

New Mexico IDEA Advisory Panel Meeting

MINUTES

September 5, 2024

Day 1

Meeting called by	Chair Jennifer Donelli Called the meeting to order at 9:23 a.m.
Type of Meeting	Advisory Panel Meeting
Facilitator	Chair Jennifer Donelli
Secretary	Hart Lewis
Attendees	Amy Trevino, Carli Mortensen, Christa Kulidge, Damon Terry, Dana Malone, Jennifer Donelli, Jessica Powell, Henry Sandles, Laurel Nesbitt Lisa Keck, Mary Vaughn, Melissa Wassana, Robert Madrid, Hart Lewis
Guests	NMPED Office of Special Education Dr. Margaret Cage, Deputy Secretary of Special Education Miguel Lozano, Chief Counsel Elizabeth Cassell, Education Administrator – Parent and Community Liaison Matt Tomicek, Data Analyst Liz Schweiger, Education Administrator, Indicator 13 Coordinator Kaylock Sellers, Business Operations Lorenzo Dominguez, Assistant Deputy Director Data & Finance Lorie Pacheco, Education Administrator, Low incidence coordinator, ECLIPSE Project Director Kimberly Gonzalez, Education Administrator Program & Support Specialist Katalina Gallegos, Management Analyst Tammy Burkett, Education Administrator – Data Analyst Kaity Ellis, OSESocial & Community Coordinator Jessica Dinsmore, Education Administrator Support Specialist Charlene Marcotte, Deputy Director of Data and Finance Ria Gill, Assistant Deputy Director of the Office of Special Education

Agenda Topics

Minutes	Chair Donelli requested a motion to approve the minutes. Carli Mortensen made a motion to table the minutes until corrections were made. Christa Kulidge provided a second. A roll call vote ensued: Amy Trevino-yes, Carli Mortensen-yes, Christa Kulidge-yes, Dana Malone-yes, Jennifer Donelli-yes, Henry Sandles-yes, Laurel Nesbitt-yes, Lisa Keck-yes, Mary Vaughn-yes, Melissa Wassana-yes, Robert Madrid-yes. With all voting members in favor, the motion passed.
Chair Report	Chair Donelli presented her report, expressing her honor of serving as chair this year and highlighting the significant progress made. She reported that the Ad hoc work group updated the bylaws last year and voted on the changes at the previous meeting. She expressed gratitude to the NM PED for implementing the voted-on changes and for posting the updated bylaws on the IDEA Panel page and PED website.

	<p>The Chair and Vice Chair have collaborated with PED and the Part C Interagency Coordinating Council to plan a joint meeting with the IDEA Panel at the upcoming third-quarter meeting. Chair Donelli is looking forward to the collaboration and emphasizes the importance of this joint meeting, hoping to make it an annual event for both groups.</p> <p>Chair Donelli emphasized the importance of committee work and encouraged all members to meet regularly to drive recommendations to the state. Each committee is expected to meet at least four times a year, and a report document has been developed to guide their work. Donelli looks forward to everyone's participation and sharing of goals and concerns for the upcoming year, stressing the significance of their work.</p>
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<p>Introductions and Ice Breaker</p>	<p>Kaity Ellis, Social & Community Coordinator, and Jessica Dinsmore, Education Administrator Support Specialist</p>
	<p>Jessica Dinsmore and Kaity Ellis led an icebreaker activity for the panel, allowing everyone to introduce themselves. The activity included questions to get to know the person better.</p> <p>Laurel Nesbitt was introduced as the newest member of the IDEA B Panel.</p>
<p>Directors Report OSE Program Report</p>	<p>Charlene Marcotte, Deputy Director of Data & Finance</p>
	<p>Charlene Marcotte, Deputy Director of Data & Finance, began her presentation by mentioning the implementation of the new NOVA system and that OSE is currently working with the EDPass Coordinator and information technology staff to finalize the special education data for the school year 2023-2024. This data will be used to determine the Local Education Agencies (LEA's) annual assessment. A new rubric will be implemented for this purpose. The 2024-2025 school year rubric will focus on compliance and student outcomes. The 40-Day data collection period is from October 9 to November 6, 2024. Local Education Agencies (LEAs) will receive training to ensure a smooth process. Indicators 9 and 10 are being revised to improve equity, and Indicator 8 surveys will be sent to parents of students with disabilities.</p> <p>In fiscal year (FY) 2024, the Early Childhood and Early Care Department will manage administrative funds and state-level activities for preschool IDEA B funds. The Office of Special Education (OSE) will allocate funds to LEAs and collaborate with federal partners to implement IDEA finance requirements.</p> <p>The Office of Special Education (OSE) conducts an internal inventory as federal regulations require. The finance team monitors the expenditure of funds by the LEAs to ensure that funds for students with disabilities are being used effectively. The U.S.</p>

