

ACT 833 LEADERSHIP STEERING COMMITTEE
October 1, 2014
MEETING SUMMARY

Claiborne Building
Baton Rouge, LA

1:00 P.M.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Rep. John Schroder, Chair
Sen. Dan Claitor
Alan Coulter, LSU-HDC
April Dunn, Self-Advocate
Rebecca Ellis, Northshore FHF
Shawn Fleming, LaDDC
Liz Gary, Parent
Sherri Houin, Parent
Shelia Jackson, Superintendent, Grant Parish Schools
Kelli Joseph, Superintendent, St. Helena Parish Schools
Lauren Mayfield, President, LaSEA, Bienville Parish
Ashley McReynolds, LaTEACH
Scott Richard, La. Schools Boards Assoc.
Sarah Voigt, Advocacy Center
Mauricia Ledet-Walters, FHF of Acadiana
Patsy White, LaDDC
Jamie Wong, LDE

MEMBERS ABSENT

Donnica Conway, LaDDC
Rebecca Hanberry, Bossier Parish Community College Program for Successful Employment
Carolyn Hill, BESE
Debra Schum, La. Assoc. of Principals
Carol Tall, Vice Pres., LaSEA, Acadia Parish

LaDDC Supporting Staff

Robbie Gray, Program Monitor

GUESTS PRESENT

Erin Bendily, LDE
Bridget Bergeron, St. Martin Parish
Jeanne Bower
Pam Crook
Belinda Dumas, Livingston Parish
Joanette Dunn
Jeanne Ebey, Livingston Parish
Kathy Edmonston
Larry Gage, Vermilion Parish
Brandy Golston-Neal
Danny Guillory, St. Tammany
Penny Harris
Jeanne Johnston, La. Legislature
Nancy Jolly, La. Legislature
Alison LeBlanc, Parent
Charlie Michel, Lafourche School Board
Will Sentell, The Advocate
Regina Washington
Roxane West, Evangeline Sped Superv.
John Weymann, Governor's Office of Disability Affairs
John White, LDE Superintendent
Kay Rone Wilson, LDE
Sandee Winchell, LaDDC Exec. Director

Representative Schroder called the meeting to order with a quorum at 1:07 p.m. and recognized members who were not present at the September meeting.

Motion passed: Motion to accept the summary from the September 3rd meeting made by Shawn Fleming, second by Patsy White, passed without objection.

The Committee agreed to focus discussion and consideration on recommendations related to diploma pathways for students who do not meet eligibility for LAA-1 but lack requisite skills to master all the standards required to demonstrate proficiency on state-established standards in Carnegie credit courses.

These included the five following recommendations contained in item IV of the Agenda:

- a. Recommendation that policy and guidance documents indicate eligible students may earn regular high school diplomas by meeting alternative performance requirements established by their IEP teams.
- b. Recommendation of allowance of applied or modified course work to be accepted for Carnegie credit, with indication on student transcript of course work level.
- c. Recommendations for student access to highly qualified teachers.
- g. Recommendations related to possible expansion of LAA-1 criteria.
- h. Recommendations for considerations of 'non-diploma' bound status.

An estimated 8,000 high school students with disabilities fall within this category. Committee members and guests acknowledged that this category contains a wide continuum of academic levels among students. Discussion included numerous challenges with meeting these students individualized needs within existing high school course options required for a diploma and inappropriateness of the expectation for all students to meet the same level of proficiency or standards to earn necessary Carnegie credits applicable for a diploma.

Following discussion, Superintendent White agreed to modify the Department's position reflected in recently issued guidance documents that would have required all students to meet the same level of proficiency requirement to earn credits toward a diploma. It was agreed that IEP teams of eligible students may determine the specific standards and proficiency levels required for each student to earn a Carnegie credit.

Guests and Committee members expressed the need for additional considerations that this shift in current practice will require and the necessity to explore expanding the courses accepted for credit toward graduation. Other discussion points included, but were not limited to:

- the lack of access to or availability of qualified teachers,
- the role of federal laws and the application of those laws in Louisiana and other states,
- the need to consider grading and course credit on student transcripts to reflect modified levels of proficiency,
- a desire for increased stakeholder input and working groups to assist the Department in developing guidance materials,

Act 833 Leadership Steering Committee Summary
October 1, 2014

- the need for Individualized Education Program reform,
- the status of Louisiana's No Child Left Behind Waiver, and
- the need for training and monitoring, and concerns over school districts being cited for implementation issues related to Act 833.

Motion passed: Motion to adopt the following recommendations 1 through 3b made by Shawn Fleming, second by Patsy White; following discussion Scott Richard motioned to amend the motion by adding language contained in (3c), second by Shawn Fleming; passed without objection:

1. The Louisiana Department of Education convene a workgroup to review and develop a potential list of applied and/or foundational level courses that could be accepted as Carnegie credits toward a high school diploma.
2. All Board of Elementary and Secondary Education policies and Louisiana Department of Education guidance documents indicate that any student eligible under Act 833 for an alternative pathway to a diploma may earn any course credit applicable toward a high school diploma by meeting performance requirements for each course as established by the student's Individualized Education Program team. It is recommended that the Department issue information correcting the information contained in the Department's webinars on September 29th and 30th to align with the example below:
 - Example: From the [42 Standards in Algebra I](#) an IEP team may determine which of the standards and the level of proficiency on the selected standard will be required for the student to earn course credit in Algebra. So one IEP team may select two of the 42 standards and determine the degree to which the student will meet proficiency on these two standards as a requirement for earning course credit. Another student's IEP team may require that student to meet certain degrees of proficiency on all 42 standards, but the proficiency levels determined may not meet the same level of proficiency required of all students for purposes of earning course credit.
3. The Louisiana Department of Education:
 - a. Convene a State Performance Plan and Annual Performance Report Steering Committee to establish targets that will be used to make determinations of the degree Local Education Agencies are fulfilling the requirements of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (i.e., Meeting Requirements, Needs Assistance, Needs Intervention, or Needs Substantial Intervention); and,
 - b. Re-establish on-site focused monitoring of Local Education Agencies by teams consisting of Department staff, Local Education Agency representatives (from outside of monitored district), and parents; and,
 - c. Increase the Department's internal capacity for providing support and technical assistance on special education issues to Local Education Agencies.

Meeting adjourned at 4:06 p.m.