

## **Additional Working Group Member Suggested Recommendations Since the 1-22-15 Meeting**

- 1) Limit the time for each party to present its' case in a special education due process hearing to three days, so that each hearing will last no longer than six days in total. Grant the hearing officer the authority to authorize additional days for case presentation if he or she deems it is necessary for a full and fair disclosure of the facts required to arrive at a decision.
- 2) Institute a required step, prior to a special education due process hearing, that helps the parties realistically assess the options available to better meet the educational needs of the child in question without the expense and controversy of a full hearing. A state employed and trained "adjudicator" or "conciliator" could administer this process. Retired advocates, administrators, or former members of the judiciary could be considered as possible candidates for the adjudicator or conciliator role. Adjudicators or conciliators would have the discretion to recommend educational services or a cost sharing for services, in addition to the settlement proposals made by each party (the district and the student's parents or guardian). Either party would still preserve the right to proceed to a due process hearing following this new process, but the decision of the adjudicator or conciliator would be admissible in that hearing.
- 3) Establish a state grant program (via bonding) to make funds available to districts that are willing to establish and administer "mini-regional" special education centers in their districts. Such funds would be used to renovate or expand space that would be dedicated to the delivery of special education services in the district with space made available for students from at least \_\_\_ [3?] neighboring towns. Also authorize such cooperating districts to share staff and transportation, as needed.
- 4) Establish a dedicated state school or network of schools, such as exists in other states, for students who do not benefit from the mainstreaming process.
- 5) Require private special education providers to provide their audited financial statements (or equivalent documentation) to any requesting school district that uses the provider's services.
- 6) Cap or eliminate the ability of the RESC's to carry a surplus - ensuring that the money they have is spent on services, just like a school district.