

**HAWAII SPECIAL  
EDUCATION ADVISORY  
COUNCIL (SEAC)**



**ANNUAL REPORT  
2001-2002**

## Contact Information

Members of the Special Education Advisory Council (SEAC) can be reached at:

### **Special Education Advisory Council (SEAC)**

919 Ala Moana Blvd., Room 101

Honolulu, HI 96814

Phone: (808) 586-8126

Fax: (808) 586-8129

Email: [accesshi@aloha.net](mailto:accesshi@aloha.net)

SEAC's meeting schedule, agendas, by-laws, minutes and annual reports are available online at: [www.spinhawaii.org/SAP/sap.html](http://www.spinhawaii.org/SAP/sap.html).

# CONTENTS

VISION .....	1
MISSION .....	1
FUNCTIONS OF THE COUNCIL.....	1
RECOMMENDATIONS .....	2
MEMBERSHIP .....	3
GOALS & OBJECTIVES .....	3
ACCOMPLISHMENTS .....	4
FUTURE DIRECTIONS.....	5
APPENDICES	
A. MEMBER ROSTER	
B. BROCHURE	
C. CORRESPONDENCE	

## **VISION**

The Council believes in optimizing the educational achievement of every child through a strong public education system that is proactive and supportive of students, families and educators. To that end the Council will use its strength as a broad based constituency group to play an active and influential role in decisions affecting policies, programs and services.

## **MISSION**

The mission of the Council is to guide and assist the Hawaii Department of Education in fulfilling its responsibility to meet the individual needs of children with disabilities.

## **FUNCTIONS OF THE COUNCIL**

1. To advise the Department of Education of unmet needs and any other issues or concerns within the state in the education of students with disabilities.
2. To comment publicly on the rules or regulations proposed by the State regarding the education of children with disabilities.
3. To advise the Department of Education in developing evaluations and reporting on data to the Secretary of Education, U.S. Department of Education, in the performance of his/her responsibilities under Section 618 of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.
4. To advise the Department of Education in developing corrective action plans to address findings identified in the Federal monitoring reports.
5. To advise the Department of Education in developing and implementing policies relating to the coordination of services for children with disabilities.
6. To monitor the implementation of activities and timetable pursuant to consent decrees or court orders regarding the education of children with disabilities.
7. To advise on the education of eligible students with disabilities who have been convicted as adults and incarcerated in adult prisons.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE SUPERINTENDENT**

*Under its responsibility to advise you, the Council asks your action on the following recommendations:*

### **INTEGRATED SPECIAL EDUCATION DATA SYSTEM (ISPED)**

- Give parents access to their child's ISPED records for both review and input by giving them an access code.
- Ensure that ISPED meets the full requirements of the Family Education Rights Protection Act.
- Utilize SEAC's expertise to advise the Department on the design, implementation and evaluation of ISPED.

### **LEAST RESTRICTIVE ENVIRONMENT**

- Support a revised staffing allocation methodology to ensure that educational supports are provided in the general education setting to the maximum extent appropriate based on the individual student's needs.
- Increase training activities for general education teachers, special education teachers, paraprofessionals, administrators, related service personnel and parents on the principles of LRE and strategies to improve access to the general curriculum.
- Increase training activities for administrators on best practices in special education and current legal mandates.
- Mandate that all new programs, strategies and curriculum be designed to fully include students with disabilities alongside their non-disabled peers.

### **PRESCHOOL TASK FORCE**

- Establish and convene the Task Force recommended in the Felix Preschool Study to address early childhood issues and include SEAC representation.

### **STATE LEVEL SPECIALISTS IN AUTISM, READING & SBBH**

- Recruit qualified specialists in autism, reading and school-based behavioral health as soon as possible so that the positive reforms begun by Laurie Sperry, Lisa Stevens and Richard Hess will continue.

### **STUDENT DISCIPLINE**

- Maintain and expand the discipline data collected for the Felix Suspension Study to detect trends and factors relating to the disciplines of students with and without disabilities.

## **MEMBERSHIP**

The membership of the Council represents a broad spectrum of committed individuals who have a stake in the education of children with disabilities. Council members are parents, grandparents, persons with disabilities, educators, advocates, departmental representatives, university professors and community members. A majority of members are individuals with disabilities or parents and grandparents of children with disabilities. All school districts are represented.

Members are appointed by the Superintendent and serve a three-year term. A membership roster is attached to this report.

## **GOALS & OBJECTIVES**

In January 2001, Council members convened a retreat to reorganize and revitalize Council activities. The goals and objectives developed from that endeavor were further refined in the Spring of 2001 and became the focus of the Council during this school year.

