

2018 - 2019
ANNUAL REPORT

of the

West Virginia
Advisory Council
for the
Education of
Exceptional Children



July 1, 2018 to June 30, 2019

Preface

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEA) requires each state to have an Advisory Panel. The West Virginia Advisory Council for the Education of Exceptional Children (WVACEEC) is also mandated by State Code 18-20-6. The Council is charged in part with advising decision makers regarding the unmet needs of exceptional children. The mission adopted by the Council is to influence the State Board of Education, public policy makers, and West Virginia's citizens in ways that continuously improve educational outcomes for children with exceptionalities. The Council is composed of members appointed by the State Superintendent of Schools.

Council Members, 2018-2019

Brenda Lamkin	Buckhannon, WV (Upshur)	Parent, WVPTI
Michelle Norweck	Barboursville, WV (Cabell)	Parent
Jeff McCroskey	Amma, WV (Roane)	Community Member
Kelly Miller	Sweetland, WV (Lincoln)	Parent
Jacob Green	Madison, WV (Boone)	Parent, Office of Diversion/Transition
Susan Beck	Charleston, WV (Kanawha)	State Agency Representative
Rhonda Stout	Maxwelton, WV (Greenbrier)	Parent, Teacher, Behavior Specialist
Conrae Lucas Adkins	Hamlin, WV (Lincoln)	Marshall University
Melanie Hesse	Romney, WV (Hampshire)	Schools for the Deaf and the Blind
Erica Sauer	Weirton, WV (Hancock)	Special Education Administrator
Vacant		McKinney-Vento (HEARTH Act)
Vacant		Individual with a Disability

Council Staff

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The activities of the West Virginia Advisory Council for the Education of Exceptional Children are supported and funded by a Federal grant from the West Virginia Department of Education, Office of Special Education.

COUNCIL ACTIVITIES

The Advisory Council plans and initiates a variety of activities in order to meet its charge and achieve its mission. The Council:

- schedules and conducts regional meetings across the state to seek input and gain information about programs and services for exceptional students.
- informs local media, local and regional special education administrators, Parent Educator Resource Centers, principals, superintendents, school board members, school improvement councils, faculty senates and community members about scheduled meetings.
- provides a forum for programs to be showcased and issues to be identified.
- develops and shares information and the Annual Report of recommendations with the State Board of Education, Legislature, schools, and members of the public.
- reviews and comments on proposed policies, regulations and procedures affecting children with exceptionalities.
- provides a part-time staff to ensure access to the Council.
- participates in related special education activities.
- assigns members to various state committees and task forces.
- provides practical information to parents on how to deal with concerns.
- participates in meetings with other groups associated with providing special education services.
- serves as a stakeholder group for the development of the State Performance Plan and the Annual Performance Report, both required by federal law.
- cooperates and collaborates with the Office of Special Education (OSE) of the West Virginia Department of Education and other public and private agencies to address the unmet needs of students with exceptionalities.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

2018-2019

Although the Council is charged with identifying the unmet needs of children with exceptionalities, it is important to recognize that there are many parents, families, educators, and other agencies working together to ensure access to the benefits of public education. Examples include, but are by no means limited to:

- **PARENTS, FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES**

Enormous gratitude is extended to all the parents, families and community members committed to support and improve services for all students. Special thanks are due to all those community members who provided testimony at Council's public hearings this year.

The Council admires the work of WV Parent Training & Information Inc. in its work with families of children and youth with disabilities through training, information and technical assistance. The Council is fortunate to have two representatives from this organization working with us to improve collaboration and share information with parents. Parent Educator Resource Centers in some counties provide additional support and assistance in understanding special education programs and obligations. Their contributions were reflected in the report on Healthy Grand Families of Harrison Co. and by Nancy Cline state coordinator for Family Engagement.

Four community organizations have contributed additional resources to promote understanding and information for students and families through online, interactive resources. These groups include WV Prevention First, Pathways WV, Help & Hope WV and Stigma Free WV and presented engaging resources for individuals dealing with crisis.

