

DRAFT Advisory Council to the Division of Autism Services
Minutes, November 18, 2009

MEMBERS PRESENT: Rep. Cathy Abercrombie, Nancy Bagatell, Jennifer Carroll, Maggie Casciato, Jan Galloway, Chera Gerstein, Ann Gionet, Jacqueline Kelleher, David Daniel Klipper, James Loomis, Sara Reed, Lois Rosenwald, Jonathan Ross, Stan Soby, Jennifer Ureta, Tricia Winter and Larry Wood

MEMBERS ABSENT: Judy Dowd, Ruth Eren, Mary Franco, Elaine Flynn, Sara Lourie, Nikki Richer, Angela Spino and Joseph Stobierski

EX OFFICIO MEMBERS: Kathy Reddington, Lori Conchado

There were no members of the public present. Minutes for the September 16, 2009 meeting were accepted.

David Daniel Klipper introduced and welcomed Nancy Bagatell of Quinnipiac University as a new member to the council.

American Recovery Reinvestment Act (ARRA) Jacqui Kelleher presented an overview of 138 million allocated to the State Department of Education (SDE) for students 3 – 21 with Autism Spectrum Disorders. The contact person for the grant applications is Brian Cunnane. To date, 13.8 million in funding has been dispersed. The three main areas are development of new programs (15% has been allocated), providing professional development training (40%), and purchasing of state-of-the-art assistive technology. This initiative has created 689 jobs. You may visit the Department of Education website for information at: <http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/cwp/view.asp?A=2683&Q=322286>

The SDE is looking at the education of children on the Autism Spectrum (*See attached "ARRA Recommendations" handout*). They are working with regional contacts to build assessment centers to provide outreach to districts. Three areas, Childhood Education, Assistive Technology and Parent Involvement, have been identified as priorities for children with ASD and in Special Education. The federal government requires districts to identify children with disabilities by comparing racial needs and redirecting funds as necessary. Jacqui is bringing a group together to look at this issue.

Reinstatement of the Medicaid Waiver Subcommittee – Kathy Reddington would like to reconvene the committee as we move along on the development of the Waiver. She would like members available to review a 1st draft, which is expected to be ready in January.

Nationwide Town Hall on Autistic Adults in the US – Maggie Casciato participated in the forum sponsored by the Advancing Future for Adults with Autism (AFAA) consisting of parents, consumers and providers who worked on strategies, which were then presented and discussed nationally through “virtual attendance”. All ideas were summarized for overall patterns and participants could then vote. The information will

be used in a 3rd Phase “Autism Congress” in 2010. Members may visit the AFAA website at: www.afaa-us.org for additional information. An additional resource, Global Regional Asperger Syndrome Partnership can be accessed at: www.grasp.org

Data Committee discussion on how to collect data for the Housing Committee – Jacqui Kelleher provided an overview. The committee has researched various surveys already conducted and found they are either too comprehensive or too short to collect the information needed and organizations are not willing to share their instruments as they are not validated. In short, the wheel has not successfully been created; we need to chart new territory. It was agreed that pilot program participants should be included in a survey; that town social workers would be a great resource; the survey should be truncated by age; it should be both quantitative and qualitative and should include a needs assessment for a large population to best capture information needed to develop an action plan. The information gathered will be used to determine models of housing that may be best for our consumers and a cost for each model, which can be shared with legislators.

Public Affairs Committee – Sara Reed shared a handout (*See attached*) of ideas the committee suggested as areas of concentration. It was suggested and agreed that Kathy will look into creating a webinar video of consumers in the program, which will focus on their accomplishments. The video will be a low cost tool, which can be posted on the DDS website and then shared with legislators. The council would like to host “Coffee Forums” statewide to bring constituents, consumers and legislators together. It will allow the council an opportunity to share the success of the Pilot Program, educate legislators and initiate discussions to increase funding to expand the program.

Other – Information gathered by the Provider Committee was shared during a Provider Forum on 11/16, facilitated by Kathy Reddington and assisted by Stan Soby and Larry Wood. A new initiative to train staff through the College of Direct Support was discussed and may be implemented.

Executive Committee - The next Executive Committee’s next bi-monthly teleconference call is scheduled for December 16th at 9:30 a.m. The bi-monthly calls for 2010 are scheduled for: 2/17, 4/14, 6/16, 8/18, 10/20, and 12/15. All are at 9:30, using the established call-in number.

Advisory Council Meetings for 2010 are scheduled for: 1/20, 3/17, 5/19, 7/21, 9/15 and 11/17. All meetings are 9:00 – noon at the DDS Office located on 470 James Street, New Haven, CT.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:50.