

**Illinois State Advisory Council
on the Education
of Children with Disabilities**



Annual Report 2003-2004

DATE: July 1, 2004

MEMORANDUM

TO: All Interested Parties

FROM: Terri Devine, Chair
Illinois State Advisory Council on the Education
of Children with Disabilities

SUBJECT: Annual Report for 2003-2004

On behalf of the Illinois State Advisory Council on the Education of Children with Disabilities (ISAC), we are pleased to submit this report summarizing the Council's activities and accomplishments during its 2003-2004 sessions.

Although ISAC has lacked timely appointments and re-appointments to the Council, its members represent most of the geographic regions in the state of Illinois. Members represent parents of children with disabilities, people with disabilities, educators, governmental service providers, and a member at-large. ISAC committees include Executive, Bilingual, Comprehensive State Plan, General Supervision/Due Process, Family Communications, Finance, Legislation, Personnel Development, and Rules and Regulations.

ISAC has also been very active in the implementation of the Illinois' Continuous State Improvement Plan required by the U. S. Department of Education's Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP). The Council has provided legislative testimony, public comment on proposed rules and regulations, analyzed effects of the No Child Left Behind initiative on students with disabilities, addressed the critical shortage of teachers in special education, the lack of funding to provide adequate special education services, and Illinois' progress regarding teaching children in the least restrictive environment.

ISAC appreciates your support in making a free and appropriate public education a reality for all students in Illinois. Thank you for your continued attention to maintaining the level of services necessary for every student to attain his or her IEP goals.

Mission Statement

The role of the Illinois State Advisory Council on the Education of Children with Disabilities is to be a proactive body, advising the Governor, Legislature and State Board of Education on current issues relating to the education of children and youth with disabilities, as well as the unmet needs of these children and their families. It is also the responsibility of this Council to encourage new strategies and technologies, while advocating high standards of excellence throughout Illinois.

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Identity and Purpose

Identity

The Illinois State Advisory Council on the Education of Children with Disabilities (ISAC) is statutorily mandated by state and federal law to provide advice and policy guidance to the Governor, General Assembly, and the State Board of Education with respect to special education and related services for children with disabilities and the unmet needs of children with disabilities.

Purpose

The purpose of the Council is to:

- 1) Provide advice and policy guidance to the Governor, General Assembly, and the Illinois State Board of Education with respect to:
 - a) special education and related services for children with disabilities; and
 - b) unmet needs of children with disabilities.
- 2) Advise the State Board of Education regarding:
 - a) all rules and regulations related to the education of children with disabilities that are to be promulgated by the Board;
 - b) modifications or additions to county or regional comprehensive plans; and,
 - c) qualifications for hearing officers and the rules and procedures for hearings conducted under Section 14-8.02 or Section 14-8.02a.
- 3) Assist the State Board of Education in developing evaluations and reporting on data to the United States Secretary of Education.
- 4) Advise the State Board of Education in developing corrective action plans to address findings identified in federal monitoring reports pursuant to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.
- 5) Advise State and local education agencies regarding educational programs and materials that may be provided to children with disabilities to enable them to fully exercise their constitutional and legal rights and entitlements as citizens, including those afforded under the Federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973 as amended, and the Illinois Human Rights Act.

- 6) Advise the State Board of Education in developing and implementing policies relating to the coordination of services for children with disabilities.
- 7) Comment publicly on rules and regulations proposed by the State regarding the education of children with disabilities and the procedures for distribution of funds.

Council Membership

Membership The members must be citizens of the United States and of Illinois and are selected on the basis of their knowledge of, or experience in, the education of children with disabilities. Members are to be broadly representative of Illinois' population in regard to developmental, physical and mental disabilities, race, ethnic background, gender, and geographic location.

The membership of the Council is established by statute and includes twenty-three (23) persons appointed by the Governor and four (4) ex-officio voting members:

*Governor
Appointed*

Nine parents of children with disabilities between 3 and 21 years of age currently receiving special education services at public expense:

Mary Kay Ballasiotes	Bolingbrook	03/04
C. Jackson Darnall	Oak Park	11/03
Therese Devine	Orland Park	08/99
Judith Flink	Morton Grove	11/03
Kimberly Jachim	Palos Park	11/03
David Rands	Olney	11/03
Stanley J. Valentine	East Peoria	11/03
Jeffrey Malcolm Williams	Pecatonica	11/03
Suzanne Woods	Chesterfield	03/04

Five individuals with disabilities, including one student or former student who is at least 18 and no older than 21 years of age at the time of his or her appointment and who is receiving special education services at public expense or received those services at the time his or her high school program terminated.

