



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
AGING AND DISABILITY SERVICES
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MINUTES

Name of Organization: Nevada Commission on Autism Spectrum Disorders

Date and Time of Meeting: February 3, 2017
1:00 p.m.

Location: Nevada Early Intervention Services
3427 Goni Rd., #102
Carson City, NV 89706

I. Call to Order/Roll Call

Dr. Mario Gaspar de Alba called the meeting for the Nevada Commission on Autism Spectrum Disorders to order at 1:13 p.m.

Members Present: Mario Gaspar de Alba, Gwynne Partos, Sarah Dean, Julie Ostrovsky

Members Absent: Korri Ward, Sarah Dean

Staff Present: Carol Reitz, Brook Adie

Guests: Jan Marson, Diane Thorkildson, Steven Cohen, Denise Robinson, Ralph Sacrison, Kristin Merwin, Michelle Scott-Lewing, Lori Follett

A quorum was declared.

II. Public Comment (No action may be taken upon a matter raised under public comment period unless the matter itself has been specifically included on an agenda as an action item)

Mr. Cohen informed the Commission that the most time sensitive issue is the secretary of education nomination. He stated they represent one of the swing states to determine the future of Nevada's education as well as federally. He

stated the final vote will be next week. He suggested contacting the legislators to voice concerns.

Mr. Cohen stated there is a leadership academy in June in D.C. for students that are in their last year of college. He also stated there was a self-advocacy coordinator at the governor's council and the autism self-advocacy network that can help with the toolkit that is an objective for the community education subcommittee.

Mr. Cohen informed the Commission that the A-Team out of Opportunity Village in Las Vegas is leading an advocacy day at the legislation on February 27th.

Ms. Lewing-Scott informed the Commission that they have a Town Hall meeting scheduled on February 13th at 6:30 p.m. at the Atlantis Casino to discuss issues regarding the upcoming legislative budget for Medicaid and ATAP funding. Dr. Gaspar de Alba asked if there is a call-in number. Ms. Lewing-Scott said she is working on it.

Mr. Cohen asked if there would be dates throughout the legislative session to discuss any autism-related BDRs and bills. Ms. Ostrovsky said there are autism organizations that are working to get an autism day, possibly April 3rd or April 4th. They are working on tracking legislation and working with some legislators on ATAP and Medicaid issues, highlighting what is being worked on in the north. They are not moving forward and are liable to lose autism dollars.

III. Approval of the Minutes from the December 5, 2016 Meeting

Ms. Partos made a motion to accept the minutes as they were written. Ms. Ostrovsky seconded the motion. The motion passed.

IV. Review on Progress Made by the Subcommittees and Discuss Possible Recommendations

Ms. Thorkildson informed the Commission that the Funding and Insurance Subcommittee met for the first time on January 23rd. The Subcommittee spent some time during their initial meeting to review the objectives. They had decided that their priorities would include tracking the legislation, encouraging the cooperative arrangements between state agencies and nonprofits and supporting those, and also to review the HHS (Health and Human Services) budget to recommend any budget issues.

Dr. Gaspar de Alba asked if the Funding and Insurance would be tracking the bills. Ms. Thorkildson said they will be tracking the bills.

Dr. Marson informed the Commission that they have a group that's tracking the developing rates methodology using the EPSDT for neurodevelopmental assessments.

Dr. Gaspar de Alba asked about the collaborative efforts. Ms. Thorkildson said that they were making sure that subcommittees were encouraging state agencies to work in collaboration with local nonprofits and other community agencies to maximize dollars.

Dr. Marson reported to the Commission that one of the goals of the Resource Development Subcommittee is to work on cooperative agreements and policies related to screening and monitoring. She is working on this objective with the Learn the Signs Act Early team. Dr. Farmer from Missouri will be discussing the policies during the Act Early Summit to come up with ideas and strategies.

Dr. Marson asked about feedback that was received from the recommendation letter that was sent to allow BCBAs in the school districts. She reported that they received positive feedback from Washoe but Clark County had pushback.

Dr. Marson asked about the objective for developing the service standards. She stated they needed guidance since it was an evidenced-based document that needs to be developed. Dr. Gaspar de Alba said it sounds like an evidence-based document that would require funding. It is to encourage the treatment programs that the state uses to be in line with evidenced based practices. He suggested reaching out to Ms. Ward to find out how to proceed.

Dr. Marson asked if there was any feedback that was received to the recommendation letter. Ms. Adie stated that she spoke to Mr. Jensen from the Department of Education. He was discussing it with their attorneys. She is working with a few different school districts on MOUs (Memorandum of Understanding) to have BCBAs in the schools. Dr. Gaspar de Alba suggested well documenting it so they are building the model to present to other school districts that resistant to the idea.

