



STATE OF DELAWARE
STATE COUNCIL FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES
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The Honorable John Carney
Governor

John McNeal
SCPD Director

MEMORANDUM

DATE: January 31, 2018

TO: All Members of the Delaware State Senate
and House of Representatives

FROM: Ms. Jamie Wolfe, Chairperson
State Council for Persons with Disabilities

RE: H.B. 292 (Amend Title 14 of the Delaware Code Relating to Services for Children with Autism Spectrum Disorder)

This legislation was introduced on January 4, 2018. As of January 4, 2018 it awaited action by the House Education Committee.

This bill implements the recommendations of the Autism Educational Task Force Report and overhauls the statewide educational program (DAP) for children with autism. The bill requires the employment of a statewide director, hired in consultation with a Peer Review Committee. The bill lists a number of requirements for the director. The bill creates a three-year pilot program mandating training and technical assistance for all public schools which includes practices specifically relevant to children with ASD classification using evidence based practices.

The bill mandates at least one training specialist for every 100 students with ASD classification (the bill contemplates a phase in of this requirement). The bill has qualification requirements for training specialists. Funding for the program will come from a variety of sources, including state appropriations, unit funding, pass through funds and grants, and "fees for service for support." There are to be numerous committees including a parent advisory council, a Peer Review Committee, and a Statewide Monitoring Review Board.

The goal appears to be to create a less centralized DAP where students who have a classification of ASD can be educated in their own districts. The goal of the pilot is to increase capacity in all school districts through coordinated training and access to specialists. The Councils may wish to

endorse this concept only if it is properly resourced and funded. A less centralized system without adequate resources would severely compromise the educational quality for students with the ASD classification. There is also concern about what would happen after the three-year pilot program has been completed.

Given the potential benefits for students with disabilities, the SCPD is endorsing the concept of the proposed legislation if it is properly resourced and funded.

Thank you for your consideration and please contact SCPD if you have any questions regarding our position or observations on the proposed legislation.

cc: Ms. Laura Waterland, Esq.
Governor's Advisory Council for Exceptional Citizens
Developmental Disabilities Council

HB 292 autism program 1-31-18