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DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
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Advisory Panel for Children with Disabilities Annual Priority Setting Summary Report

June 2025

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Report compiled by the Center for Technical Assistance for Excellence in Special Education (TAESE), a division of the Institute for Disability Research, Policy & Practice at Utah State University.

T A E S E

Technical Assistance for Excellence in Special Education

Introduction

As part of the contract between the Center for Technical Assistance for Excellence in Special Education (TAESE) at Utah State University and the South Dakota Department of Education (DOE), DOE requested facilitation assistance completing priority setting for the South Dakota Advisory Panel for Children with Disabilities.

The main contact for the Panel at DOE was Wendy Trujillo. The facilitator and main contact at TAESE was Brenda Smith.

Planning Meetings

On April 30, 2025, Brenda Smith met with Wendy Trujillo to review the needs of the Panel for priority setting. Items reviewed during this planning meeting included:

- Expected outcomes for the priority setting workshop.
- The date and time of the priority setting workshop.
- Data the Panel should review to prepare for priority setting.

An additional meeting was held on May 19, 2025. Present at the meeting were Linda Turner (DOE), Wendy Trujillo, Mary Anne Fleury (Panel member), and Brenda Smith. During that meeting, the process agenda for the priority setting workshop was reviewed and refined. The question for the priority setting workshop was also reviewed.

Priority Setting Workshop Question: What priorit(ies) should the Panel focus on in the next year to address unmet needs for children with disabilities in South Dakota?

Priority Setting Workshop

The priority setting workshop occurred virtually on June 18, 2025 as part of the Panel's quarterly meeting. Brenda Smith from TAESE facilitated the priority setting workshop. The purpose of the workshop was to meet as the South Dakota Advisory Panel for Children with Disabilities to develop priorities for the next year. The stated outcome for the meeting was to establish shared priorities the Panel can work on together. Agenda items for the workshop included:

- Welcome
- Results of the Panel's Work and a Review of the Panel's Role
- Priority Setting
- Action Planning
- Next Steps

Brenda Smith conducted the welcome to the priority setting workshop and reviewed the meeting purpose, outcome, and agenda. Wendy Trujillo conducted the review of the Panel’s work over the past year and Brenda Smith provided the review of the Panel’s role under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and best practices for setting annual priorities.

The priority setting workshop included two activities that allowed the group to:

- Develop a priority
- Conduct action planning to complete the priority

Priority Development

To begin the priority setting, Panel members participated in a focused conversation regarding the work the Panel completed during the past year. Panel members discussed items that stood out to them from previous Panel presentations and discussions, information reviewed during Panel meetings that confirmed observations from their personal or professional experiences, initiatives and programs that are improving outcomes for students with disabilities in South Dakota, and where changes could be made to improve outcomes for students with disabilities.

Following this discussion, Panel members conducted individual brainstorming around the workshop question (What priorit(ies) should the Panel focus on in the next year to address unmet needs for children with disabilities in South Dakota?). After the individual brainstorming, Panel members separated into small groups to review their individual brainstorming responses and form shared responses to the workshop question. The Panel then participated in large group sharing, clustering group ideas by similar themes, and naming the grouped themes to answer the workshop question. Based on these activities, the group identified the following two potential priorities.

- Supporting retention of teachers and improving student outcomes by providing accessible professional development resources.
- Assessing and directing parents to available resources.

The following table summarizes the two potential priorities generated by the group sharing/brainstorming that contributed to the answers to the workshop question. The table includes the two named priorities as the column titles and all brainstormed comments that contributed to the priority suggestion.

Supporting Retention of Teachers and Improving Student Outcomes by Providing Accessible Professional Development Resources	Assessing and Directing Parents to Available Resources
Behavior intervention support/trainings	Partnership within the IEP process
Paraprofessional training	Improving the IEP process – alternatives to dispute
Professional development >quick takes (5–10-minute videos or podcast format) > “hack commercials” sharing ideas that work for them	Guide for schools on what resources should be shared with families
Mentorship for special educators	Always use student/family friendly language
Increase knowledge of discipline procedures – especially what constitutes a suspension	“You just found out your child has a disability, now what?” resource document
Gen Ed teachers training to recognize behaviors in students to implement behavior plan	Ensuring that we are making every attempt to ensure that parents are educated and understand (not assuming) – increasing their ability to advocate sooner in the process
Professional development for educators and support for SPED teachers	Addressing trauma
Increase support for SPED staff to support Gen Ed staff	Support for foster families
Successful Inclusion – Gen Ed supports	Family knowledge of statewide resources for families
Executive Functioning training	
Addressing the teacher shortage	
Understanding and using Response to Intervention	
Assistive technology awareness	
How to do the work with less funding	

Table12 priority setting results.

After reviewing the two potential priorities, the Panel came to consensus on setting one priority for: *Supporting Retention of Teachers and Improving Student Outcomes by Providing Accessible Professional Development Resources*.

Action Planning

To begin the action planning activity, the Panel discussed outcomes that would result from completing their selected priority. The Panel determined they could meet their priority by completing a needs assessment addressing professional development for administrators, general education staff, special education staff (including paraprofessionals), and private school personnel. They then developed action items they would need to accomplish to complete their priority within the next year. The table below summarizes the action item timeline and tasks that should be completed by the end of each meeting.