Mr. Cohen informed the Commission that the Adult/Transition Services and Resources Subcommittee have been working on creating awareness trainings. They completed the first draft of the stakeholders that can benefit from the training. He reported that Ms. John is working on business development to find out if the state can fund it in some way through ODEP (Office of Disability Employment Policy). They are concerned with some of the bills that are going through legislation. He added they are concerned with traditional employment opportunities as well. They are also working on developing an autism-friendly employer database.

Dr. Gaspar de Alba asked about the response letters that were received from the recommendation letters that were sent. Ms. Reitz said she would share the response letters with the subcommittee that she just received.

Ms. Robinson informed the Commission that the Community Education Subcommittee has submitted a letter to address the objective of a statewide Website. They would like to work with the other subcommittees to establish the contents of the Website. She read the recommendation letter that was submitted that included the resources specific to the state.

Ms. Robinson stated that the other goals of the subcommittee were contingent upon the Website. The 100-Day Toolkit through Autism Speaks is overwhelming. She added that they are continuing to look at the peer-driven parent support groups that they will include on the Website. Ms. Partos asked if the resources would be in Spanish. Ms. Robinsons stated that the resource guide that FEAT has published is in Spanish and they are working on the Spanish version for the north.

Ms. Robinson added that the JUSTin HOPE Foundation has been training first responders throughout the state. They are also working on acquiring CEUs for nurses.

Ms. Ostrovsky asked if they contacted ASDD to ask them if they are able to insert a link on their Website that takes them to the statewide Website on autism. Ms. Adie suggested writing a letter requesting the link to be on the ASDD Website. Ms. Ostrovsky said the Website should appear if someone is googling autism services so that ATAP, resources and the toolkit would appear under that Website. Ms. Adie said they would not be able to do a .gov Website since it costs money and it would require a state person to maintain it.

Dr. Gaspar de Alba informed the Commission that the Workforce Development Subcommittee is also requesting a Website. Mr. Daulton has offered to build and maintain the Website. He said it will have to be done and then a request needs to be submitted to include the link on the ASDD Website. He suggested Ms. Robinson contact Mr. Daulton and work with him. Ms. Adie said the request letter would go to Director Whitley and Administrator Ableser stating the Autism Commission subcommittee has created this Website and they are requesting that a link be added to the website on the homepage under autism. She added it will take a long time to get approved and the link will be added once the Website is created. Ms. Ostrovsky said they can be done simultaneously. She said they need to determine what the name of the Website is going to be which should be an action item.

Dr. Gaspar de Alba reported that the Workforce Development Subcommittee has been working on training opportunities for the RBT program. Dr. Gaspar de Alba asked what needed to be used in order to utilize the DHHS logo. Ms. Adie said there were additional questions which she has not been able to connect with Dr. Crozier to discuss. She said if the logo is placed on the flyer, it would be perceived as the State were hiring the RBTs. She said they do receive resumes from people that they share with providers. Most providers do their own recruitment. She asked what they wanted the outcome to be. Dr. Gaspar de Alba said the idea was to send them to one place which has not been determined.

Ms. Adie has asked if they had discussed getting training programs started at the high schools. Dr. Gaspar de Alba said they have discussed it and Dr. Crozier is looking into it. Ms. Adie said she was concerned about adding the DHHS logo to

the flyer since it would seem as though they are being hired by the State but she can ask if they wanted her to.

V. **Review and Make Recommendations on Legislative Bills Related to Autism (For Possible Action)**

Dr. Gaspar de Alba informed the Commission that they need to assign a person to track the legislative bills. He asked Ms. Ostrovsky if she would be able to keep the Commission up to date on bills related to autism. Ms. Ostrovsky said she will provide the updates to Ms. Reitz who will in turn share the information with the Commission to be discussed during the meetings.

Dr. Gaspar de Alba asked if there was any other information related to the bills. Ms. Partos said that there is discussion about amending the Read by Third Grade bill so kids aren't automatically retained. She added that she has been watching SB49 which relates to funding for pupils with disabilities in public schools as well.

Ms. Adie suggested participating with the CSPD (Commission on Services for Persons with Disabilities) since Jon Sasser tracks a lot of the bills. Ms. Ostrovsky said she participates in that group as well.

VI. **Confirm Dates for Future Meetings**

They decided to meet more frequently due to legislative sessions. The Commission decided to meet on March 1st at 4:00 p.m. Dr. Gaspar de Alba made a motion to accept that day and time for their next meeting. Ms. Ostrovsky seconded the motion. The motion passed.

VII. **Public Comment** (No action may be taken upon a matter raised under public comment period unless the matter itself has been specifically included on an agenda as an action item)

There was no public comment

VIII. **Adjournment**

Dr. Gaspar de Alba adjourned the meeting at 2:20 p.m.