

**Task Force To Identify Special Education Cost Drivers
and Innovative Approaches to Services**

128th Maine Legislature, 1st Session (Resolve 2017, Chapter 26 (LD 642))

***** AGENDA *****

Thursday, November 16, 2017, 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.
Cross State Office Building, Room 202, Augusta, Maine
(Education & Cultural Affairs Committee Room)

1:00 p.m. **Call to Order and Introductions**
(*Sen. Brian Langley, Senate Chair, and Rep. Richard Farnsworth, House Chair*)

1:05 p.m. **Welcome and Opening Remarks**
(*Sen. Brian Langley, Senate Chair, and Rep. Richard Farnsworth, House Chair*)

1:15 p.m. **Presentations and Discussions (Q&A):**

1. Maine Administrators of Services for Children with Disabilities (MADSEC) trends and policies recommended by Special Education Directors:

Presenters: **Jill Adams**, Executive Director, MADSEC; **Katherine Cox**, Director of Instructional Support, South Portland; **Lesley Snyer**, Special Education Director, RSU 87, Carmel; **Lynn Maddocks**, Director of Special Education, Ellsworth

- Request Maine Administrators of Services for Children with Disabilities (MADSEC) to come and talk with us about some trends the Special Education Directors have noted and to provide us with some policy recommendations (e.g., 3-4 top issues regarding current federal and state law related to special education programs and services)

2. Response to Intervention (RTI):

Presenters: **Jill Adams**, Executive Director, MADSEC; **Katherine Cox**, Director of Instructional Support, South Portland; **Lesley Snyer**, Special Education Director, RSU 87, Carmel; **Lynn Maddocks**, Director of Special Education, Ellsworth

- Do we have data on a RTI process, including a checklist for the series of interventions prior to a student entering special education and preceding a student getting out of special education; or do we need to develop a RTI process?
- Is it possible for MADSEC to survey Special Education Directors to see if they have an in-depth screening process or if they can propose an approach to formalize a RTI recognition process?

3. Clarification of cost driver categories for regional special education programs and services:

Presenters: **Jill Adams**, Executive Director, MADSEC; **Janice Breton**, Director of Special Services, Department of Education (DOE); **Amy Johnson**, Co-Director, Maine Education Policy Research Institute (MEPRI)

- Clarify occupational categories as authorized by Maine DOE’s Chapter 101 Rules (Maine Unified Special Education Regulation [“MUSER”] Birth to Age Twenty), including special education directors, teachers, education technicians (Ed. Techs. 1, 2 & 3), occupational therapists, physical therapists, speech therapists, etc.;
- Do school districts cooperate and establish regional special education programs; and can school districts regionally collaborate to collectively share occupational therapists, physical therapists, speech therapists, etc.?
- How many groups of school districts provide services by contracts; can they develop a team of specialists to serve within the contract; and is it possible to review financial data to see if these regional collaborations result in cost effectiveness?
- Would there be regional cost adjustments for special education faculty, staff and students in high poverty school districts?

4. Relationship of State Plans with Federal Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS):

Presenters*: **Janice Breton**, Director of Special Services, DOE; **Julian Baier**, Acting Director, Government Relations and Policy, Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS)

* (Note: Presenters will provide written responses to these Task Force requests)

- What are the current state laws and rules enacted following the April 30, 2012 report from the Maine DOE and the Maine DHHS to the Maine Legislature in response to LD 1003, “Resolve, To Assist Maine Schools To Obtain Federal Funds for Medically Necessary Services”?
- Is it possible for Maine DOE and Maine DHHS spokespersons to present briefings and discuss the authority to package together expenses with Maine Care (Medicaid) funds to provide medically necessary services for public school students?

5. Federal and State Maintenance of Effort (MOE) finance data:

Presenters: **Janice Breton**, Director of Special Services, DOE; **Amy Johnson**, Co-Director, MEPRI

- Request the Maine DOE to explain federal and state MOE laws and regulations; and report data on the submission of MOE financing to Maine school districts;
- Given the recent shift in the federal MOE regulations, does the MOE favor more wealthy communities in Maine school districts?

3:30 p.m. **Discussion of Next Steps and Requests for Information**
(Task Force Chairs and Members)

1. “Something Has Got to Change: Rethinking Special Education”:

Presenter: Carrie Woodcock, Executive Director, Maine Parent Federation

- Introduction of a report by Nathan Levenson, a special education expert, that addresses strategies and specific resolutions that will provide cost savings while improving student outcomes;
- The task force may consider seeking further discussions on the report strategies and inviting Nathan Levenson to make a presentation at a forthcoming task force meeting.

2. Child Development Services (CDS) and early intervention:

Presenters: TBA, Department of Education

- What will be the financial impact for the state and the local school districts’ special education costs should the Maine DOE proposals to shift the CDS and early intervention programs be implemented?

3. Further Next Steps and Requests for Information

Presenters: TBA ...

3:45 p.m. **Future Meeting Dates and Announcements**
(Sen. Langley, Senate Chair, and Rep. Farnsworth, House Chair)

4:00 p.m. **Adjournment**