Autism Commission

Sub-Committee for Three Years Old - Fourteen Years Old

May 23, 2017 – 11:00am – 12:30pm

500 Harrison Avenue

Members present were Carolyn Kain, Dianne Lescinskas, Teri Valentine and Zach Houston.

Members accessing meeting remotely were Julie Kelley, Dr. Beth Jerskey, and Tina Fitanides.

Carolyn Kain, the Chair, called the meeting to order and welcomed the members to the meeting of this Sub-Committee. Ms. Kain stated that the meeting was subject to the Open Meeting Law and that the Sub-Committee members present would need to vote to approve the remote participation of some members because of their geographic location, whenever any members were utilizing video and/or tele-conferencing. Remote access was approved unanimously. Minutes from last meeting in April were reviewed and were approved with Julie Kelley and Tina Fitanides abstaining from the vote.

Ms. Valentine informed this committee that moving forward Michelle Poulin and Alexis Glickman will represent DESE at these meetings. She asked to be copied on all email correspondence related to the 3-14 year old sub-committee.

**Brochure**

This committee has created a draft brochure for families that would provide information and guidance to additional resources. This brochure is intended to be given to families during the IEP meeting and she has been working with DESE and will incorporate their feedback into the document. She has shared the draft document with this committee and they have provided some feedback. It was asked that any additional feedback be sent via email. Some suggestions are as follows:

* DDS has Family Support Centers (they will be added)
* Group in clear buckets 1. Eligibility, 2. Insurance, 3. Services (DDS, MRC) and 4. Additional Resources.
* Provide a sentence before each link to orient the user
* DESE – no longer PQA but Problem Resolution System (PRS)
* Could the Federation assist with graphics for the brochure
* Links are too long – convert to bit links
* Make sure it is in plain language for all to comprehend
* Divide into two brochures – one for 3-14 and the other for over 14

Ms. Kain also gave an update on the increase in funding for Turning 22. This is the first time they have seen this kind of increase and DDS is trying to capture as many individuals with ASD in Turning 22. Ms. Kain also attended an event for the ABLE accounts which is a tax free account of up to $14K maximum annually and $100k in total contributions without any impact to an individual’s social security.

Ms. Kain updated the members on the last meeting that focused on the work that DESE is doing on Problem Resolution System, Coordinated Review Process and the regional meetings that DESE will host to get input from families.

Ms. Kain asked about the new IEP system and had heard that it was put on hold. Ms. Valentine informed this committee that the new IEP is moving forward and they are working with IT on creating an RFR to hire a Project Manager. They are engaging in a procurement process for the technical build to move it forward. Boston is also working on a new IEP and DESE is in discussions with them and getting feedback. DESE is also open to recommendations/suggestions from this sub-committee for the new IEP – some areas that we could look at are as follows:

* Social skills
* Executive Functioning
* Daily Living Skills – all of the above impact employment and independent living

Too many of the adults with ASD (currently) missed their opportunity to work on these skills while still in school. Some individuals with ASD that are higher on the spectrum need to work on many of these skills to ensure their success later in life. Many of these individuals have tried higher education and employment but have failed and are at home. This requires different thinking and can lead to bigger problems if not addressed early on in life. Some of these individuals will develop mental health issues, depression and anxiety.

**Next Meeting**

We will go through the current IEP and see what is missing, what is the current process and how can we address some of the changes we would like to see. It was noted that the current IEP can be confusing for parents and the basic structure of writing goals should be addressed. Ms. Kain mentioned that she had read the book “How Well Does Your IEP Measure Up” and it is a great read and could be helpful during this process.

Ms. Kain also asked that specific edits to the brochure should be sent to her office ASAP – it is currently being reviewed by multiple people and should be ready for distribution in September.

Ms. Kain’s office will send out an email to this sub-committee with a date and time for the next meeting.

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