A restructuring of Council committees resulted in new standing committees to address each of the three stated goals.

### **GOAL 1 (Operations Committee)**

#### **To be able to operate more effectively.**

OBJECTIVE 1: Get full time staff support/budget

OBJECTIVE 2: Review the list of current membership and determine need for additional members.

OBJECTIVE 3: SEAC will have a definitive role in any decision making which affects students with disabilities.

### **GOAL 2 (Public Relations & Communication Committee)**

#### **To develop public relations for SEAC and a communication/feedback loop with all stakeholders.**

OBJECTIVE 1: Utilize a variety of means to engage the public in SEAC activities.

### **GOAL 3 (Guidance & Quality Assurance Committee)**

#### **To guide implementation of services and timelines in accordance with court orders and State and federal rules and statutes regarding the education of children with disabilities.**

OBJECTIVE 1: To guide the State of Hawaii to meet compliance requirements of Consent Decree and court orders.

OBJECTIVE 2: Partner with DOE to develop an improvement plan based on OSEP monitoring recommendations.

## **ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF THE 01-02 SCHOOL YEAR**

### **Key Departmental Issues**

- Met with the new Superintendent, Mrs. Patricia Hamamoto, to understand her vision for the Department and her plans for reorganization.
- Received briefings on school-based behavioral health, the transition of services to students with autism, the special education reading initiative, and the Preschool and Suspension Studies ordered by the Felix Court Monitor.
- Reviewed the six principles of IDEA through monthly briefings.

### **Interagency Collaboration**

- Wrote to the Superintendent April 3, 2002 asking the Department to update the Memorandum of Agreement with the Department of Public Safety regarding educational supports to students with disabilities served in adult prisons.
- Represented the Council on the steering committees of the State Improvement Grant and the Continuous Improvement Monitoring Process.

### **Least Restrictive Environment**

- Drafted a position paper on Least Restrictive Environment.
- Wrote to the Superintendent July 3, 2002 requesting action to preserve LRE for special education students at Jefferson Elementary (pending response).

### **Membership**

- Added representation from private schools and Family Court.
- Secured a liaison to the Council from the Superintendent's Office

### **Public Relations/Communications**

- Met with legislators (Chairs of the Hawaii House and Senate Committees on Education, Senator Inouye's and Senator Akaka's staff, various state legislators), the Board of Education (Special Programs Committee) and the Family Court administrator to provide information on SEAC and special education issues.
- Created an informational brochure on SEAC and disseminated it to educators, policymakers and parent groups (see appendix)
- Launched a Student Participation Project to gather input from students with disabilities.
- Posted monthly agendas and minutes on the Internet ([www.spinhawaii.org/](http://www.spinhawaii.org/)).

### **Student Confidentiality**

- Wrote a letter to the Superintendent on October 12, 2001 in response to a media incident involving a special education student on the Big Island prompting a reply dated assuring SEAC that steps were being taken to inform and train administrative personnel regarding student confidentiality and communication with the media (see appendix)

## **FUTURE DIRECTIONS**

During the 2002-2003 School Year, the Council intends to play a proactive role in the following areas:

- √ **Providing input/testimony on the Reauthorization of IDEA;**
- √ **Monitoring compliance and sustainability of Felix reforms;**
- √ **Supporting the State Improvement Grant activities; and**
- √ **Participating in Implementation Planning for the Continuous Improvement Monitoring Process**

Additionally, each Committee of the Council has identified objectives for the coming year:

### **Operations Committee – 02-03 Targeted Objectives**

- Secure permanent funding for SEAC.
- Clarify staff support and financial resources provided through the DOE/SPIN MOA.
- Assess Council membership for required representation.
- Set a policy on renewal of member term of service.
- Establish a procedure for follow-up on absentee members.
- Secure parent representation for all ages of children.
- Develop position statements on various topics.
- Organize incoming topics in an organized and unified way.

### **P.R./Communications Committee- – 02-03 Targeted Objectives**

- Redraft and reprint the *Parent’s Guide to Special Education* in a user-friendly format;
- Develop a fact sheet on “person first” language for the media.
- Expand web capabilities to include member passwords for work in progress and special alerts.

### **Guidance & Quality Assurance Committee- Targeted Objectives**

- Follow-up with the development on the updated MOA between Department of Public Safety and DOE.
- Monitor the transition of services for children with autism; examine the utilization and role of the Autism Consulting Teacher.
- Examine and address whether sufficient transition planning occurs for students as they move from more restrictive settings to less restrictive settings.
- Examine the adequacy of program options available to children and youth; provide recommendations based on student needs.