

MINUTES OF FIRST ISBE OUTCOMES TASK-FORCE MEETING

**August 5, 2009
Kiefer School, Peoria**

Approximately 55 diverse nonpublic personnel, representing almost that many programs, attended our inaugural meeting. All parts of the state, out-of-state programs and all primary disability categories were represented.

Paul Nijensohn and Sarah Sebert explained the purpose and intended outcomes for the Outcomes Committee. The Illinois State Performance Plan was briefly discussed and compared to this project.

Purpose of this meeting: To have nonpublic special education school personnel identify possible outcomes appropriate to nonpublic special education programs and to develop committees to study and determine the validity and rigor of each.

Long-term Outcome: Develop a set of outcomes and indicators that are measurable, applicable to most schools (*) and created by a field of experts from nonpublic special education programs.

The group was randomly divided into eight smaller groups whose task was to brainstorm suggestions for outcomes to be explored. Upon re-grouping, ideas were divided into four main topics: Behavior/Clinical, Academics, Transition, and Other. The following is a list of all preliminary outcomes that were identified:

***Acquisition of positive social skills
Attendance/Increased attendance from previous school
District/Parent/Stakeholder satisfaction
Improving academic proficiency
Parent participation
Positive culture & climate
Post-secondary outcomes
Progress on IEP Goals
Reducing levels of clinical supports
Reduction of dropout
Reduction of incident reports
Reduction of maladaptive behavior
Reduction of restraints & physical management
Re-integration to lesser restrictive environment
Sense of belonging
Stability of appropriate placement
Transition programming success (planning & services during placement)***

Each person was then given the opportunity to place their top three votes on any area they felt had the highest importance. Many ideas were combined due to their similarities. Final topics are listed below along with a rough (and not final) description of the purpose of each.

Academics: How can programs know they are using the most appropriate curriculum? What assessments exist to measure academic progress accurately & efficiently? Can nonpublic schools demonstrate consistent student academic progress and/or improvement in comparison to public school settings?

Chairperson: Craig Maki from Maryville Academy

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Attendance: How to aggregate and collect data to show that student attendance is positively changed by placement in a nonpublic program?

Chairperson: Sandra Rodenberg from Illinois Center for Autism

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Behavior Change: What measures and data demonstrate reduction in inappropriate behaviors and increases in appropriate behaviors?

Chairperson: Sol Rappaport from Connections Day School

srappaport@counselingconnections.net

IEP Progress: All 14-7.02 students have IEPs. How can progress on IEP goals be accurately measured? How can the progress of students at different schools be compared?

Chairperson: Susan Bower from Lutherbrook Academy

Susan_bower@lcfs.org

Reintegration: What data is needed to show how students are best reintegrated into a less restrictive setting?

Chairperson: Ken Carwell from Special Education Services

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Stakeholder Satisfaction: How satisfied are parents, referring districts, and surrounding communities with the services of the program?

Chairperson: Bridget O'Connor from Giant Steps Illinois

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Transition/Post-Secondary: How is the success of a program's transition efforts measured? How is post-school success measured?

Chairperson: Jessica Lee from SEAL

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The large group again broke into smaller groups according to the interest of each participant. These groups elected a chairperson, decided on a next meeting date and place and discussed the topic in the few remaining minutes.

The chairpersons will be meeting as a group with Paul and Sarah quarterly to discuss progress. The first meeting will be November 16th, the morning before our Nonpublic Conference at the Oak Lawn Hilton. All committee members are invited to these meetings. By next year's Special Education Directors Conference in August we intend to have the outcomes organized so that programs can begin to collect data and "test the system". After a year of testing and refining, we hope to be able to post the outcomes for schools to use.

Anyone not in attendance at this inaugural meeting is welcome to join the committee of their choice. Please contact the committee chairperson and/or Paul & Sarah. Be prepared to work. Thanks to all who attended and traveled to this important meeting. This project would be near insurmountable without your participation, insight and expertise.

Please contact either Paul Nijensohn or Sarah Sebert with any questions you may have.

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**The use of the identified outcomes will not be required. However, since programs are required, by the Part 401 Rules to set and measure success toward outcomes, it would make sense to use these that will have been validated.*