

Due Process Screening Committee Meeting
May 22, 2007
Illinois Beach Resort & Conference Center
Zion, Illinois

Members in attendance:

Kathy Lyons, Chairperson
Dr. Joseph Vaal
Rick Ramirez
Terri Devine
Joseph Russo (by telephone)
Elizabeth Hanselman (by telephone)

Others in attendance:

Andy Eulass, ISBE Due Process Coordinator
Robert Lehrer, Impartial Due Process Hearing Officer
Ann Breen-Greco, Impartial Due Process Hearing Officer
Carolyn Ann Smaron, Impartial Due Process Hearing Officer
Marie Bracki, Impartial Due Process Hearing Officer
Sheana Hermann, Impartial Due Process Hearing Officer
Gail Friedman, Impartial Due Process Hearing Officer
Marian McElroy, Impartial Due Process Hearing Officer
James Wolter, Impartial Due Process Hearing Officer
Robert Ladenson, Impartial Due Process Hearing Officer
Alfred Spitzzeri, Impartial Due Process Hearing Officer
Susan Cox, Impartial Due Process Hearing Officer
Kristine Anderson, Impartial Due Process Hearing Officer
Janet Kidd, Impartial Due Process Hearing Officer
Stacey Stutzman, Impartial Due Process Hearing Officer
Linda Mastandrea, Impartial Due Process Hearing Officer
Mary Schwartz, Impartial Due Process Hearing Officer
Joyce Eckrem, Joyce O. Eckrem & Associate
Gail ImObersteg, Special Education Law Associates

The meeting was convened at 1:08 p.m.

A review of the draft minutes of the March 19, 2007 meeting took place for which one needed change was noted. Andy Eulass stated that the change would be made and the revised minutes submitted for review at the next meeting. Rick Ramirez moved, and Joe Vaal seconded, to accept the March 19th minutes with the change discussed. The motion carried unanimously.

Similarly, the Committee then reviewed the minutes of the April 18, 2007 meeting. No changes being noted, Joe Vaal moved and Rick Ramirez seconded to accept the April 18th minutes as drafted. The motion again carried unanimously.

Next, the Committee received a report from Joyce Eckrem, the current hearing officer trainer, outlining the second Training Needs Assessment. Ms. Eckrem provided a brief background on the development of the report and described briefly several points in the report. No further action being required of the Committee, Kathy Lyons received the written report on behalf of the Committee.

The meeting was then opened to a public comment period in which nine hearing officers presented concerns and issues to the Committee related to the course of the past year's training program and the current performance evaluation process.

Upon completion of the public comment period, Joe Vaal moved for the committee to go into closed session pursuant to Section 2(c)(15) of the Open Meetings Act and Section 14-8.02c of the Illinois School Code for the purpose of considering the current performance evaluations of the Due Process Hearing Officers. The motion was seconded by Rick Ramirez. Per roll call vote, the following Committee members voted in favor of the closed session motion: Joe Vaal, Joseph Russo, Rick Ramirez, Elizabeth Hanselman and Kathy Lyons. Accordingly, at 2:22 p.m., the Committee went into closed session.

At 5:48 p.m., the Committee returned to open session. Upon its return, Joe Vaal moved and Rick Ramirez that the Committee recommend 15 hearing officers for reappointment from July 1, 2007 through June 30, 2008. The motion was carried unanimously.

In addition, Rick Ramirez moved and Joe Vaal seconded that for 15 hearing officers recommended for reappointment, each hearing officer should engage in professional development activities in each area of their respective performance evaluations where needed improvement was noted, and that demonstrated improvement would be one of the criteria used by the Committee to determine whether reappointments would be recommended the next contract year. This motion carried unanimously.

Finally, Andy Eulass reported to the Committee that a new compensation package was being provided to the hearing officers for next year of \$50 per hour along with a \$10,000 annual stipend. Also, Andy reported that the new Requests for Sealed Proposals for hearing officer training and evaluation were being posted that week. Andy requested that as soon as practicable the Committee would need to set a new meeting date in order to consider the training and evaluation proposals.

There being no further issues that the Committee could address, Rick Ramirez moved for adjournment with Joe Vaal seconding. The motion having been carried unanimously, the Committee adjourned at 6:03 p.m.