	<p>Department of Education's Individuals with Disabilities Education Act program fully complies with the Payment Integrity Information Act of 2019 for FY 2023, meaning no additional payment integrity studies will be needed in FY 2024. A shared internal and external calendar was provided to inform everyone of important dates. Questions were then taken from the panel.</p>
OSE Program Report	<p>Jessica Dinsmore, Education Administrator Support Specialist</p>
	<p>Jessica Dinsmore's program update included a two-day professional development event to benefit parents, the community, teachers, special education directors, superintendents, and educational assistants. Attendees can look forward to discussions on OSE initiatives, data-driven decision-making, behavioral support, family and community engagement, professional development plans, and parent university.</p> <p>Jessica mentioned that OSE has partnered with a Louisiana agency to develop a Professional Development Plan. The draft plan is due by mid-September 2024, with the final plan expected by October 2024. The goal will be to use data to identify priorities for professional development, such as IEP, Special Education Law, Behavioral Support, and Parent-Student Engagement. The long-term goal is to create a library of resources and learning opportunities for students and parents.</p> <p>Jessica also mentioned that the Parent University goal is to attract 500 participants, host a national panel discussion on supporting students with disabilities, and provide information about local and state resources for parents. The event is proposed to take place on November 13 and 14 in Albuquerque, with possible reimbursement for parents.</p> <p>Jessica provided an overview of the 23-24 monitoring, focusing on child find, least restrictive environment, service delivery, discipline, alternate assessment, early childhood, and transition. The monitoring results are still being calculated.</p> <p>The OSE will host engaging and informative office hours every third Tuesday of the month. The sessions will offer 15-20 minutes of valuable professional development, exciting updates, and the opportunity to ask questions and receive technical assistance.</p> <p>The Office of Special Education (OSE) launched a monthly newsletter in January 2024 about the latest special education practices and procedures. The content includes supporting students with disabilities, IDEA-B compliance, important dates, upcoming professional development and learning opportunities, and highlights from OSE and the OSE office hours.</p>
IDEA B Panel Responsibility	<p>Kaitly Ellis, Social & Community Coordinator</p>

	<p>Kaity Ellis provided a comprehensive overview of the essential responsibilities of the IDEA B Panel. She emphasized that both herself and Jessica Dinsmore are readily available in the office to support and collaborate. These responsibilities involve offering guidance, shaping evaluations, ensuring accurate data reporting, contributing to corrective action plans, and developing policies to improve services for children with disabilities. Ms. Ellis also highlighted the panel's exciting goals, including establishing specialized committees to drive specific initiatives and legislative priorities for OSE, generating recommendations for future IDEA B meetings, and actively advocating for forthcoming legislation in anticipation of the next legislative session. To wrap up, she encouraged the audience to ask any questions they may have.</p>
Break	11:05 a.m.
OSE Directors Report	Dr. Margaret Cage, Deputy Secretary of the Office of Special Education
	<p>Dr. Cage presented the OSE director's report, starting with an overview of some important updates. She informed everyone that the Secretary of Education had resigned, so the office had taken on additional responsibilities. She highlighted some significant accomplishments and mentioned that the governor's office and the executive order had successfully transferred the 619 coordinator position from the OSE to ECECD. The Office of Special Education (OSE) is collaborating with ECECD to determine what support will look like. Additionally, OSE remains responsible for accountability and compliance related to the IDEA from the Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs.</p> <p>The IEP template is in its final draft stage and requires approval from the governor's office before being presented to the review panel. Once approved, it will replace the old IEP, and individuals will have a year to transfer to the new one. Once the new IEP template becomes available, professional development will occur cyclically.</p> <p>Dr. Cage announced that all public agencies and governmental organizations are implementing the plan to support quadrants. Each quadrant will have centrally located training centers and office hours during which OSE will provide training on various topics. All training sessions are recorded and accessible on the website. OSE conducts data reviews and interactive working groups to enhance productivity and support the mission of providing quality education.</p> <p>The Office of Special Education (OSE) has discovered that no processes have been in place for LEA monitoring activities for at least ten years. The Office of Special Education (OSE) is committed to ensuring that monitoring is being carried out. Dr. Cage mentioned that the state will be monitored in 2026-2027. LEAs must be monitored at least once within six years to pass this part of the monitoring. The OSE thanked the staff, LEAs, notable education directors, and superintendents across the state for providing the required information for the monitoring report.</p> <p>Dr. Cage stated that implementing the unified IEP template and developing a draft state plan embedded in the executive order is underway. The state plan draft, the</p>