- **COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICTS**

Of the thirteen school systems represented this year, all should be commended for their efforts to increase the level of student achievement and increase the graduation rate for students. Noteworthy efforts include extensive professional development opportunities, interagency collaboration, specialized training for new special education teachers, monthly support groups, computer/technology assisted instruction and enhanced collaboration with institutions of higher education. These are widespread efforts to improve teachers' capacity to address the needs of all students and require dedication and persistence to maintain these initiatives year after year.

Districts articulated many innovative and creative methods used to overcome barriers that inhibit the effective provision of services to

students with disabilities. While noting that compliance is essential for accountability, districts continue to engage in activities that promote “results driven accountability” and continue to partner with external agencies for the benefit of transient and transitional students. All of these efforts strengthen the capacity of school systems to provide a free appropriate public education to exceptional students in West Virginia.

The Council would like to commend all of the districts visited for their attention to two significant concerns. Each county is focused on increasing the graduation rate of students with disabilities through expansion of successful transition to post- secondary education, careers and community opportunities. Additionally, early intervention with modified programming and career awareness aims to keep students in school and reduce the drop-out rate.

Secondly, interagency networks are evolving to support students with emotional and social challenges through school and community based mental health clinics, parent support groups and other community enterprises. Although the success rate of students with emotional problems caused by chemical or environmental circumstances is less than optimistic, all districts are open to collaboration with other agencies to break the cycle of this national epidemic.

- **WEST VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION**

The Office of Special Education is to be commended for fostering partnerships with state, regional and national technical assistance centers. Collaboration with the Autism Training Center specifically addresses concerns about positive school climate, through Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports and Early Childhood Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports. The Council supports the on-going need for teacher training related to research-based strategies through summer academies, and teacher boot camps. ReClaim WV: Connecting Social-Emotional and Mental Health Supports to the Opioid Epidemic demonstrates another inter-departmental and inter-agency commitment of the Department.

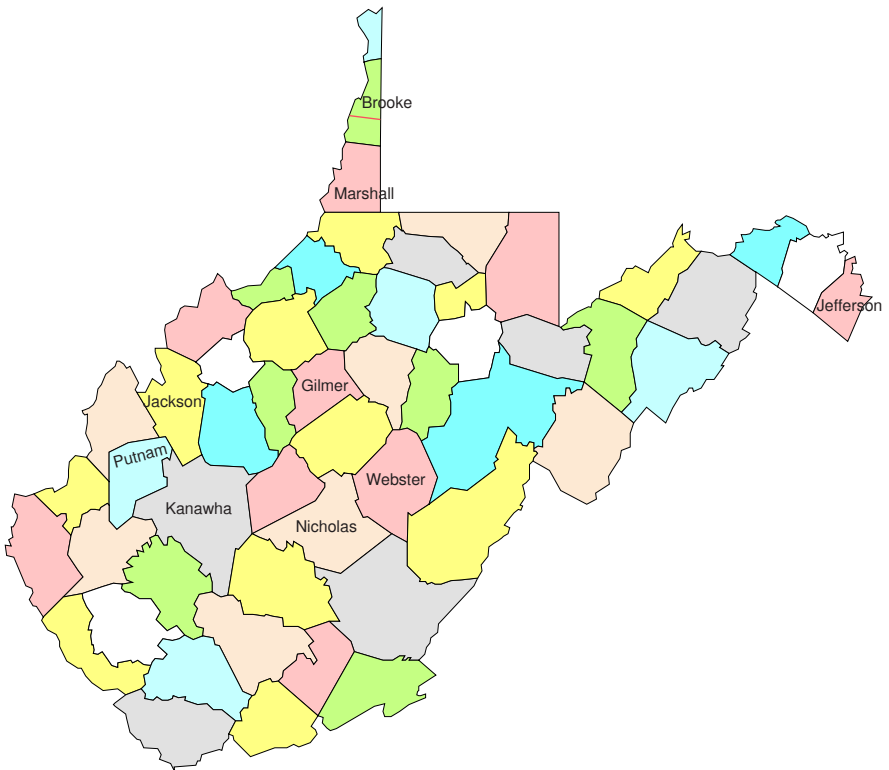
The Council has the privilege and obligation of serving as one of the stakeholder groups for the Office of Special Education’s State Performance Plan (SPP) and Annual Performance Report (APR), both required by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA 2004). The Council was pleased to submit letters of support in pursuit of funding for the Families Engagement Grant.

