

**Autism Plan Advisory Committee
VT DOE - Berlin Office
May 18, 2009**

MINUTES

Attendees:

Jackie Rogers, Dana Robson, Claudia Pringles, Claire Bruno, Judith Masson, Carol Hassler, Karin Hayes, Laurie Mumley, Cherie Maynard, Rhoda Butler and Amy Cohen, Steve Contompasis (via phone), Katy Chaffee(via phone), Monica Hutt(via phone), Linda Chaim (via phone)

- I. Introductions were made around the room
- II. Members volunteered for roles for this meeting
- III. Autism Plan Priorities
 - Clare M. shared with the group the current status of Autism Plan Priority Goals for all to review
 - **Goal A:** The Dept. of Health is contracting with VT Children's Health Improvement Program (VCHIP) to develop and promote developmental screening, including autism specific screening, at pediatric practices around the state. VCHIP will be starting their work on this project soon. The Vermont Office of Health Access (Medicaid) has made additional funding available to allow doctors to bill specifically for conducting developmental screening at well child visits. This should provide an incentive to complete them. Division of Disability and Aging Services has a committee working on developing best practice guidelines for diagnosis of ASD. They should be finished the beginning of next fiscal year (July 2009). VT-ILEHP at UVM received a training grant last year which includes training for evaluators on conducting ADI-R and ADOS assessments. The training is happening in May and June this year.
 - **Goal B:** Exploring the use of stimulus money for the development and implementation of professional development opportunities for staff who are serving kids with ASD ages birth to 5. Helen Keith, FITP director is working on this at this time. Judith Mason indicated that she wants to become more involved with Goal B because of her EEE knowledge and experience in the Newport area. It was suggested that she contact Kate Rogers.
 - **Goal C:** Reviewed current status re: signing of MOU that outlines the responsibilities for implementing the state Autism plan
 - **Goal D:** Coordinated autism resource dissemination. The committee is being asked to provide advice on how to move this goal forward. The group spent a good portion of the meeting discussing this. We looked at the Regional Autism Centers proposal from 2006. Group spent time discussing the pros and cons of centralization or decentralization of the information dissemination process throughout the state. Group was concerned as to why nothing had been done since 2006. Claire B.

reported there had only been one meeting with Commissioners in Education and AHS since this document was completed. Forward progression on this goal was stopped due to funding reasons. The proposal was to create a means for people to get up to date info on ASD. The thought was to have a few AHS regions throughout the state to answer the calls and give information. Clare shared with the group a list of state organizations and what they do to support ASD families. She said we need to look at what we have and look at options for coordinating their efforts. Upon reviewing the list some members shared that they had called VT211 and found it not to be helpful. Amy Cohen stated that she finds it difficult to offer supportive information to those who call from out of her area of the state. Group discussed that much information and support is area specific and not available throughout the state. Funding questions were raised by Steve and others. Funding to expand services across the state has not been made available. Given the difficult fiscal situation, it is unlikely that new funding will be available through the state for a few years. The state departments continue to try to access grants, stimulus funds and other federal funds as opportunities arise.

Claudia led group discussion on the pros and cons of state wide vs. regional plan. Given the fiscal situation, Clare M. stated that we should start by looking at existing sources, look at gaps and try to advance and enhance the ASD info dissemination. Group discussed the need for a non-biased party to deliver the information to the public. Next meeting we will be discussing this issue again.

1. Central vs. Regional
2. Delivery of info (who?)
3. Want them to be unbiased
4. What is available already in each area?

Clare M. to create a chart/template for team members to complete prior to next meeting and to email it back to her.

- **Goal E:** The Autism Task Force working on completing a list of competencies for case managers in schools and human services. They will be shared with the SPED directors and other stakeholders. Carol noted that the Bridges program is getting started ASAP this list needs to be done soon in order to have any effect on this project. Also, Children's Integrated Services teams are developing and could benefit from this information. Claire B. shared that the DOE sponsored TEACCH training, level II is to be in July, check the DOE website for information. Level I will be offered again next year. Claire B. is putting together a grant application for Autism Professional Development we should know by 9/1 if we have been chosen to receive the technical assistance. In addition Vocational Rehabilitation is piloting a model of supported employment for people who don't have access to that service, and a "social thinking group".
- **Goal F:** Survey work was stopped due to a proposed job cut, however this did not happen, so work has resumed on this survey.

- **ARRA** (stimulus funds): Money available in the state is not available to expand Medicaid. Per Claire B., school districts have money to use on something that is sustainable beyond the two years of funding. ARRA funds for SPED can be used for professional development, technology is another possible use. Suggested that group look up DOE site to see if under administrators there is a section on what money is available for SPED in the different schools.
- **Stipend and Mileage:** If you are a family member and are not participating on the committee as part of your job, you can receive a stipend and mileage to support your participation. Please e-mail Clare M. if you need stipend and mileage reimbursement.
- **Committee Operations:** tabled

Next Meeting: Monday, June 15, 2009 9:30 – 11:30

Location: Vermont Department of Education, Berlin office, The Cavern room- 1311 US Route 302, Berlin.

Directions: Take I-89 for exit 7 (Barre/Berlin). After exiting, go straight. After 3 lights, the road splits. Take the road to the right towards US-302W/US-2/Montpelier. At the bottom of the hill, take a right. The DOE office is at 1311 US-302, just past Burger King on the right.

For those who would like to call in the number is:

Phone Number: 1-866-642-1665

Code: 196408

Items for next meeting agenda:

1. Goal D
2. Finalize ongoing meeting date