

CONNECTICUT STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Hartford

RESC Special Education Funding Working Group
Friday, July 22, 2016

I. Call to Order

Kathy Demsey called the meeting to order at 10:37 a.m.

II. Introductions

Members Present:

Paula Colen, Executive Director, EASTCONN
Rep. Jeff Currey, Appropriations Committee
Kathy Demsey, Co-chair, Commissioner of Education Designee
Erika Forte, Assistant Executive Director for Schools and Programs, ACES
Mary Glassman, Manager of Office for Regional Efficiencies, CREC
Leah Grenier, OPM Designee
Eileen Howley, Executive Director, LEARN
Rob Parenti, Education Connection
Dr. Mike Regan, CES
Deborah Richards, Director of Student Services, CREC
Margaret Walsh, Southington Public Schools

Non-Members Present:

Martha Deeds, Senior Policy Analyst, CT School Finance Project
Dorian Lockett, Assistant to Mayor Leclerc, East Hartford
Sheila McKay, CABE
Dr. Isabelina Rodriquez, Chief Academic Officer, State Department of Education

III. Approval of Minutes

The minutes of the June 23, 2016 meeting were approved with one abstention. Minutes and agenda are posted on the SDE website at: <http://www.ct.gov/sde/RESCSpEdFundingWG>.

IV. Discussion of RESC Special Education Survey Results

- Summary of results were disseminated.
- Data collected corresponded to what was required by the legislation. Fiscal data on specific programs and services could not be collected due to student-level confidentiality requirements.
- Results were seen as representative statewide, and also seemed to be impacted by the wealth of a district, not necessarily the RESC region of the district.
- Results highlighted the need for more supports for mental health services for students in behavioral crisis, long- and short-term positions for Speech and Language Pathologists, School Psychologists and certified Behavior Analysts.
- Training needs were identified for general education teachers and paraprofessionals.

- Training and support for staff was needed by professionals with specific expertise in working with students with autism and behavioral challenges.
- Transportation costs are high and should be coordinated whenever possible within the region.
- Discussion of history of RESCs. Districts no longer see the RESCs as the first option.
- Discussion of parent choice and the impact that has on what districts offer.
- RESCs need to provide more data on outcomes of programs and services.
- We need to reach out to higher education regarding shortage areas and who is in the pipeline. Our report should highlight some examples such as LEARN's experience with Avery Point and CES with Sacred Heart.
- RESCs should convene opportunities to meet with districts and discuss next steps regarding regional programs.
- Number one priority for RESCs is to get students back to district.
- We should use the survey report to inform the Funding group's recommendations.

V. Next steps for recommendations/report

- Deb and Kathy will meet with Isabelina. Members are to send suggestions to Deb and Kathy. Deb and Kathy will draft categories of recommendations to be discussed at the next meeting.

VI. Future Meetings

September 12, 2016

9:00 – 11:00 AM

Location: CREC Central, 111 Charter Oak Avenue, Hartford, CT

VII. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 11:50 a.m.