



Update on Related Service Personnel Shortage Workgroup

Report for OAPSA December 7, 2018 Business Meeting

The Related Service Personnel Shortage Workgroup has been in existence since January 2018 and has met 6 times at ODE since January 2018 with 4 of those meetings occurring since beginning of August 2018.

For review, the workgroup was charged by our legislators with

- Identifying and evaluating causes and solutions for the shortage of related service personnel in the school setting, including evaluating long term sustainability of potential solutions
 - Establishing short-term, medium-term and long-term goals to address the shortage of related services personnel in the state and monitor progress on those goals.
 - Report as needed on the work and findings of the workgroup
- For this group the related service personnel we are concentrating on include Educational Audiologists, SLP's, OT's, PT's, School Nurses, and School Psychologists.

We met on October 25, 2018 and, again, examined the updates that our three subgroups had worked on since spring of 2018 to address the short-term goals we had established. Those short term goals focused on:

- 1) ***Proposing an Update for the funding methodology*** for the state of Ohio and completing a cost gap analysis with the OESCA and ODE working together with some of our team members. We expect that report to be ready by January in time for the budget discussions coming up late winter/early spring. We have met the requirements the legislators have given us – now we need to ask them for the funding to fully implement our medium- and long-term goals.
- 2) Increase administrator understanding of related services practitioner's scope and practice by ***creating a booklet with an informative single page for each area of the related services***. This booklet has a series of one-page (front and back) summaries about each related service field. ODE's Communication Department has provided us assistance so that each related service page follows a similar format even though they were written by staff in each related service field. While this booklet was originally designed to help administrators' understanding of each related service field, we anticipate that this booklet will be helpful to staff and families as well. It

- will also be a useful tool to recruit staff into the fields not only in post-secondary settings but also by districts using it to “grow their own” related service staff by using it for career fairs at the high school level. An excellent **video has also been created** this fall with the assistance of OCALI in which a representative from each related service area verbally explain what their particular service area does while a video runs in the background of that related service provider providing services to a child. That video will be used to not only recruit more into the field but also to educate all educators and parents on the roles each related service area plays in the educational setting; and
- 3) We have developed **a statewide survey** to identify incentives that school districts (both regionally and statewide) would value and could use to address related services shortages. We have reviewed that survey several times now and received valuable advice from Mike Fuller, Director of Data Team at Muskingham Valley ESC and Dr. Marsha Lewis. We are into final stages preparing to send it out and expect to have some preliminary data for analysis by January. I anticipate that your related service staff will be sent an official notice when that survey will be released. I will attempt to let you know when that happens so that you can encourage your related service staff to participate.

In addition, we have paid special attention to the school psychologist shortage and OAPSA members will hear a presentation with more information about that on December 7 at the OAPSA conference in the afternoon. We also have a team member representing Higher Education that has helped us understand that the pipeline to produce School Psychologists is much smaller and more restrictive than the other areas. We are working on enlarging that pipeline and we just learned that there are universities in southeastern Ohio which have been in conversation with our workgroup facilitator. They have now formed a collaborative and will be pursuing opening a new School Psychologist Program.

In October we finalized our midterm goals and started working on our long-term goals. While we had two years to finish what the legislators asked us to do, we anticipate being done in January 2018 which is earlier than legislator requested but we were passionate about getting the job done well and faster than required due to the extreme shortages. We also recognize there's much more work to do to ensure our long-term goals get met and sustained so we have all agreed to continue working together.

I want to reassure you that I leave each one of these workgroup meetings feeling so positive and encouraged about the work we are doing and the passion and commitment of every single person on that workgroup. Dr. Monachino and her team do a remarkable amount of work behind the scenes before we even arrive to each meeting and our State Superintendent has stopped in to hear we are doing on several occasions including today and there always a huge presence of Senior ODE staff there. ODE and our team members have shown a passion and a

dedication to making a difference in the shortage problem and I'm very proud to be a part of the work that this group is doing.

We have a strong plan with real solutions to this shortage problem. We are well on our way to finalizing the mission our legislators gave us. Now we prepare to roll out our work and go after the funding we need to put the plan into full action.

Respectfully submitted,

Donna Stelzer

OAPSA Executive Director