

State of Nevada Autism Task Force

MINUTES

Thursday, November 8, 2007

Nevada State Legislative Building / Carson City – Video-conferenced to:

UNSOM-Griswold Hall/Elko – Video-conferenced to:

Grant Sawyer State Building/Las Vegas

Members Present: Ralph Toddre, Mary Liveratti, Matt Tincani, Patrick Ghezzi, Flo La Roy, Korri Ward, Johanna Fricke, Assemblyman James Ohrenschall, Senator Warren Hardy, Assemblywoman Francis Allen, Elizabeth Moore / **Members Absent:** Jan Crandy, Senator Bernice Mathews, Cynthia McCray / **Staff:** Todd Butterworth, Winny Simmons / **Guests:** John Flamm, Randy Figurski, Jennifer VanTress, Michael Hackett, Kris Christiansen, Gary Kuhre, Diane Branson, Judy White, Barbara Stoll, Jeanie Clemmer-Rodriguez, Machismo Rodriguez, Carol Lamkins, Barbie Lauver, Nancy Sylvanie, Deborah Meinberg, Winona Anhauser, Shauna Zobel, Andrea Nichols

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS, QUORUM CALL

The meeting was called to order by Chair Toddre at 8:14 a.m. Introductions were made by all present for the record; it was established that a quorum was present.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM THE SEPTEMBER 2007 MEETING

A motion was offered by Vice-Chair Liveratti to approve the minutes of the September 2007 meeting.

The motion was seconded by Dr. Ghezzi and unanimously approved.

DISCUSSION OF ROLE OF THE TASK FORCE

Chair Toddre stated the purpose of the Taskforce as defined in AB629 is to put together a report to go to the Governor and Legislators which will recommend things that will need to be done in the area of Autism. What the Taskforce needs to hear from the public and members of the Taskforce are the key issues to be addressed to the Governor and Legislators. Today he would like to appoint subcommittees to work on certain projects. These subcommittees will be made up of members of the Taskforce and members of the public. The purpose of these subcommittees will be to study the issues the Taskforce feels are important and should be included in the final report. Each subcommittee will present a white paper to the Taskforce in timely manner to move forward and eventually become a part of the report.

DISCUSSION OF ISSUES TO BE REVIEWED FOR INCLUSION IN REPORT and DEVELOPMENT OF AN ACTION PLAN FOR THE REPORT AND APPOINTMENT OF ISSUE WORK GROUP MEMBERS

Chair Toddre stated the subcommittees are subject to Nevada's open meeting law. Ms. Nichols stated the statute doesn't make reference to the number of people meeting. The intent of the statute is for transparent government and if they are doing the work of the Autism Taskforce, the meetings have to be done as publicly as possible and minutes are required. Mr. Butterworth stated his office could help with staffing and they have a little bit of money set aside for hiring outside staff assistance. AB629 calls for some assistance provided by the Department of Education and the LCB. Vice-Chair Liveratti stated subcommittee meetings could be teleconferenced. Mr. Butterworth stated his office has an account for conference calls.

Chair Toddre stated it is up to subcommittee members to go out and recruit other people to join. The chairman or vice-chairman of each subcommittee does not have to also be member of the Taskforce. The next move for the subcommittees is to get together, recruit additional members, and have a meeting so they can put together a list of the issues they will be addressing. He would like to see that list at the next Taskforce meeting. The Taskforce also needs to set a timeline to look at drafts of the white papers.

Vice-Chair Liveratti stated the next step should be that staff sets up email groups of the subcommittee members. The report is due on August 1, 2008 which means the Taskforce will probably need to have a final draft ready by June. The Taskforce can have four more meetings after the first of the year. The subcommittees should take a further look at refining the issues to report back to the Taskforce. If there are already some documents to build upon, those may be able to be presented earlier. At the next Taskforce meeting the subcommittees need to come back with a timeline on when they could start reporting back to the Taskforce so each meeting could start being agendaized. Presentations could also be agendaized for the Taskforce. Assemblywoman Allen stated the lawmakers are not as familiar with Autism issues and would welcome presentations.

