EI data had much lower number of black students included in the data compared to other races which may or may not be related to general population figures
* Could the numbers related to younger students be reflective of lack of diagnosis?
* DESE data only reflects a primary diagnosis, some students may have a developmental disability as primary, so not captured with the ASD population
* How can we look at data to determine if there is a delay in diagnosing children of color?
* EI and DESE data were inconsistent in number of children of all races found eligible and represented, could DESE look at exit data to compare with EI data?
* Would census data need to be compared to consider the general population percentages?
* English language learners in sub separate classrooms were 50% higher than English speaking students
* The 14-22 subcommittee was recently reviewing some of the same data to look at equity placement and outcomes
* Nonwhite, non-english speaking students are most likely to be in sub separate classes most of the day
* This has been an ongoing issue at Boston Public Schools for years, if certain districts have this as an ongoing issue, can it be addressed at that level?
* Can we review data by districts or geography to look for cases where children of color are defaulted to sub separate classrooms?

- If the data represents significant disparities, we need to highlight the issues

- There are concerns about an uptick in sub separate classrooms disparities

- Ms. Landau shared some screen shot examples used by MAC to share data in a more accessible format

* Ms. White shared that EI data could be looked at from birth cohort to DPH, how many children come into EI in a year and EI has reasons for exit data by race

**Next Steps**

* Highlight the trends by generating awareness and an emotional response from stakeholders to illustrate the needs to address
* Ms. Jeresky offered to assist with helping to create easy to read charts that illustrate the DESE data and disparities. Ms. Landau offered to coordinate with her to create visuals of the data to be sent to the Subcommittee for review.
* Dr. Johnston suggested following up with Ms. White regarding obtaining EI data, related to student demographics and transition
* DESE has been requested as part of pending litigation, to report on data broken down by race
* The subcommittee will review the charts being recreated and revisit this topic at our next meeting

With no further items to discuss, the meeting adjourned at 11:05 am.