Katherine Hackett	Shorewood	04/04
Kyle Packer	Effingham	03/04
Kathleen Plesko	Jonesboro	11/03
Linda Prewitt	Jacksonville	03/04
VACANT	(individual with disabilities)	

One regional superintendent of schools	Helen Tolan	Springfield	12/97
One representative of an institution of higher education that prepares special education and related services personnel	Brad Hedrick	Urbana	11/03
One teacher of students with disabilities	Elizabeth Gianulis	Oswego	11/03
One superintendent of a public school district	VACANT		
One director of special education cooperative or special education administrator from a school district of less than 500,000 population	Amy Kruppe	Morton Grove	01/03
One representative of a public charter school	VACANT		
One representative of a private school serving children with disabilities	Mike Otte	Orland Park	03/04
One representative of a vocational, community, or business organization that provides transition services to children with disabilities	Mary Ellen Abell	Carterville	08/99
One at-large member from the general public	Vickie Wilson	Springfield	03/04

Ex-Officio Members Renee Grant-Mitchell, Chicago Public Schools District 299
VACANT, Department of Corrections
Dwight Lambert, Department of Children and Family Services
Marjorie Olson, Department of Human Services/ORS

ISBE Staff

James Gunnell, Division Administrator, Special Education Services
Christopher Koch, Director of Special Education
Mary Jo Mattern-Jenkins, Consultant, Special Education Services

Committees

Standing Committees

Executive Committee
Comprehensive State Plan
General Supervision
Finance
Legislation/Interagency Communications
Family Communications
Rules and Regulations
Bilingual Special Education
Personnel Development

Ad-Hoc Committees

Site and Access Committee
By-Laws Committee

Council Meeting Schedule
2003-2004

DATE	TIME	MEETINGS	LOCATION
September 11, 2003 September 12, 2003	2:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m. 9:00 a.m. – 2:30 p.m.	Committee of the Whole Business Meeting	Springfield
March 30, 2004 March 31, 2004	2:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m. 9:00 a.m. – 2:30 p.m.	Committee of the Whole Business Meeting	Springfield
June 2, 2004 June 3, 2004	2:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m. 9:00 a.m. – 2:30 p.m.	Committee of the Whole Business Meeting	Springfield

Critical Issues Identified for Discussion

The Council did not reach consensus on critical issues for discussion in 2003-2004 but worked on getting the many new appointees oriented to the responsibilities and functioning of the Council.

ISAC Activities

September 11-12, 2003

- The Council heard testimony relative to the filling of vacancies on the Council by the Governor.
- The Chair went on record indicating that the lack of appointments to the Council impacts the ability of the Council to fulfill its statutory obligations.
- The Council was updated on new hires at the Division of Special Education Services.
- The Council was given a presentation on due process, mediations and complaints.
- The Council was updated on the Special Education Directors Conference.
- The Council was updated on school district monitoring and transition.

November 13-14, 2003

- While there was an orientation for new appointees, no business was conducted as there was some controversy generated about the validity of the appointment process; thus a quorum was not present.

March 30-31, 2004

- The Council welcomed twelve newly appointed members.
- The Council recognized former Council members who were leaving.
 - Jan Cleveland
 - William Kienzle
- The Council discussed the recommendation of the Class Size/Age Range Task Force and the ISBE response to HR 359.
- The Council heard a presentation from Dr. Koch on the special education staff in Chicago and Springfield, the recruitment of Due Process Hearing Officers and monitoring for school districts in the state, progress on the comprehensive state plan, transition date collection and the Mental Health Act.
- The Council heard a presentation on pending education related legislation.

June 2-3, 2004

- The Council learned that the Parent Survey is posted on the ISBE web site in both English and in Spanish.
- The new due process hearing officer training manual was presented by Dr. Chris Koch.
- The Council was updated on Reauthorization of IDEA, Parent Mentor and Technical Assistance grants, and the request for OSEP to speak with a parent group in Illinois.
- The Council heard a presentation on NO Child Left Behind 1% waiver guidelines.

Public Participation

The Council provides an opportunity for public participation at every business meeting. During this period of time, participants sign in and are provided five minutes to present the various issues and concerns they have.

Council Actions

September 12, 2003

The Council approved changes to the Procedures for Withdrawal from a Special Education Joint Agreement. The Regional Superintendent and the Special Education Director of the Cooperative having a district(s) requesting the withdrawal shall be invited to attend the first presentation before the Council.

The Council approved the proposed meeting calendar for the 2003-2004 year.

The Council directed the Chair to advise the ISBE in writing to appoint a task force to study class size and case load.