There was an extensive conversation about the formation of subcommittees that resulted in the following subcommittees being formed with initial members as follows:

- **Financing Comprehensive Systems of Care:**
Jennifer Bradley (Lili Claire), Gary Kuhre, Elizabeth Moore, Korri Ward, Randy Figurski, Assemblyman Ohrenschall, Nancy Sylvania, Diane Bransun, Johanna Fricke, Mary Liveratti, Todd Butterworth, and appointees from Medicaid and MHDS.
- **Screening and Diagnostic:**
Randy Figurski, Diane Bransun, Korri Ward, Nancy Sylvania, Johanna Fricke, Representative from the NV Chapter of AAP, and Elizabeth Moore.
- **Best Practices Guidelines:**
Matt Tincani, Patrick Ghezzi, Clark County School District, Washoe County School District, Debra Meinberg (Easter Seals), Nancy Sylvania, Diane Bransun, Randy Figurski, Johanna Fricke, and Assemblyman Ohrenschall.
- **Training, Certification, and Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA):**
Matt Tincani, Patrick Ghezzi, Washoe County School District, Debra Meinberg, and Clark County School District.
- **Transition, Employment, and Community Inclusion:**
Flo La Roy, Korri Ward, Jen Fenrick (Lili Claire), Barbi Lauver (Aspergers Syndrome Support Group), and a representative from the Interagency Transition Advisory Board.
- **Workforce Development:**
Washoe County School District, Mary Liveratti, Matt Tincani, Assemblyman Ohrenschall, Clark County School District, and Nancy Sylvania.
- **Education:**
Elizabeth Moore, Carol Lamkins, Assemblywoman Allen, Korri Ward, Randy Figurski, John Flamm, Diane Bransun, Clark County School District, Washoe County School District, and Gary Kuhre.

Senator Hardy offered to be on any of the subcommittees where he could be helpful in terms of being a liaison with the Legislature. He received a lot of emails from constituents during the Legislative Session relative to the creation of the Autism Taskforce and he has a nephew who is Autistic. He would like to be in a position to play a role in getting some more Legislative attention on this issue. He suggested the Legislators spend their time in each of the subcommittee meetings and review the findings.

Chair Toddre asked if the Commerce Committee dealt with certification, training, and insurance issues. Senator Hardy replied they deal with all of the board issues and insurance issues. The Government Affairs Committee and Commerce and Labor Committee deal with some of the child support issues.

Chair Toddre stated that during the last legislative session informational binders were distributed and will be updated and sent out again to Taskforce members.

A motion was offered by Vice-Chair Liveratti to establish the Financing Comprehensive Systems of Care, Screening and Diagnostic, Best Practice Guidelines, Training and Certification and ABA, Transition and Employment and Community Inclusion, Workforce Development, and Education Subcommittees. The motion was seconded by Dr. Fricke and unanimously approved.

UPDATE ON THE PLAN FOR PROVIDING AUTISM SERVICES PURSUANT TO SECTION 41 OF AB629

Mr. Butterworth stated acceptance of applications for Autism services started on October 1st and since then have received 85 applications in the south and 26 applications in the north. Services for some of the children started this week. His office wants to process all applications even though they will receive far more than can be served with the limited funds available. Each child will be looked at, a determination of what their needs are will be made, and the Office of Disability Services will try to estimate their needs so that the Governor and Legislature will be informed. The plan is to provide parents with information on every service provider that provides evidenced-based services and who has the certifications/qualifications necessary. Parents will be empowered to choose from these providers.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Chair Toddre stated there are representatives from the Washoe County School District in attendance. Paul Dugan - Superintendent, Rick Harris - Deputy Superintendent, Kris Christiansen - Assistant Superintendent for Special Education, and Jen VanTress - Special Education Administrator. Next week Chair Toddre will be going to Las Vegas to meet with the Clark County School District's special education people and will tour their facilities. Part of that trip will be to put together people from the Clark County School District and Washoe County School District to work together on some of the Autism programs.

Mr. Dugan stated their purpose for attending this meeting was to visibly show the support of the Washoe County School District for the Taskforce and to begin a long term commitment of collaboration between the district and with this Taskforce. The Washoe County School District would like to participate in the subcommittees and he delegated Mr. Harris and Ms. Christiansen to suggest the school district members.

SET NEXT MEETING DATE

Mr. Butterworth suggested having the Taskforce meetings in January, March, and May with a final meeting being in June or July. The subcommittees could meet in the even months in between. Chair Toddre stated the next Taskforce will be set for the end of January.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 11:30 a.m.