

## **Region IV MCASE Meeting**

April 28, 2022 at 10:00 AM

[Google Meet](#)

**Participants:** Jenny Malloy, Michelle Hallberg, Dede Frothingham, Sara Novak, Dan Laughlin, Kim McCauley, Verne Beffert, Maria Pace, Char Allred, Mary Beth Pummel, Robert Stevenson, Sean Maharg, Chad Berg

**Other Attendees:** Carolyn Long, Veronica Avila, Annette Young

### **AGENDA:**

1. Carolyn Long, MCD SLP-CCC and CCO/Founder Social Optics Inc.  
[www.mysocialoptics.com](http://www.mysocialoptics.com)
  - a. Social Optics is a web-based communication strategies software for middle and high school students with autism and social communication challenges. It will be available next Fall for districts to use. Carolyn Long will discuss the program and answer questions about districts who may be interested in participating in this initial release.
  - b. Overview of Program/Curriculum - 9 Modules with 10-12 lessons each. It is designed for 15 minutes/day, enough lessons for 108 days.  
Examples of how that would look for implementation. Schools can visit with Carolyn to figure this out.
  - c. Free for next year. Trying to get it out to use and get feedback. If interested for your district or coop, connect with either Carolyn or Jenny.
  - d. Includes: Modules, Content & Database
    - i. Additional tools for the database will be coming out next year.
2. **Veronica Avila, Director of Operations for Intermountain**
  - a. Providing mental and behavioral health services in Montana and are looking to be another resource for psychiatric medication management.
  - b. 2 Providers: 1 - Helena in person 2 - Great Falls all telehealth
  - c. No waitlist, currently it's about a 2 week turnaround for an apt.
  - d. Takes most all insurances
  - e. Serves both adults & youth
  - f. Veronica will share her digital info to Jenny and she will forward it to our group.
3. **Enrollment and Attendance for 19-21 year old students**
  - a. Guidance for Districts - MTSBA just sent out sample policy and notes on updating/reviewing.
    - i. Sara noted the link between this and Coop Program Narratives
    - ii. Voc-rehab requesting school based contracts.
    - iii. Doing what's best for kids

- iv. Larger districts seem to do this and serve 19 year olds well. Smaller/Rural schools struggle with supporting students. What does it look like? Vocational vs. School
  - v. Big picture - Early education choices determine age at starting senior year, Year 4 vs. Year 5, Keeping choices individualized and IEP team decisions (Independ. Living & Voc Skills, what services are in place)
  - b. Current Policy or Needed Adjustments?
- 4. Resources for parameters for IEE requests and a new list of people to administer them.**
- a. Directors are creating a google sheet that will be shared with you all to generate a list of psychs in your area that are available to do independent evaluations.
    - i. Please add to the list [here](#)
- 5. New Teacher Training** - OPI is once again offering novice teacher training. There is a session happening now on the Teacher's Hub. It is facilitated by Alicia Herman. There will be a summer and fall session as well. OPI will be running the course June 27, 2022 – August 21, 2022, and again September 26, 2022 – November 13, 2022. Open enrollment is about 3 weeks prior to the start of the course and reminders will be sent out on the Monthly OPI Compass.
- 6. Annette Young, Office of Public Instruction, Special Education Endorsement Project**
- a. Looking to improve the mentoring of the sped endorsement project candidates. Asking for feedback on what is needed from candidates who are going through the program.
  - b. We noted that it's hard to determine who is in the program and who isn't. We support them with supervision and mentorship regardless.
  - c. As of July 1st, they should have 8 seats, 7 left (1st come, 1st serve with only 1 candidate per district).
  - d. Question on looking at options on the application process and helping to ensure success. Also letting administrators know who is in program vs. internship
  - e. Those not accepted, are required to set up for the Special Ed Internship Program, housed at MSU Billings. If the district or coop doesn't have a mentor, the school will provide one free of cost.
  - f. Discussion on mentors onsite vs. assigned mentor from the program.
  - g. Jenny will share her training manual with Annette.
  - h. Suggestions for improvement: Communication with district, ensuring the teacher candidates feel supported in all areas (teaching, paperwork, data, etc)
  - i. Chad asked about the rule on no qualified candidates applied. She replied that the district has to prove they have a high need.
    - i. District follows the policy on hiring practices
    - ii. No qualified applicants
    - iii. Qualified applicant, but after interview they were not fit for the job, wouldn't work out to be offered a position.
- 7. Sped Advisory Panel**

- a. Chad Berg is the current Chair for this panel. He is stepping down from this role. Is anyone open to taking on this role?

**Next Meeting: MCASE End of Year Celebration will be held on May 25th at 11:30 in Bozeman at 1013 Springbrook Ave. This party is to honor our region members who are moving onto greener pastures. Dede will be moving to Assistant Superintendent of Belgrade Public Schools, Dan Laughlin and Michelle Halberg are moving onto a life of leisure through retirement!**