(Continued page 5)

Meeting Sites in 2018-2019

September 13-14, 2018	Gilmer County
October 11-12, 2018	Kanawha & Putnam Counties
November 8-9, 2018	Nicholas & Webster Counties
December 13-14, 2018	Jackson County
February 7-8, 2019	Brooke & Marshall Counties
April 4-5, 2019	Jefferson County
May 2-3, 2019	Annual Work Session, Kanawha County

All meetings are open to the public for comments and reports are provided by state and district staff. Additionally, speakers are invited to address topics of concern and interest.



Graduation 20/20, West Virginia's State Systemic Improvement Plan, has resulted in improved graduation rates for students with disabilities and is being nationally recognized for its accomplishments. (WestEd National Center for Systemic Improvement). Funded by the WVDE and Office of Special Education, the newly established Transition Technical Assistance Center (TTAC) under the direction of Jeff McCroskey and his team from Community Access Inc. has exceeded the initial goal for support to 14 counties by an additional 6 districts. TTAC services include training for teachers, students and parents on transition publications/websites and by creating work exploration sites in the districts. This collaboration with the State Parks and other state agencies demonstrates the capacity of students with disabilities to perform and sustain value within the community and for themselves.

- **STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION**

The Council applauds the West Virginia Board of Education for its leadership in setting strategic goals for school improvement and for developing policy structure and accountability measures necessary to achieve them. Such leadership, coupled with policy oversight and ongoing professional development, has provided many new opportunities to improve achievement for all students. Special appreciation is extended to the State Board and the WV Department of Education for offering the public an opportunity to participate in forums and surveys to ascertain community perspectives on the state of education and publication of the results in West Virginia's Voice.

PERVASIVE ISSUES, CONCERNS and RECOMMENDATIONS

Throughout the year, the Council listens to comments from school personnel and parents about their challenges and accomplishments. The diversity of culture, terrain, and local opportunity is vast for our small state, but there are universal areas of concern which are consistently discussed as the Council travels to all regions of West Virginia. In the recently released report *West Virginia's Voice*, we identify numerous similarities with concerns and needs that have been reported in the Council's Annual Reports over the past decade. No less than 12 of the 18 key findings have been cited as "recommendations" to the State Board. This correlation is yet another indicator that general education needs and special education needs are more alike than different. Indeed, prior to the release of *West Virginia's Voice*, the Council had selected three key topics for the focus of our recommendations in this report, each report correlates with the other.

Teachers and Quality Instruction

One of the longest standing concerns for districts, nationally, has been the discrepancy between student achievement, performance and successful completion of grade level standards in preparation for transition to adult independence. Regardless of improvement in methodology and differentiation for unique student learning needs, results on standardized assessments are still insufficient to close the achievement gap. This concern raises the complex questions of teacher **recruitment, retention, preparation and support.**

It has long been known that the teaching profession does not attract enough college bound students to fill staffing needs in several areas, mathematics and special education being two of those areas. An oversimplified explanation is that often individuals will enter the field of special education only as an entry to general education. Other times the motivation for becoming a teacher is the flexibility to have summers and extended holidays for family needs. The downside to a shortened number of workdays is that salary scales have not increased in proportion to the cost of living, college tuition, and additional responsibility for our most valuable resource, children. Then due to the complexity and diversity of student learning needs, teachers are asked to relinquish part of that non-contract time for additional professional learning/training. Teachers cannot be required to participate in this training which may result in a lack of understanding of new methodologies, strategies or requirements to better meet the learning, social/emotional and developmental needs of students. Therefore, teachers feel undervalued, underpaid and frustrated to the point of leaving the profession and resulting in additional personnel shortages. It is a complex and vicious cycle.

