**COUNCIL ON EDUCATIONAL SERVICES FOR EXCEPTIONAL CHILDREN**

**March 2023**

**Summary of Actions**

**Welcome, Call to Order, Introductions, Review of Agenda, Review of Meeting Minutes – December 2022**

Chairperson Diane Coffey called the in-person/virtual meeting to order. Council members provided self-introductions and reviewed the day’s agenda.

The September Summary of Actions was reviewed. The Council approved the June Summary of Actions with no comments or edits.

The December Agenda was reviewed. The Council approved the December Agenda.

**Agency Updates – Mrs. Sherry Thomas and Mr. Matt Hoskins**

Matt Hoskins shared information about the trends from schools about the mental health reports. Researched post school closures due to COVID identified the need to teach social awareness skills to students across the grade levels. Districts have been able to engage in risk-protocols and increase Memorandums of Agreements (MOAs) with area mental health agencies to support students in schools. Project AWARE grant through SAMPSA has two active grants with 6 sites: Cleveland County, Rockingham County, Beaufort County, Jackson County, Nash County, and Sampson County. Ms. Christy Grant, EC Director in Nash County, spoke about the impacts this grant has in her district and students. They are seeing a spike in referrals/mental health needs because they are getting better at identifying and getting to the issues at the core level.

The Council asked for an update regarding Child Count numbers and EC teacher vacancy numbers. Sherry Thomas shared that it’s too early to tell if there are changes in identifying students, but trends appear to show no decrease in numbers. Current trends show a large number of unfilled teacher positions in many districts across the state. The OEC has provided guidance to districts to make sure there is communication with parents when there is a vacancy and to have a plan for addressing how services will be provided. The OEC has offered a stipend to current college students enrolled in teacher education providing they agree to teach in a NC public school for 1 year upon graduation.

The Council held a discussion about information presented and provided recommendations to the chair for inclusion in the annual report to the State Board of Education.

**NCDPI School Performance Grade Redesign – Dr. Tammy Howard and Kristie VanAuken**

Kristie VanAuken, Special Advisor, Workforce Engagement, presented information on the redesigning of school performance grades as part of Operation Polaris. The workgroup is now in the Design phase after conducting research in the previous months. The Testing and Accountability goal is to create a Portrait of a Graduate as part of the school performance grade redesign.

Dr. Tammy Howard, Director of Accountability and Testing, provided information about where the workgroup is currently in the process. The workgroup partnered with EdNC to survey over 19,000 participants about the accountability indicators/measures to include in the school performance grades and will be working on narrowing down the list to the top academic indicators and top school quality indicators.

The Council held a discussion about information presented and provided recommendations to the chair for inclusion in the annual report to the State Board of Education.

**Rulemaking Process and EC Policies – Dr. Carol Ann Hudgens**

Carol Ann Hudgens began by explaining the OEC is undertaking this project because of a recent change in the General Assembly to ensure the *NC Policies* are not duplicating another law or repeating another rule, law, or regulation currently in place. The OEC is currently conducting an analysis of its policies to identify content duplicated in state or federal regulation versus content that is not addressed in either state or federal regulations. The predicted timeline for completion is summer of 2023 with implementation beginning in 2023-2024.

The Council held a discussion about information presented and provided recommendations to the chair for inclusion in the annual report to the State Board of Education.

**Council Meeting Restructure and Setting of Future Meetings – Diane Coffey**

Diane Coffey, chair of Council, shared the new layout for the agenda with the inclusion of a recommendations/actions section after each presentation. This is to allow for council discussion and to help with writing the annual report for the State Board of Education. Diane also asked the Council about continuing with in-person meetings versus an all-virtual setting. After discussion, the decision was made to continue offering meetings as a hybrid option but asking that members make an attempt at attending the September meeting in person since that is the first meeting of the new year.

**Learning Loss Discussion – Council**

In the June meeting, information regarding the *Report to the NC General Assembly: An Impact Analysis of Student Learning During the COVID-19 Pandemic* was shared but the Council did not have an opportunity to discuss as a group for possible recommendations to the State Board. Therefore, a discussion was held at this meeting where members could share their thoughts and ask questions. After the discussion, recommendations were added to the agenda for inclusion in the annual report.

**Public Comments**

No Public Comments

**State Performance Plan/Annual Performance Report (SPP/APR) Update – Lauren Holahan**

Lauren Holahan, Coordinator for SSIP, provided an update on the SPP and APR that is submitted to OSEP on February 1, 2023. The State Performance Plan will be in effect until the 2027 school year as it is a six-year plan. Lauren shared the data for indicators 4, 8, 9, 10, and 17 with the Council that are included in the report the OEC will be submitting in February.

The Council held a discussion about information presented and provided questions for the OEC to investigate.

**OEC Parent Call Trends – Council**

In the June meeting, information was shared by Alexis Utz, parent liaison, regarding the parent calls received but the Council did not have an opportunity to discuss as a group. Therefore, the information was updated and shared with the Council for a discussion. After the discussion, recommendations were recorded on the agenda for future actions to consider taking.

Meeting adjourned at 2:26 pm.