

**Continuing Advisory Committee (CAC) Meeting Minutes
November 10, 2021- Zoom Meeting
9:00 AM-10:37 AM**

CAC Attendees: Agatha Thibodeaux, Alicia Giordano, Laurie Rodriguez, Jen Stratton, Laura Villareal, Elizabeth “Beth” Donaldson, Jana Burns, Amy Litzinger, Susan Nichols, Teresa Bronsky

CAC Absentees: Jana McKelvey, Shemica S. Allen, Rachel Dreiling, RayTijerina, Stephanie Martinez, JoAnn Wofford

Texas Education Agency: Keith Swink,

9:01 Welcome and Opening-Jen Stratton, CAC Chair

Quorum was reached at 9:01, Jen Stratton opened the meeting and reviewed meeting guidelines, and agenda for the day. Quorum was present.

9:05 Discuss Possible Topics for the CAC’s Next Legislative Report

- The October 1st 2021 letter from USDOE: OSEP, request that this letter be addressed by TEA at our next meeting.
- Discuss the implications of HB 785.
- Request for TEA to provide an overview of all of the ESC regional service centers as well as outside vendors primary leadership roles for various state initiatives.
 - Current link provided: <https://tea.texas.gov/academics/special-student-populations/special-education/statewide-technical-assistance-networks>
- Addressing the Mental Wellness of Staff and Students.

9:31 Presentation by Amy Litzinger, Legislative Update

Full and Initial Evaluation

- **HB785 by Rep Allen** – Requires an annual review of a BIP, plus more frequently (within ten days) for a change of placement, change of behavior, discipline frequency, or unexcused absences. Requires schools to review or consider recommending a BIP for a child with a disability in certain disciplinary actions. Requires notifications of the use of restraints, time-out, or certain disciplinary actions, if the child has a disability.

Data Privacy

- **HB2287 by Thompson** – The Collaborative Task Force on Public School Mental Health Services will be collecting data from TEA, ISDs, HHSC regarding threat assessments, DAEP and JJEPs, etc. but this data may not include student identifying information, such as names and birthdates.

Mental Health

- [HB1525](#) by Rep Huberty – Allows school districts to use compensatory education funds to help students develop social and emotional skills. This bill covered multiple education issues, also revising TEA's special grant programs for dyslexia and autism, also creating a temporary Texas Commission on Special Education Funding.
- [HB123](#) by Senator Johnson – Integrate social-emotional learning skills into state curriculum standards and character education programs.
- [HB2287](#) by Rep Thompson – TEA must maintain a database of mental health training and services provided by each school district, producing a biennial legislative report.
- [HB168](#) by Senator Blanco – Requires school districts to take steps to support the social-emotional wellness and mental health of students when conducting active shooter drills on school campuses.
- [SB179](#) by Senator Lucio – Supports school counselors in being able to focus their time on core counseling duties.
- [SB279](#) by Hinojosa – Adds suicide prevention information to student ID cards in grades 6-12 and in higher education.
- [SB2050](#) by Senator Menendez – Emphasizes positive school climates, healthy relationships, and student health and wellness initiatives as part of school district bully prevention efforts.
- [SB1921](#) by Senator Lucio – Requires UIL to disregard a student's absence for attending outpatient mental health appointments.
- **Rider 19** = ABA therapy shall be implemented no later than 1/1/22. Currently slipped to 2/1/22.

Impartial Hearing Officers

- [HB1252](#) by Rep Moody – Expands the state's statute of limitations from for requesting a special education due process hearing, increasing it from one year to two years.

Educator Certification & Educator Preparation Curriculum

- [HB159](#) by Rep Gonzalez – Focusing on regular education prep, this bill improves training for educators to effectively serve every student, including 504, special education, dyslexia and ESL. Requires that teachers broaden instructional planning to allow for multiple ways to learn and to demonstrate knowledge, reducing barriers to instruction by incorporating multi-tiered systems of support, co-teaching models, positive behavior intervention, adaptations, modifications, and use of assistive technology. Adds a requirement for principals to oversee this in their school.
- [SB560](#) by Senator Lucio – Increases/improves bilingual education in Pre-K and beyond by having TWC and the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board collaborate to better prepare educators.
- [HB2256](#) by Rep Guerra – Creates a certification in bilingual special education to build a pipeline of school leaders who are equipped to serve the specific needs of English learner children with disabilities and developmental delays.

COVID-19

- [SB40](#) by Senator Zaffirini – Authorizes telehealth offerings for a licensed therapist who oversees assistants or interns if the patient (student) is located in a school.
- [SB89](#) by Senator Menendez – Requires a student's ARD committee to conduct an individualized review for Compensatory Services, because of COVID-19.
- [SB1697](#) by Senator Paxton – Permits a parent or guardian to elect for a student to repeat a grade or course(s) from last year (2020-2021) in this year (2021-2022). Original grades can be removed from the GPA and replaced. These allowances expire on 9/1/22, unless extended.

- **SB1716 by Senator Taylor** – Establishes a State Supplemental Education Services (SSES) grant program, by expanding a grant program originally limited to students taking the STAR Alt II, so that with this new program, all students with an ARD may have extra supports when at home to mitigate the losses experienced because of COVID-19. The ARD committee is required to tell each family about the program. Parents then apply for their student to participate. Those chosen will have access to an online portal to select educational and instructional services for use by their child, including access to local professionals. The program is capped at \$1500 per student.
- **HB999 by Rep Bernal** – During COVID-19, expands qualifications for individual graduation committees for all seniors, regardless of performance on the STAR test.

9:57 Public Comment

Steven Aleman – **with Disability Rights Texas**

- Steven sits on the newly formed Continuous Improvement Steering Committee. The Fed requirement will target performance. The CAC should request a briefing from the CISC and request that a member of CAC be on the CISC.

10:03 Discuss, Recommend, and Take Possible Action on Current and Future Topics

- Create a standing agenda item: ISD impact issues - a forum to allow committee members to learn about specific issues that ISDs are addressing.
- Request briefing from TEA regarding the CISC (Continuing Improvement Steering Committee).
- Request briefing from TEA regarding the Maintenance Financial Support requirements, including future concerns.
- TEA Continuous Improvement Steering Committee. House Bill 2 on MFS; and HB 1525 on special education funding commission.
- Request briefing from TEA regarding the status on HB 1525 Special Education Funding Commission, including the appointee process.
- Presentation on the impact of Covid on the Special Education Population.
- The CISC and request that a member of CAC be on the CISC.

10:09 Jen Stratton moved to have future meeting date of February 16, 2022 from 9:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.. Amy Litzinger seconded that motion. The committee voted and approved, pending physical location availability.

10:35 Minutes were approved. Amy Litzinger moved to approve the minutes. Jen Stratton seconded the motion.

10:37 Motion to Adjourn

Teresa Bronsky made a motion to adjourn. Jen Stratton seconded motion. Meeting adjourned at 10:37.