It has come to the attention of the Council that West Virginia University has eliminated the special education department all together, leaving WV without any preparatory program for teachers of gifted and students who are severely

impaired. This leaves WV without any avenue to certification in these two areas of special education. The teacher shortage problem is compounded by another even greater concern, the path to certification has been reduced to the ability of the pre-service teacher to pass a written test, Praxis. This measure of a person's knowledge does not equate to an individual's ability to teach. Another complexity of the puzzle is that by allowing individuals to obtain degrees and certification via online coursework, peer learning has been eliminated and the individual is left to interpret the content based on their own experiences alone. There is yet another component to teacher preparation programs that concern the Council. Previously, special education teachers concentrated on expertise in one area of disability through a 32-36 hour graduate program and then added additional endorsements in selected areas through additional course work. Today colleges offer "multi-categorical" certification programs with as few as 6 hours of course work in each disability area, e.g., specific learning disability, behavior disorder, and mild intellectual disability. These shortcut programs are not adequate to prepare teachers to work with the most complex of students learning needs as reported by district directors.

Many districts report that teachers are coming to them fully certified but ill prepared to address the daily needs of students. The Council believes that face to face time in college classrooms is necessary for adequate teacher preparation. Learning is a social process. Herein lies the conundrum, in order to create an easier way for individuals to obtain teaching certificates and reduce the shortages, quality of preparation appears to be reduced.

Finally, the Council heard multiple examples of the need for teachers to have the support of specially trained professionals to identify interventions when students' social and emotional needs exceed the classroom teachers' expertise and training. The growing need for behavior specialists appears to stem from neonatal exposure to drugs, dysfunctional family units, and societal changes. Several counties have used supplemental and district funds to support teachers in the acquisition of Board Certification in Behavior Analysis (BCBA). To achieve this credential teachers must complete a rigorous program of study including:

- Graduate degree at the Master or PhD level,
- 270 clock hours of Course work covering 169 specific competencies,
- 1500 hours of work experience, including 75 hours of direct supervision by a BCBA/instructor,
- Pass a standardized Exam similar to the Graduate Record Exam (GRE) or L-SAT.

Unfortunately, not all counties can afford to support teachers with this course work or provide the required supervision for work experience. According to the Behavior Analysis Certification Board of Littleton, Colorado, most university accreditation programs are "on campus" programs rather than "online" programs. WVU offers a BCBA degree for doctoral level candidates on campus only. One district is offering

Registered Behavior Technician (RBT) training of 40 hours to all interested para-professionals. Tuition fees will be reimbursed upon completion of the program. These efforts are proving effective but are not available to all students statewide.

Districts also expressed additional need for licensed social workers to assist with home: school liaison, transition, and community supports. This dilemma seems comparable to the shortage of school nurses and relates to funding, formula, and State certification classifications. Thus, arises the question of incentive for teachers and aides to undertake this intensive training. With the elimination of regional service agencies, demands for continuing professional development due to high rates of teacher turnover are being absorbed by the Office of Special Education. Once again the challenge of providing local support for teachers is stymied by policy which limits the number of non-instructional staff that a district can support to provide guidance, coaching, mentoring and training in an efficient and effective way that maximizes quality differentiated instruction to all students.

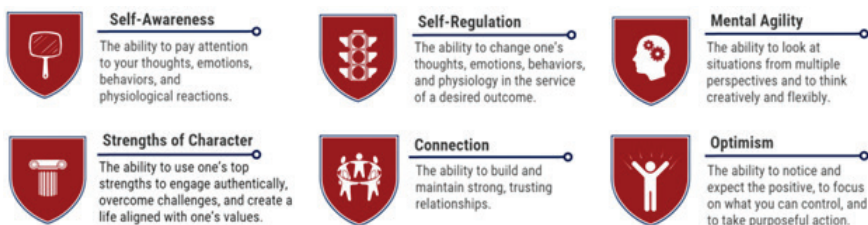
For these reasons, the Council recommends that the West Virginia Department of Education use every means available to secure additional funding for teacher preparation and expand salary classifications to encourage and promote quality instructional programming with added flexibility for teacher scheduling and terms of employment.