The Council directed the Chair to respond to HR 359: indicating that a survey was requested of stakeholders; indicating the areas of concern that exceeded the federal law; and indicating the time to make appropriate recommendation for changes.

The Council approved the 2002-2003 Annual Report.

March 31, 2004

The Council accepted the Parent Survey and advised the ISBE on its dissemination.

The Council adopted the revised Procedures for Withdrawal from a Special Education Joint Agreement.

June 3, 2004

The Council accepted the recommendations of the Due Process Steering Committee to name five new hearing officers and to retain fourteen hearing officers.

The Council elected new officers for the 2004-2005 year.

The Council adopted the meeting calendar for 2004-2005.

The Council voted to pursue alternative methods, including the utilization of technology, and to pilot this effort at its September meeting for future evaluation.

The Council directed the Chair to send a letter to parent groups to encourage participation in ISAC meetings.

Barriers to

Success

- Delay in Council appointments
- Understaffing in ISBE - Special Education Unit
- Staffing changes in ISBE - Special Education Unit
- Finance
- Time sensitive responses
- Awaiting the reauthorization of IDEA Act to be passed.
- Controversy over appointment process

Council Minutes

Copies of approved minutes of the Council meetings from September 12, 2003, through June 3, 2004, are available upon request. Individuals are asked to contact the Executive Secretary to the State Advisory Council, Illinois State Board of Education, 100 North First Street, Springfield, Illinois 62777. Inquiries may be directed to 217/782-5589 (Voice), 217/782-1900 (TTY), or 217/782-0372 (fax).

APPENDIX
PARENT/GUARDIAN SURVEY

ILLINOIS STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION
 Division of Special Education Services
 100 North First Street, N-253
 Springfield, Illinois 62777-0001
 Telephone: 217/782-5589

Date _____

PARENT/GUARDIAN SURVEY

The purpose of this survey is to collect information from parents involved in determining appropriate services for their children who receive special education services. The survey data will be used for future ISBE planning to improve practice. If you have questions about the survey, contact Deb Kunz at 217-782-5589 or 1-866-262-6663. Thank you for your input.

Mail to: Deb Kunz, Illinois State Board of Education OR Fax to: 217-782-0372
 Division of Special Education Services
 100 North First Street, Springfield, Illinois 62777-0001

PERSONAL BACKGROUND

YOUR SCHOOL DISTRICT NAME AND/OR NUMBER	MY ZIP CODE
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YOUR CHILD'S AGE

- a. Birth-2 b. 3-5 c. 6-11 d. 12-17 e. 18-21

YOUR CHILD'S PRIMARY DISABILITY

- | | | |
|---|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> a. Developmental delay | <input type="checkbox"/> f. Hearing impairment | <input type="checkbox"/> k. Specific learning disability |
| <input type="checkbox"/> b. Autism | <input type="checkbox"/> g. Mental retardation | <input type="checkbox"/> l. Speech or language impairment |
| <input type="checkbox"/> c. Deaf-blindness | <input type="checkbox"/> h. Multiple disabilities | <input type="checkbox"/> m. Traumatic brain injury |
| <input type="checkbox"/> d. Deafness | <input type="checkbox"/> i. Orthopedic impairment | <input type="checkbox"/> n. Visual impairment and blindness |
| <input type="checkbox"/> e. Emotional disturbance | <input type="checkbox"/> j. Other health impaired | <input type="checkbox"/> o. Don't know |

ETHNICITY

- a. Black b. Asian/Pacific Islander c. White d. Hispanic e. Native American
 f. Other _____

I AM

- a. Parent b. Foster Parent c. Surrogate Parent d. Grandparent e. Guardian f. Other

1. Which of the following best describes the school your child attends?

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> a. A regular school that serves a wide variety of students | <input type="checkbox"/> f. Alternative school |
| <input type="checkbox"/> b. A school that serves only students with disabilities | <input type="checkbox"/> g. Another kind of school, SPECIFY _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> c. A school that specializes in a particular subject area or theme, sometimes called a magnet school | <input type="checkbox"/> h. Juvenile justice facility |
| <input type="checkbox"/> d. A voc-tech school (vocational/technical) | <input type="checkbox"/> i. Hospital school |
| <input type="checkbox"/> e. A charter school | <input type="checkbox"/> j. Home schooled |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> k. Home bound schooling/instruction |

2. Yes No Is this school located in the neighborhood where you live?

3. Yes No During this current school year is any part of your child's school day spent in general education classes mostly with children who **don't** have disabilities or special needs?

4. Do you feel that the education and services that your child receives are:

- a. Highly individualized to your child's needs b. Somewhat individualized, or c. Not individualized at all?