	<p>parent resources, and the teacher resources are complete and are also at the governor's office for approval.</p> <p>Also, as mentioned, the Office of Special Education will have those resources to share with the panel at the next IDEA Panel meeting. The next hot topic is the legislators' award of 15 million dollars through House Bill 2 to reduce the number of special education teacher vacancies across the state.</p> <p>An agency has contacted Dr. Cage to contract with them to conduct research for the OSE. The purpose is to track how the OSE will spend the money received from the legislature and whether it has positively or negatively impacted districts. Dr. Cage is reminding everyone that there are about ten days left for the first phase of the application. The first phase involves filling any vacant positions in any LEA related to special education. Phase two provides retention stipends to teachers who have stayed in their special education positions without moving, leaving, or retiring. They will receive a retention stipend. Phase 3 involves providing stipends and paid differentials to educational administrators, LEAs, and related service providers. The Special Ed Law conference will be held in September.</p> <p>OSE is establishing a state-level executive working group. Dr. Cage discussed the top 5 policy recommendations: Policy and Compliance, Family and Community Engagement, Data and Research, Transition Planning, and Advocacy and Outreach.</p> <p>After her report, Dr. Cage stated that OSE must submit a report to the governor's office by June 2025. This report should detail the progress and status of OSE's current initiatives and provide an outlook on plans for the Office of Special Education. The report should also include input from the Panel on the progress made across the state beyond just holding meetings. The governor seeks a collaborative approach to transform the committee into a more inclusive process. OSE is developing training programs for educators at all levels, including new, mid-career, and experienced special education, general education, and inclusion teachers. These trainings will be available to everyone.</p> <p>Additionally, OSE plans to create a newsletter for parents, which will be unveiled during a parent conference.</p> <p>Furthermore, OSE collaborates with the Regional Education Centers (RECs) to plan director and leadership academies. OSE has also started expanding special education hurdles. Dr. Cage then addressed questions from the panel and thanked the IDEA panel for participating in this groundbreaking initiative.</p>
Lunch	Returned 1:15
Dispute Resolution Report	Miguel Lozano, Chief Counsel
	<p>Miguel Lozano updated the Dispute Resolution activity for the 2023-2024 school year. The update included snapshots of the resolution process and a detailed report. It covered hearing requests, decisions, and resolutions through sessions, mediation, facilitated IEP meetings, and withdrawn or dismissed cases. He also mentioned that a new hearing officer had been added to the staff to handle cases. In his presentation, he included the State Complaint Cases and presented cases that were addressed. He</p>

	<p>also highlighted that they are now offering Facilitated IEPs. The most common issues subject to investigation are IEP development and implementation. Other recurring problems are child find, evaluation, eligibility, and parental participation, which are relatively frequent issues.</p>
Public Comments	<p>Chair Donelli welcomed public comments, granting each speaker 5 minutes to address the panel.</p> <p>Gail Stewart inquired about the press release issued by the NMPED on July 10, 2024, which discussed the graduation rates for students across the state in 2023. According to the release, 68.5% of students with disabilities graduated in 2023. Gail specifically requested a breakdown of these numbers, particularly regarding students graduating on a modified or ability diploma pathway. After some time, she submitted a public records request to the NMPED and received a response stating that the NMPED did not have this information and was not published. Gail believes it is essential for everyone to have access to accurate information. In her second comment, she reflected on the formation of IDEA B Panel committees and emphasized that these committees should adhere to statutory obligations. Her third comment pertained to a policy focused on the safety of the students, specifically with respect to covering of classroom windows and doors..</p>
Committee Determination Discussion	<p>Chair Jennifer Donelli-Jessica Dinsmore</p>
	<p>Jessica Dinismore began the presentation by outlining the committee's objectives and OSE strategic priorities. She then presented Dr. Cage's top 5 committee recommendations and invited the panel to join a brainstorming session to share ideas and sign up for committees.</p> <p>After some discussion, Chair Donelli designated three committees, each with five members. The three committees solidified for Friday's' meeting. The committees decided on the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Family & Community Engagement 2. Transition 3. Policies & Procedures Committee
Recess for the Day	<p>Chair Donelli adjourned the meeting at 3:58 pm.</p>