Trauma and Adverse Childhood Experiences: Impact on Teachers and Students.

As every state and local agency, organization and profession in West Virginia has duly noted, there is a critical need for mental health and behavioral support for children statewide. Statistically, West Virginia has one of the highest rates of risk for students, including social and socioeconomic stressors, substance abuse and addiction, and community violence (CDC, 2018). Research supports the benefits of early intervention and schools seem to be the logical place to address these concerns, but schools alone cannot fulfill the all-encompassing needs for families facing these challenges. West Virginia is at the forefront of developing intervention strategies and Marshall University is leading the effort to develop problem solving skills and coping strategies that foster resiliency (Kilgus, Reinke & Jimerson, 2015) using the multitiered systems of support (MTSS) already in place in WV schools. ***Poster presentation at the 2018 Annual Conference on Advancing School Mental Health, Las Vegas, NV 10/20/2018.*** For additional information on the work being conducted at MU, please contact Dr. Conrae Lucas Adkins, Tiffany Pittman, Dr. Richard Crespo, or Dr. Lanai Jennings. The Council takes this opportunity to acknowledge Marshall's efforts to expand school based mental health research and implementation to all West Virginia schools.

During the course of public meetings this year the Council began to hear more and more about the effect of dealing with children in crisis on teachers. Fortunately, schools are developing *Trauma Informed* teams and networks to address the academic and behavioral challenges of adverse childhood experiences. However,

the Council is greatly concerned about the impact of daily stress on teachers' health, well-being and desire to remain in the teaching profession. When teachers are under pressure to continually deal with student outbursts, they begin to lose resiliency compounding the stress on everyone. The University of Pennsylvania School of Positive Psychology has researched methods to combat **compassion fatigue** through a theory of well-being referred to as PERMA: Positive Emotion, Engagement, Relationships, Meaning, Accomplishments. A common myth regarding resilience is that you either “have it or you don’t”. Research at U Penn has proven that skills related to resilience can be learned by everyone. The concept of resilience centers on being able to better regulate emotions, ask for help, know when to slow down, and rejuvenate. The U Penn model addresses six skill sets which can be adapted for different audiences (teachers and students).



<https://ppc.sas.upenn.edu/resilience-programs/resilience-skill-set>

<https://ppc.sas.upenn.edu/learn-more/perma-theory-well-being-and-perma-workshops>

Dr. Kurt Metz, School Psychologist/Director of Health and Related Services at the WV Schools for the Deaf and the Blind is a Master Resilience Trainer (MRT: Level 1). In March, 2019, he participated as the first and only civilian in a two-week intensive training at Fort McCoy, WI courtesy of the US Army. After his training, WVSDB directors participated in weekly workshops designed to address and reduce workplace stress and burnout. This summer, the directors will continue to receive training in a more compressed and intensive format via a “train the trainer” model. This training has been well received by the staff at the Schools who expressed enthusiasm for MRT skills that apply to the workplace.

Dr. Metz has used the MRT skills by teaching several secondary-level WVSDB students to apply them to personal situations. Their response to the training was extremely positive. One student who was coping with a grave situation regarding a parent with terminal illness was able to recoup composure and face the situation head-on and foster meaningful connections with family members in spite of the decline in the parent's condition.

Although no single strategy or program will cure every crisis situation, the Council recommends that the West Virginia Department of Education include this model in the professional learning repertoire available to teachers as a positive intervention to help students and teachers cope with trauma.

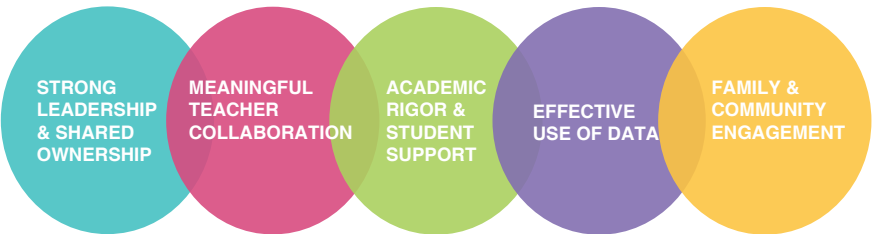
Leadership: School Climate and Unintended Consequences

For decades, the recurring discussion on school effectiveness includes **school climate**. There are a myriad of models that illustrate the components and outcomes when specific factors are in place. The following model illustrates the aspects of most school climate approaches and has been used here because it is self-explanatory and correlated to the Council’s findings.