5. During this school year has your child received any of the following services? (Check all that apply.)

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> a. Speech or language therapy | <input type="checkbox"/> j. Nursing care |
| <input type="checkbox"/> b. Audiology services for hearing problems | <input type="checkbox"/> k. Personal assistant/aide |
| <input type="checkbox"/> c. Psychological or mental health services or counseling | <input type="checkbox"/> l. Tutor |
| <input type="checkbox"/> d. Physical therapy | <input type="checkbox"/> m. Reader or interpreter, including sign language |
| <input type="checkbox"/> e. Social work services | <input type="checkbox"/> n. Assistive technology services or devices, such as help selecting, getting or using assistive technology devices |
| <input type="checkbox"/> f. Occupational therapy or life skills therapy | <input type="checkbox"/> o. Transportation |
| <input type="checkbox"/> g. Recreational therapy | <input type="checkbox"/> p. Service coordination or case management |
| <input type="checkbox"/> h. Orientation and mobility services | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> i. Medical services for diagnosis or evaluation | |

6. Who came up with the goals for your child in his/her IEP? Was it...

- a. Mostly your family
 b. Mostly teachers and other school staff
 c. You and the school staff together
 d. Advocate/Consultant
 e. Doesn't know about any goals

7. How do you feel about your family's involvement in the decisions about your child's IEP? Do you feel you...

- a. Wanted to be more involved
 b. Were involved about the right amount, or
 c. Wanted to be less involved

8. How much progress do you think your child has made toward meeting these IEP goals? Would you say...

- a. A lot of progress
 b. Some progress
 c. Not much progress
 d. No progress

9. Yes No During this school year, has your child participated in any **school activities** outside of class, such as sports teams, band or chorus, school clubs or student government?

10. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the statement: My child's IEP goals are challenging and appropriate. Would you say...

- a. Strongly agree
 b. Agree
 c. Disagree
 d. Strongly disagree

11. Yes No Have you, or has anyone in your family, participated in any parent training meetings, programs or trainings for families of students with disabilities?

12. Would you say you are **very satisfied**, **somewhat satisfied**, **somewhat dissatisfied**, or **very dissatisfied** with:

	VERY SATISFIED	SOMEWHAT SATISFIED	SOMEWHAT DISSATISFIED	VERY DISSATISFIED
a. The school your child has attended this year?				
b. The teachers your child has had this year?				
c. The educational services or programs that your child has received this year?				
d. The educational services or programs that your child has received altogether in school up to now?				
e. The amount and difficulty of homework your child is assigned?				
f. The special education services your child receives?				

13. Yes No I know about the state special education complaint process and understand when it is appropriate to use.

14. Yes No Has your family ever been through mediation because of a conflict with the school about your child's special education program?

15. **If so**, what was the outcome of the mediation? Did you...

- a. Receive the services you asked for
 b. Not receive the services you asked for
 c. Partially receive what you asked for
 d. Have a due process hearing, or
 e. Something else? (specify) _____

16. Yes No Has your family ever been through a due process hearing because of a conflict with the school about your child's special education program?

17. **If so**, what was the outcome of the due process hearing? Did you...

- a. Receive the services you asked for
 b. Not receive the services you asked for
 c. Partially receive what you asked for
 d. Go for mediation, or
 e. Something else? (specify) _____

THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS ARE FOR PARENTS OF CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES AGES 14-21.

18. Yes No Has your child met with teachers to set goals for what he/she will do after high school and make a plan for how he/she will achieve them?
19. Which of the following best describes your child's role in his/her IEP (and transition planning)?
- a. He/she was present in discussions but participated very little or not at all.
 - b. He/she provided some input
 - c. He/she took a leadership role, helping set the direction of the discussions, goals and plans.
 - d. DON'T KNOW ABOUT ANY GOALS.

- | | DEFINITELY
WILL | PROBABLY
WILL | PROBABLY
WON'T | DEFINITELY
WON'T | DON'T
KNOW |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 20. How likely do you think it is that your child will get a regular high school diploma?
<i>A REGULAR HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA DOES NOT INCLUDE A G.E.D., A CERTIFICATE OF COMPLETION OR A SPECIAL DIPLOMA FOR STUDENTS RECEIVING SPECIAL EDUCATION SERVICES.</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| 21. How likely do you think it is that your child will attend school (i.e. university, community college, technical schools and others) after high school? Do you think he/she | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| 22. How likely do you think it is that your child eventually will earn enough to support [him/her]self without financial help from [his/her] family or government benefits programs? Do you think he/she | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Additional comments: