**What to Expect if You Serve on the Council**

**Mission:** Creating change that improves the lives of Alaskans with disabilities

**Vision Statement**

Alaskans share a vision of a flexible system in which each person directs their own supports, based on their strengths and abilities, toward a meaningful life in their home, their job, and their community. Our vision includes supported families, professional staff, and services available throughout the state now and into the future.

**Appointment**

The Governor makes appointment to the Council for 3-year terms and individuals who apply do so through the Governor’s Board’s and Commission’s website: [Boards and Commissions – Mike Dunleavy (alaska.gov)](https://gov.alaska.gov/services/boards-and-commissions/). You can apply online, and this requires a letter to the Governor stating which Council you wish to apply for, why you want to serve and then attach a resume or other information you want to include. If there are openings, you may get a call from the Governor’s to set up an interview.

You must be a resident of the State of Alaska and registered to vote. If you want more detailed information on what it means to serve, you can call the GCDSE offices at 907-269-8990 and any staff person can talk to you about this.

**Council Meetings**

The Full Council meets three times per year, generally for two days. Typically, it is in Anchorage twice and once in Juneau, but that varies from year to year and depends on our travel budget and other factors like the pandemic. Members can join any meeting remotely via teleconference or zoom.

Our next meeting is October 13-15 in Girdwood and will be a learning retreat. The meetings following this retreat have not yet been scheduled, but they usually occur in February and May. If necessary to travel, the Council pays for all travel expenses (airfare, mileage reimbursement and hotel) and provides food and or a per diem for meals for Council members and support staff.

**Council Committees**

Council members are asked to serve on two committees of their choosing but can serve on just one if that is what their schedule allows. These committees meet via Zoom with in-person option for Anchorage based members. They are usually 1-1.5 hours in length and each committee generally meets 5-7 times per year. The committees are as follows:

* **Community Inclusion, Supports, and Services Committee (CISS):** Assists the Council in support of people with developmental disabilities to have increased access to a flexible system of meaningful supports and services in their homes and communities to increase the number of people with developmental disabilities living the lives they choose.
* **Employment Committee:** Directs the work of the Council toward training necessary for successful transitions to adulthood, meaningful work experiences, integrated and competitive employment, as well as career development, across the lifespan.
* **Self-Advocacy and Leadership Committee:** This committee supports people with developmental disabilities to have access to education, tools, and opportunities for self-advocacy across the lifespan to increase the number of people with developmental disabilities expressing their vision for their lives in local, state, and national forums.
* **Legislative Committee:** Provides direction to Council on all local, state, and federal advocacy positions, including correspondence, meetings and testimony to the Alaska Legislators and congressional members.

*In addition to the Council committees, GCDSE also serves these roles:*

* **Interagency Coordinating Council (ICC):** Advises and Assists the State Infant Learning Program (ILP), and helps the state prepare federal reports and improve services to toddlers and infants with disabilities.
* **Special Education Advisory Panel (SEAP) Committee:** The SEAP is responsible for advising the State Department of Education and Early Development and providing recommendations about new and ongoing efforts to provide exemplary services for students with disabilities.
* **Special Education Service Agency Board:** Members of the Council function as the governing board for the Special Education Services Agency, which supports the effective education of students with low-incidence disabilities throughout Alaska, but especially in remote and rural areas.

*For more information on the Council’s committees and structure go to our website:*

[*Governor's Council on Disabilities and Special Education (alaska.gov)*](https://dhss.alaska.gov/gcdse/Pages/default.aspx)

*Call 907-269-8990, or toll free 1-888-269-8990*

*Visit our FB Page at* [*https://www.facebook.com/GCDSE*](https://www.facebook.com/GCDSE)