In 2012, EdVestors launched the Improving Schools Initiative to see if and how practices from higher-performing schools could be utilized in a cohort of lower-performing schools to improve academic outcomes for students. A study of the best practices in our School on the Move prize-winning schools (schools recognized for rapid improvement over a five-year period), coupled with national research, resulted in a framework that outlines five key practices of effective schools. This framework guided the Improving Schools Initiative.

FIVE KEY PRACTICES
of effective schools

The five key practices of effective schools provided the foundation for much of the work, especially with respect to anticipated changes in adult discourse and behavior.



Distributed leadership grounded in shared accountability between administrators and teachers toward a goal of instructional excellence and increased student achievement.

The involvement of teams of teachers in analysis of data and related decisions regarding curriculum, instructional practice, and student supports, as well as sufficient time for teachers to plan collaboratively.

A student-centered approach balancing high academic and behavioral expectations with integrated academic and developmental supports tailored to student needs.

Intentional systems to use data to drive decisions about curriculum, instructions, and interventions.

A school climate that is welcoming and engaging for students and families, supported by strategic partnerships aligned to school improvement goals.

With this knowledge we crafted a theory of action for the Initiative: *If schools: (a) are given the opportunity to develop a data-driven and focused improvement plan that includes input from the entire staff and (b) receive targeted and intensive support towards implementing that plan with depth and fidelity aimed at supporting and changing adult practices (as reflected in the five key practices of effective schools), then the school will build the capacity to significantly improve student achievement.*

Marinell Rousmaniere: EdVestors
140 Clarendon St. Suite 140
Boston, Mass 02116

Leadership: The foundation of positive school climate and effectiveness lies with administrative leadership from the superintendent to the principal. The atmosphere in a school is palpable and reflects the attitudes of the entire staff. However, leadership is not limited to the principal. Effective schools share accountability with administrators and teacher leaders resulting in each having a vested interest in the overall success of everyone. When leadership is demonstrated through modeling, coaching and mentoring, student achievement increases.

Collaboration: The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) was initially written to address the educational needs of a specific set of children who were often deemed uneducable. The learning potential of these children was very quickly realized, but how to bring these kids to their full potential has been a learning process for teachers. Knowledge of pedagogy has certainly increased, but so has the complexity and expansion of the original group of children for whom IDEA was originally intended. There are now thirteen distinct categories of disability for educational purposes and the potential need for additional methodologies, strategies and interventions is expanding exponentially. Initially intended to protect the rights of all children with disabilities to a free public education, IDEA establishes guidance for school systems through the creation of compliance rules and regulations. An absolute **intended consequence** of the rules was that a single individual would not be the final decision-maker with regard to what is best for each child. Multi-disciplinary teams are required to consider the preliminary needs of the student (School Advisory Team), eligibility determination (Eligibility Consideration Team) and instructional teams, including parents, to determine the services, goals, placement and transition needs of the student (Individual Education Program Team). Research on school effectiveness strongly support teamwork. The **unintended consequence** of requiring team decision-making is the logistical complication of how to manage time and incentive for collaboration within the school day. This dilemma brings the reader back to the Council's first recommendation in this report.

Academic Rigor and Student Support: A multi-faceted **unintended consequence** of low teacher expectations is that students, especially those with high intensity needs are denied adequate opportunities to pursue a full range of experiences and learning opportunities which would otherwise enable them to seek greater independence as adults. Parent representatives on the Council and other advocacy groups across the state adamantly express this concern for children with disabilities.

Use of Data: IDEA requires districts to create a full continuum of services and placement options to "appropriately" meet the needs of each child. Services include but are not limited to instruction provided by qualified teachers and supplementary support from specialized therapists. Placement options include instruction in the general and special classrooms, in homes and residential settings to the extent necessary for the student to benefit from and acquire knowledge/skills

leading to post-secondary opportunities. The extent of removal from students' typical peers is based on data and response to specific intervening strategies. The use of data driven decision-making is required by the U. S. Department of Education Office of Special Programs in order to ensure that individual education programs are designed to provide results and not simply paper compliance. When schools and districts are limited by funding or formulas to a limited number of staff and support personnel, the **unintended consequence** is that students may not receive a Free Appropriate Public Education.

Family & Community Engagement: Children succeed when families are engaged, welcomed and supported. When the school climate is perceived to be intimidating or threatening, families withdraw from participation and create another set of **unintended consequences**. This scenario is different from current efforts to encouragement family engagement which is receiving much acclaim through the upcoming Kid Strong Conference. Schools must be cognizant of the impression they make on parents through attitude, voice, and language. Effective schools differentiate communication strategies to meet parents needs and levels of understanding the special education process. Special education is complex and challenges the most dedicated teacher with finding the appropriate level of instructional intensity for each child.

The Council recommends that the West Virginia Department of Education, Office of Special Education and local districts:

- *Enhance leadership opportunities for classroom teachers,*
- *Pursue mechanisms to create more flexibility in scheduling,*
- *Thoroughly discuss and reach consensus on the meaning and rigor of academic standards and work exploration opportunities as related to graduation and diploma requirements,*
- *Ensure that districts have the resources to provide a full continuum of services and support staff, and*
- *Hold accountable each school and district for full parent participation and involvement in the education process of each child.*

PARTICIPANTS

The Advisory Council would like to express our gratitude to the following people who attended meetings across the State during the past year. Some provided information, some expressed concerns and others gave presentations for the Council to acquire indepth information on topics of interest and concern. We are happy to acknowledge the Pro Start students who provided refreshments.

<i>Participant</i>	<i>Role/Position</i>	<i>Location</i>
September 2018		
Gerda Kumpiene	GSC Asst. Professor	Gilmer Co.
Shelly Ratliff	GSC Professor	Gilmer
Connie Stout O'Dell	GSC EC Field Exp. Director	Gilmer
Abby McCarry	GSC Student	Gilmer
Darlene Smithson	C&I Coordinator Gilmer Co.	Gilmer
Kaitlan Frymier	School Psychologist Gilmer	Gilmer
Pam Hotsinpiller	Coordinator Harrison Co.	Harrison
Lola Brown	Federal Programs Supervisor	Harrison
Riley Freeland	Social Worker	Harrison
Kristi Pritt	WVABLE Director WVSTO	Kanawha
October 2018		
Sharla Griffith	Dir. Exe. Children Putnam Co	Putnam
Kate Porter	Asst. Supt. Sp. Ed. Kanawha C	Kanawha
Megan McCorkle	Sec. Currie Spec. Kanawha c	Kanawha
Bridget Philllips	Elem. Currie Spec. Kanawha	Kanawha
Karen Miller	Teacher PHS Mercer Co	Mercer
Frank Ratcliffe	WVDNR Camp Creek SP	Mercer
Betsy Peterson	WVDE OSE TTAC staff	Kanawha
Mitch Balaban	TTAC staff	Kanawha
Chris Napier	TTAC staff	Kanawha
Mary Knapp	Dir. Special Ed. Boone Co.	Boone
Renee Eockles Hardy	Data Manager WVDE	Kanawha
November 2018		
Sue Weir	Webster Co. BOE	Webster
Allison Pyle	Special Ed Director Webster	Webster
Lydia Young	Sp. Ed. Coordinator Nicholas	Nicholas
Sarah Keiper	EC Specialist Nicholas Co.	Nicholas
Kathy Sibbett	Sp. Ed. Director Nicholas Co	Nicholas
Beth Goette	Pro Start Inst. Nicholas Co.	Nicholas
25 Pro Start Students		Nicholas
Tom Bayless	NCCTC Principal/CTE Dir	Nicholas
December 2018		
Lisa Cunningham	Sp.Ed. Director Jackson Co.	Jackson
Tracy LeMasters	Dir. Federal Programs	Jackson
Stephanie Majetich	Social Worker Jackson Co.	Jackson
Samantha Keen	Sp. Ed. Coordinator	Jackson
Chris Napier	Teacher Ripley High School	Jackson
Mitch Balaban	WV Transition TAC	Kanawha

