

Alabama Interagency Autism Coordinating Council (AIACC)

Tuesday, November 15, 2011

Alabama Institute for Training and Development

The AIACC met on Tuesday, November, 15, 2011 at the Alabama Institute for Training and Development. The meeting was called to order by Chairman Cam Ward. Also in attendance were Co-Chair, Bama Hager, Council members Fred Biasini, Julie Brown, Jerimie Goike, Melanie Jones, Hanes Swingle, and Kathy Welch. The following proxies were in attendance as well: Sue Berry for Nancy Buckner, Dawn Ellis for Don Williamson, Tonya Lee for Marquita Davis, Olivia Nettles for Sandra King Parker, Teresa Thomas for R. Bob Mullins and Sophia Whitted for Elmyra Jones.

Senator Ward welcomed all attendees and apologized for the fact that he will be required to leave the meeting early. Since the previous meeting of the council, much work has been done in small groups and those meetings will continue. Senator Ward shares that this is going to be the year the insurance issue will be addressed. He has already been involved in research and meetings regarding this task. Senator Ward discussed how difficult the job will be, particularly in this economic climate, to change the system so that everyone will have the insurance coverage they deserve. He is committed to leading the charge to make this change. After a brief discussion of the process, Senator Ward left for another Committee Meeting.

Ms. Hager then shared an update from the Alabama Department of Mental Health regarding the hiring of an Autism Coordinator. Currently the position announcement is closed. Twenty one applications were received, and are being scored by the personnel office. Upon completion, interviews will begin for qualified applicants.

Minutes of the last meeting, held August 3, 2011, were not available for review by the Council, therefore, they will be distributed and approved by email.

The first presenter was Greg Carlson of Glenwood Autism & Behavioral Health Center who gave a presentation on Insurance Reform. Mr. Carlson shared his research on how Autism Insurance Reform has been handled in other states. His complete PowerPoint presentation will be made available on both the Glenwood Website, as well as that of the Autism Society.

Melanie Jones from the Autism Society then shared the design of the new Autism car tags. They have to have 1000 prepaid, \$50 commitments to purchase between December 1, 2011 and November 30, 2012. It will be necessary to make the commitment to purchase in person at the DMV office. When that goal is met, the tags will go into production and be available for general purchase. Proceeds from the purchase of each tag (\$41.25), will go to the Autism Society.

Next on the agenda was Doris Hill, Coordinator for Education and Consumer Supports, Auburn University Center for Disabilities Research and Services, with an update from the Professional Preparation and Training Workgroup. The charge of this committee was to determine the current level of training teachers receive. The findings were that students with autism are in general prep classrooms; teacher preparation programs don't provide teachers with the knowledge necessary; and teachers trained in special education are trained in the methodologies but may not have the administrative and financial support needed.

The action items the workgroup focused on were: Teachers should receive pre-service and in-service training regarding ASD and specific intervention strategies; there should be a way to monitor and track training; and teachers should have access to model sites.

The work of the committee is not done, but recommendations have been made, and they will move forward with their work with the new Autism Coordinator.

Jerre Brimer then spoke to the progress of the subcommittee on Standards of Service for Ages 6-21 year olds. They established ten areas of standards: development of instructional plan; instructional activities; instructional methods; instructional environment; review and monitoring of progress; family involvement and support; social behavior; transition; personnel development; and program evaluation. They have now completed through unit seven. Work will begin on transition the first week of December.

A cumulative, on-going draft of this information is available by email. Requests may be sent to jbrimer@bellsouth.net.

The next update was from the subcommittee on Standards of Service for Adult Services, presented by Jade Carter. The workgroup discovered they just didn't know enough at the beginning. They found that while there is a lot of information about early intervention, and some information about school, and a little information about transition, there exists almost an abyss of

information when it comes to bridging the gap to adult services. Therefore they began to ask more questions. Three surveys were conducted where they polled adults with ASD as well as family members of adults on the spectrum. They asked what was wanted and needed in the areas of life skills, social skills and vocational skills. The results were a set of indices that are no different than those for the typical population. Adults want to work, have friends, live on their own, and don't want people telling them what to do.

Because the workgroup found they don't know enough, aren't coordinated and have no centralized way of supporting adults with ASD, they started drafting recommendations rather than standards. Most of the agencies they were investigating are standards based. They are regulated by standards, but making the standards match across entities was almost impossible, as each agency has their own. Therefore, while the group set aside some of the standards, they were able to arrive at standards for some of the areas reviewed. Those results will be presented to the Autism Coordinator.

They are currently regrouping to move forward to specific recommendations, and would love input from the council. Jade can be reached at jadecarter@horizonsschool.org.

Announcements: Kathy Welch announced that Easter Seals is offering a social skills class for 14-18 year olds Cooking, and balancing a checkbook will be covered.

The date of next meeting of the Council will be announced at a later time.

Co-Chairperson Hager adjourned the meeting.

Recording Secretary



C. S. Weldon

11/15/2011

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Minutes submitted and approved January 23, 2012.



Chairman, Senator Cam Ward