

H. 140 Following the general discussion under the legislative agenda item, members present reviewed the testimony of the AOE before the House Education Committee point by point, concluding as follows:

1. The SEAC has no position for or against changing the name of the council.
2. The SEAC supports moving the reference to parents and individuals with disabilities to the beginning of the membership list consistent with the IDEA structure.
3. The SEAC supports listing the special rule requiring that the majority of members be either parents of children with disabilities or individuals with disabilities above the list of members.
4. The SEAC supports removal of the two members of the General Assembly from the list of required members.
5. The SEAC strongly opposes the removal of a representative of the parent training and information center from the list of required members. Members present find the participation of this parent/child focused advocacy organization critical to ensuring a statewide perspective regarding the identification of and services for children and youth with disabilities. They are necessary to the effective functioning of the SEAC.
6. The SEAC strongly opposes the removal of a representative of the State protection and advocacy system from the list of required members. Members present find the participation of this parent/child focused advocacy organization critical to ensuring a statewide perspective regarding the identification and services for children and youth with disabilities. They are necessary to the effective functioning of the SEAC.
7. The SEAC opposes using the federal reference to SEA in this statute. It's the SEAC's belief and assertion that the SEA is an umbrella term intended to cover both the Agency of Education and the State Board of Education. To avoid any different interpretation, the SEAC supports maintaining the reference to both entities in 16 VSA § 2945.
8. The SEAC would support OSEP guidance that where plural references are used under 34 CFR § 300.168 representation by at least one representative from a category is permissible. The SEAC would want confirmation from OSEP in this regard.
9. The SEAC opposes capping the membership of the advisory as it may result in an imbalance between professional and non-professional membership which is the case under the existing statute.

The additional issues brought up by the Feb 19 Committee amendment are:

1. The SEAC does not support the additional recommendation requirements for various members. This will complicate an already non-working membership process i.e. members would have to be appointed by the Governor in collaboration with the Secretary AND have been recommended by the various organizations
2. The SEAC does not support term limits. With retention an issue, we think this may be ill advised. We agree that addressing stagnation and getting "new blood" is important, but we feel that term limits for council leadership has been addressed in by-laws and we feel it is more beneficial to the working of the council to continue in this manner.

3. The SEAC does not support that the numbering of positions is not in compliance with federal law and will be cumbersome to manage. Using the federal language will provide the clarity needed.
4. The SEAC does not support listing some advocacy groups, unions and other special interests is in the best interest of children with disabilities globally. There are 12 different disability categories. The PTI and advocacy agencies provide general support to children and families of all disabilities, the others a specialized. Should all groups be included in statute?