<i>Participant</i>	<i>Role/Position</i>	<i>Location</i>
Betsy Peterson	WV TransitionTAC	Kanawha
Dawn Embrey King	WVDE OSE	Kanawha
February 2019		Brooke
Melissa Figlioli	Sp.Ed. Director	Brooke
Jaclyn Robinson	Brooke Hancock ALC	Brooke
Michelle Hogan	Hancock Co. Transition Co	Hancock
Shelby Haines	Dir. Special Programs	Marshall
Susie Baker	Marshall Co. PERC	Marshall
Nancy M. Cline	WVDEOSE	Kanawha
April 2019		Jefferson Co.
Cindy Fitzwater	Dir. Pupil Services	Jefferson
Erica Pritts	IEP Coord.	Jefferson
Jill Prangle	IEP/UKERU	Jefferson
	Lead Trainer	
Mary Ellen Lloyd	Student Support	Jefferson
Jenny Lancaster	Terzetto Creative	Cabell
Martha Minter	Red Barn Stables LLC	Kanawha
Sheila Paitsel	WVDE OFP	Kanawha
May 2019		Kanawha Co.
Fredrick D. Martin	Community member	Mercer

CONCLUSION

As the 2018-2019 year concludes, the West Virginia Council for the Education of Exceptional Children (WVACEEC) completed their goal and mission to discuss progressive advancements for the students of West Virginia. The members of WVACEEC had the privilege of traveling West Virginia and talking with stakeholders, including parents and educators, on a wide variety of issues that are currently affecting our state. We heard about outstanding programs that are making a real difference in the lives and futures of students with exceptionalities throughout West Virginia. In addition to hearing the good news about outstanding programs, we also took note of unmet needs or concerns.

Some of the topics brought forth to the council this year by parents, educators, and other professionals included:

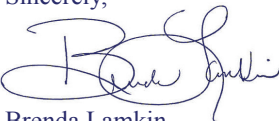
- Mental Health of Students
- Trauma Informed Care and Classrooms
- Substance Abuse and Neonatal Abstinence Syndrome (NAS)
- Grandparents Raising Grandchildren - Children in Foster-Care
- Students in the Criminal Justice System, Truancy and Out-of-State Placement

On behalf of the West Virginia Council for the Education of Exceptional Children, we wish to thank Susan White, WVACEEC Executive Director and Susan Beck, Executive Director of WVDE, Office of Special Education and her staff. Their tireless work and perseverance to overcome obstacles are to be commended. Thank you to the West Virginia Department of Education for their initiatives, guidance, and on-going support.

I want to thank the parents and families, educators, and stakeholders for their energy and focus on improving the lives of exceptional children by attending the meetings or providing feedback. The WVACEEC continues to focus on the importance of parent involvement in their children's education. The information provided allows the WVACEEC to provide recommendations to the West Virginia State Board of Education.

On behalf of the WVACEEC, I respectfully submit our report summarizing the activities, concerns, accomplishments, and recommendations for the 2018-2019 school year.

Sincerely,



Brenda Lamkin
Chairperson, WVACEEC



**WEST VIRGINIA ADVISORY COUNCIL
FOR THE EDUCATION
OF EXCEPTIONAL
CHILDREN**

**WEST VIRGINIA ADVISORY COUNCIL FOR
THE EDUCATION OF EXCEPTIONAL CHILDREN**

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Organization
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Permit No. 1093

Name _____
Organization _____
Address _____
City _____
State _____ Zip _____
Comments _____

We need your ideas, concerns and comments. Please
detach and mail to:

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