

**ODR Stakeholder Council Meeting
September 17, 2015
Meeting Minutes
Office for Dispute Resolution
6340 Flank Drive
Harrisburg, PA 17112**

Participants

Linda Deal
Cindy Duch
Betsy Gustafson
Heidi Konkler-Goldsmith, Esquire
Debbie Leggens
Kay Lipsitz
Robyn Oplinger
Dr. Gina Scala
Jane Williams, Esquire

ODR

Edward Titterton, Esquire, Legal Counsel
Kerry V. Smith, Esquire, Director
Suzanne McDougall, Program Director
Heather Doyle, SC Secretary

Presenters

None

Minutes

The June 18, 2015 Stakeholder Council (SC) meeting minutes were adopted as written and will be published on the ODR website in both English and Spanish.

Welcome and Introductions

The SC welcomed two new members, Heidi Konkler-Goldsmith and Jane Williams.

Dennis McAndrews has resigned from the SC and has nominated Heidi Konkler-Goldsmith as his replacement. Attorney Konkler-Goldsmith is a parent attorney with the McAndrews law firm.

Andrew Faust has resigned from the SC and has nominated Jane Williams as his replacement. Attorney Williams is an attorney with the Sweet, Stevens, Katz & Williams law firm who represents local education agencies.

ODR Annual Report

ODR has completed the 2014/2015 Annual Report. While the number of decisions were close to even compared to the 2013/2014 school year, the number of decisions favoring parents were higher than that of LEAs.

ODR Initiatives

Kerry Smith and Suzanne McDougall continue to work on revising IEP Facilitation policies, procedures and documents. ODR staff are developing an IEP Facilitation video to provide constituents with additional information on this ODR service. This is in follow up to the recent IEP Facilitation training. Any SC members who have ideas to help identify outreach opportunities regarding IEP Facilitation should contact Kerry Smith.

Kerry Smith and Suzanne McDougall met with School District of Philadelphia counsel to discuss the possibility of a targeted IEP Facilitation pilot within the district. SD members expressed positive feedback regarding the pilot.

ODR no longer has a contracted Hearing Officer for due process cases with gifted-only issues.

Kerry Smith provided an update on the Conflict Coaching Pilot, which focuses on building capacity for conflict resolution. The pilot has stalled due to separate, unrelated matters within the school districts involved.

ODR is in the process of transforming Evaluative Conciliation Conferences (ECC) into the more streamlined "Hearing Officer Settlement Conference." Both the Stakeholder Council and members of the parent and school bar have provided input on these changes. Targeted training is being created to ensure a uniform process among hearing officers.

Kerry Smith and Suzanne McDougall presented Creating Agreement in Special Education training to paraprofessionals of the West Chester Area School District. These staff members are creating a version of this training specifically focused on paraprofessionals, and have partnered with a school district who will undergo this new training and provide feedback and suggestions.

Kerry Smith is gathering information on creating a workshop regarding trust building for parents and local education agencies. SC members gave helpful insight and suggestions, including Act 45 eligibility.

Linda Deal provided a brief update on Chapter 16. Trainings will be coming for teachers in the near future.

The meeting concluded at 10:55am. The next quarterly meeting of the Stakeholder Council will be held on Thursday, December 17, 2015.