September 2025 Meeting	January 2026 Meeting	April 2026 Meeting	June 2026 Meeting
Determine needs assessment objectives.	Create the needs assessment.	Analyze and review the needs assessment results.	Make recommendations based on the needs assessment results.
Draft an explanatory message to send with the needs assessment.	Develop a recipient list for the needs assessment.	Identify current, available professional development and compare it to the needs assessment results.	
Draft the needs assessment questions.	Distribute the needs assessment.		

Table 2 action planning timeline.

In addition to the above table, an action item timeline was developed for the Panel to use to track their progress accomplishing their priority.

Priority Setting Summary and Follow-Up

In summary, the South Dakota Advisory Panel for Children with Disabilities completed a priority setting workshop during their meeting on June 18, 2025. The Panel set a priority to support the retention of teachers and improve student outcomes by ensuring the provision of accessible professional development resources. In addition to this summary report, an action item timeline was developed to assist the Panel in tracking activities they need to complete to accomplish their priority.

Supporting Documentation

Priority Setting Workshop Agenda

South Dakota Department of Education



South Dakota Advisory Panel for Children with Disabilities

Priority Setting
June 18, 2025 | 9:30 CST

Purpose

Meet as the South Dakota Advisory Panel for Children with Disabilities to develop priorities for the next year.

Outcomes

Establish shared priorities the Panel can work on together.

Agenda

Welcome

Review of Panel Work/Presentations from past year – *Wendy* (10 minutes)

Review of the Panel's Role and How Priorities Help the DoE Improve Student Outcomes

Introductions

Setting the Context and Review of Workshop Question

Priority Setting Workshop

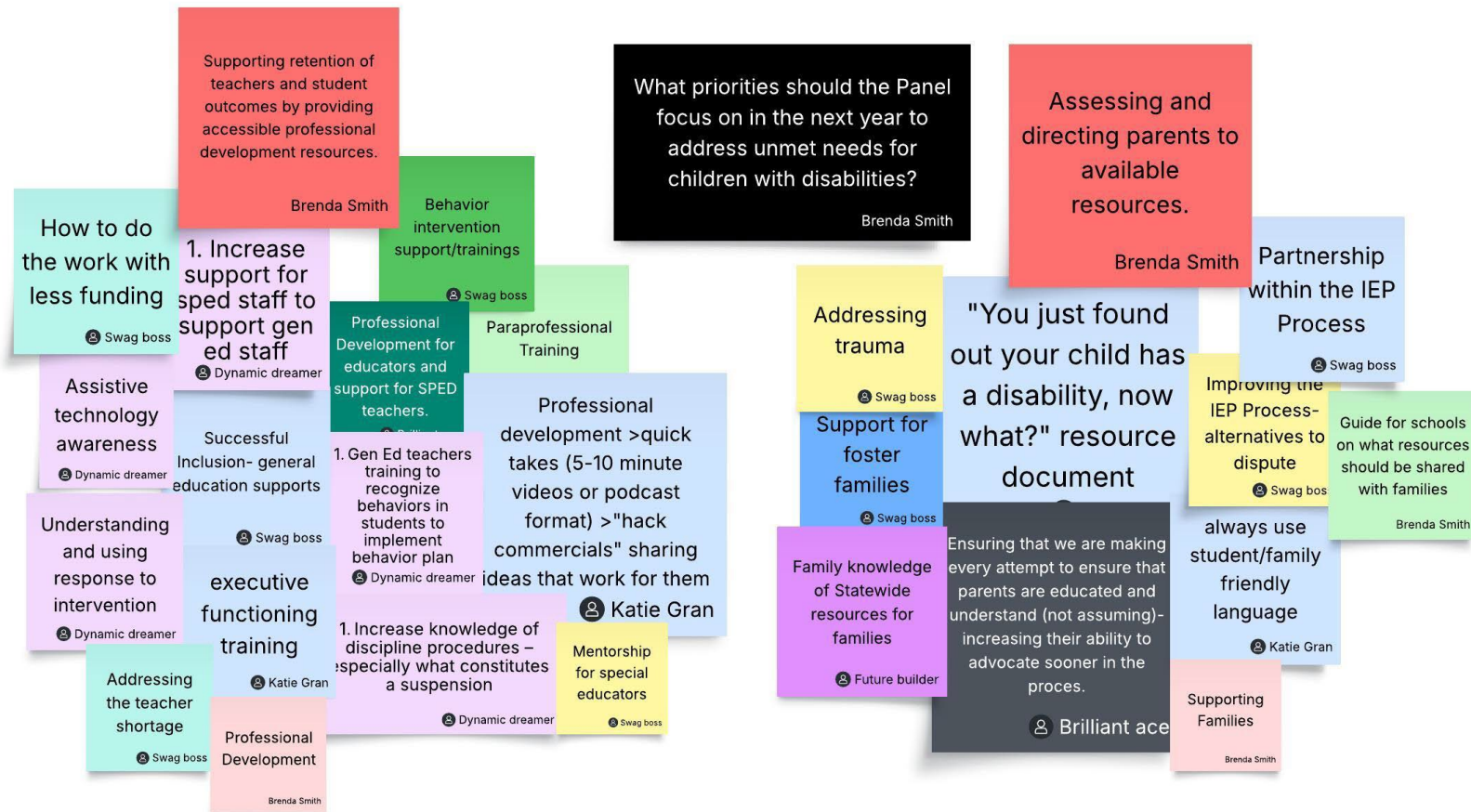
Lunch Break (30 minutes)

Action Planning Workshop

Next Steps

Adjourn

Priority Setting Activity Diagram



Action Planning Activity Diagram

