Feasibility Study Group Meeting
November 13, 2008
9:00 am – 12:40 pm

Attendance: Pam, Kathy, Ruth, Jacqui, Michael, Jim

- Proposed Timeline Review Changes: Writing and Reviewing Report
    - **November 17: 9:30 am**
        - Review common themes in comments across the 10 categorical themes.
        - Discuss root causes of the issues that might be causing the issues
        - Brainstorm recommendations for how we might address.
    - **November 24: 9:30 am**
        - Review SDE state data and determine what to include and why (which areas it might support – statement of need, themes, budget)
        - Review data analysis results from state survey and look for relationships.
        - Revisit recommendations.
        - Share outlines for individual sections and identify any individual needs for writing the section.
    - **December 4: 12:30 pm**
        - Review descriptive data from deans' survey and identify where to include in report.
        - Section drafts due – read through and target what needs to be revised.
        - Review sections for inclusion of federal and state statutes/regulations and statements from the Autism Guidelines and any DD information.
    - **December 11: 9:30 am**
        - Send drafts to reviewers for comment after making section revisions.
        - Work on a proposed timeline for recommendations.
        - Review recommendations and categorize as no cost, low cost, and high cost.
    - **December 16: 12:30 pm**
        - Review reader comments and make revisions.
    - **December 23: 9:30 am**
        - Hold

- We inquired Jill about this time extension by phone and Jill did not see an issue with moving to a December timeframe since December 1st is an internal deadline.

Discussion
- Readers have been invited to review sections of the report within the next 3-4 weeks represented by: Birth to Three, ASD Guidelines Group, DD Council,

certification, paraprofessional (Iris White), parent (s), school districts, higher education, RESC rep, teacher, PD provider, advocacy, etc.

- Deans' survey – Goal: Link sent to participants November 17th.
  - Concern it might not reach other programs in higher education (ex. ECSU (ABA), MCC (SLPA), UConn (neurology/psychology), Quinnipiac (OT), Three Rivers (paraprofessionals), UCEDD-UConn partnership (medical). Getting the information to those providing programming for related service providers
  - As soon as the responses are entered, we need John (SERC) to send data set to Michael.
  - IHE Invitation to comment on incorporation of teaching methodologies into preparation programs concerning school personnel working with children and youth with autism and other developmental disabilities.
  - Changes to survey (Jim/Ruth):
    - Include an open-ended item requesting additional comments on the legislation – invitation to comment – make sure it's the maximum text box allowed in the survey tool.
    - Add option for university affiliation category.
  - Jim will look for community college e-mail list (or ask Jonas) and get a link sent to these institutions.
- Add higher education to reader review team.
- Need data from Nitza at SERC so Michael can run clean data set.
- December (middle) is a more reasonable deadline for the draft completion since we've asked for external reviewers and wish to include their feedback as appropriate.
- Jim needs information from the PD training centers in terms of budget and check in with them regarding program evaluation or impact studies – Jacqui/Kathy recommended Kentucky.
- Remaining Data Collection
  - **November 17**
    - Deans survey for comment open from November 17 – 26th
    - Data cleaning and analysis of school personnel data
  - **November 24**
    - Jacqui is working on SDE data with its Data Collection bureau – study group recommended review of data across all IDEA categories since we don't have clear criteria approved for Developmental Disabilities.
    - The following areas are necessary to examine for all students with disabilities by frequency counts – some variables might be better as percentages (need to ask Diane/Data Collection):
      - Age
      - Grade
      - Free/Reduced/Full Pay (socioeconomic)
      - Race
      - Region (DRG/ERG or by districts in specific RESC locations)

- Placement/setting and Reasons for education placement
- Total Special Education hours
- Check "Yes" for related service
- Extracurricular activity participation
- Special Education Exit reason and age of exit
- Service Plan
  - o **December 4**
    - Data cleaning and analysis of school personnel data
- Ruth is going to the OCALI meeting in Ohio and asked what could be shared about the feasibility study group efforts. The group agreed that Ruth could share the needs assessment design, the development of data collection tools, and basic methods in place to help frame recommendations. She will not share findings or any data with the group.

<u>Meeting Activities</u>

Identification of Preliminary Recommendations

Reviewed themes and discussed the presentation of themes in an order reflecting RESC/SERC/IHE meeting suggestions. Pam, Ruth, and Michael revised the preliminary findings and collapsed some of the categories together; Ruth will revise for Monday's meeting.

Discussed thematic language for clarity and alignment with both the Act and Autism Guidelines. In writing the results section, make sure the terms are clearly defined when presented such as "ability", "skills", and "knowledge".

The group decided the comments required further analysis by all members – participant comments that have agreement among group members should be considered for inclusion in final report.

Most of the themes and findings seem interrelated – the prediction is an overarching recommendation for a Center of Excellence but the recommendations for each area will all have to point in that direction to support.

Resource themes – need to clarify that these may include human, physical, and fiscal needs…and different stakeholders may have very different needs for resource allocation. Jacqui asked if there should be a separate theme covering funding.

Kathy and Jacqui suggested a table to prep for writing recommendations –

Need Themes	Key Findings	Recommended Actions
Theme 1	Highlights from data sources	Proposed solutions about what we do

In writing the results section, make sure the terms are clearly defined when presented such as "ability", "skills", and "knowledge".

Higher Education: More research is necessary in this area – when we make recommendations it's likely to be framed in a way.

Jacqui wants to make sure we think about recommending a Gap Analysis – before any strategic plan should be developed, we need to know as a state where we want to be and identify the gap compared to where we currently are. This will take further study and would require more data collection efforts to establish baselines and project or forecast with accuracy.