

Hingham Public Schools Special Education Parent Advisory Council (SEPAC)  
Wednesday, September 13, 2017  
Hingham Public Library  
Fearing Room  
7:00 pm- 9:00 pm

MEETING MINUTES

ATTENDANCE: Jennifer Doan, Beth Koyce, Katie Gaughen, Courtney Orwig, Tricia Brynes, Holly Pilotte, Liza O' Reilly, Liz Kurlan, Michelle Ayer, Jaimie Kenney, Kerry Ni, Janice Sullivan, Alyssa Pederson, Dory Rubel and Katie McBrine

ORDER: Meeting called to order at 7:10pm and introductions

APPROVALS: Minutes from the August SEPAC Business meeting were approved

FINANCIALS: The financials remained the same at \$8997.75. There is one outstanding payment, was submitted to Kathy Birds, for \$376.50. This should be deducted from the SEPAC's account total for the next meeting. To be paid out to Jaime Kenny within the next week.

CALENDAR UPDATES

- Parent Breakfast had an attendance of about 12. We will discuss changing venue for a quieter space, but want to remain consistent. We will availability at the library.
  - Many attendees were preschool and 6<sup>th</sup> grade, transition years.
- Next SEPAC Business Meeting is Wednesday, October 11<sup>th</sup>, for the Rights and Responsibilities Presentation.
  - Format will be 2 speakers
  - Draft Handout to be reviewed and approved
  - Teachers and administration are also invited
- Janice Sullivan (a high school parent) reached out to Rick Swanson to set up a meet and greet which will take place on September 15<sup>th</sup> at 7:45am
- SEPAC Members and Liaisons have been on a listening tour and meeting with elementary school Principals and Vice Principals to discuss SEPAC involvement, SPED initiatives for the year and how SEPAC can be of any assistance to the schools.
- Some of the schools are interested in a possible book drive to sponsor a lending library for teachers and parents. Books on topics such as anxiety, ADHD, Executive functioning etc.
  - Meeting with Principle dates going forward: Foster on Monday, September 18<sup>th</sup> at 9:30. Meeting at South School on Wednesday, September 20<sup>th</sup> at 9:30am. Liaisons will attend.
  - Holly Pilotte will reach out to the Middle School to arrange meeting there.

- Handout review:
  - SEPAC calendar, 1 page handout to send home In back packs through Liaisons and possibly through X2 for high school. Any comments should be submitted by September 20<sup>th</sup>.
- A parent coffee at schools was suggested for new parents during the day.
  - Another parent suggested to host parent gatherings at night for social meetings, especially for working parents.
  - Katie Gaughen will look into arranging a preschool parent playdate

WORKPLAN UPDATES  
ATTACHED for review

- Living Document to be made public and with everyone - will be attached to all meeting minutes and can be distributed through email upon request.
- Persons who hold and edit this document are: SEPAC Executive Committee, Special Education Subcommittee members and School Administration (Dr. Galo, Dr. LaBilliois and Liz Kurlan) Handle on issues being raised and worked through thoughtfully and collaboratively.
- At the SEPAC Business Meetings the document would be shared and reviewed regarding progress and changes. School Committee and Administration is to update before each meeting.
- Liz Kurlan gave update on 504 & IEP Handbook and training progress
  - Pull-outs for parents - (attached)
    - Communication Chain
    - IEP Process - documents, timelines, etc.
    - ESY - Program Quality
  - Handouts are drafts and members were asked to review and send feedback to Hingham SEPAC Gmail account to start discussion
  - Will be on the next agenda for input
  - Will be posted on website when finalized
- Workplan updates on dates from Liz Kurlan on due dates past:
  - Manuals - Heather Rodriguez with attend November meeting to discuss 504 manuals.
  - CAPS - Within the next two weeks, Liz Kurlan has meetings set up with all schools and their Team Chairs/service providers, to review all the students on the CAP list of students for review/evaluations and their status.
- Heather Rodriguez will issue a community wide message
  - Courtney Orwig will review
  - Target date November 1<sup>st</sup>
  - Heather also to review and report on how many children on IEPs/504s are taking AP classes. The finding is leading to those children are not

being recommended to take this level of class and that services be taken away first.

- AP classes will be addressed going forward
- Bullying Prevention Issues -
  - Tied to the social emotional issues on the workplan
  - Parents need to do some work collectively to bring forth some action steps
  - FB posts

#### BYLAWS - Members voted

(ATTACHED for review)

- Changes to Article II - approved
- Changed to Article III - approved
- Changes to Article IV - approved
- Changes to Article V - approved
- Changes to Article VII - approved
- Changes to Article VIII - approved
- Changes to Article X - approved

#### WORKSHOPS

- Rights and Responsibilities Workshop - October 11<sup>th</sup> at Town Hall - 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor
- Presenters
  - Colleen Shay with Disability Law Center/past SPED teacher will present on IEPs
    - Format - 45 minutes with 10 minutes of questions
    - Nicole Merrill formerly with the Office of Civil Rights is an expert on 504's
    - Format - 30 minutes with time for questions
  - Liz Kurlan will be in attendance to answer any questions but will not be formally presenting
  - Heather Rodriguez will not be there, but will accept questions regarding district specific through email and she will follow up
    - Heather has asked to come to the November SEPAC Monthly Business Meeting once the manual is done.
  - Kerry Ni has offered to help arrange HCAM to tape presentations
    - Both presenters have agreed to be taped during presentation
    - Questions at the end will not be taped
  - Copies of Rights and Responsibilities & SEPAC Calendar will be emailed to school liaisons for handout and submissions to school newsletters. Handouts will go to whole student body
  - Liz Kurlan will send out a note to the principles to encourage staff to attend
  - Katie Gaughen will finalize flyers by September 20<sup>th</sup> and email out to the Liaisons

#### PRESENTATIONS

Possibilities for presenters need to be reviewed and discussed. Possible pairing with PTO to fund presentation that could be for all student population.

- Officers will come up with a time in the near future to discuss presentations, and will post for member participation.
- Tricia Brynes wants to plan empathy training
- Michelle Ayers recommended approaching PTOs to line item SEPAC presenters to commit and earmark a certain amount for the year, permanently.
- Historically, SEPAC has never had an issue funding a presentation

### BULLYING OVERVIEW

Courtney Orwig spoke regarding parents reaching out with major concerns that the schools are not following our bullying prevention plan, they are as follows:

- Their concerns are the districts compliance with bullying laws
  - District is not using the incident report form, when a report is made to the principle
  - Principals may not be contacting the parents of the alleged target and/or the alleged aggressor, as required by the law
  - The school is not informing the parents of the target about the DESE problem resolution solution system and the process for accessing that system
  - If a child is on IEP or 504 and is bullied for any reason, even if it is unrelated to the disability the team must meet as soon as possible to determine if the students' needs have changed and whether student needs more or different supports. Parents are reporting this is not happening
  - Concerns have been raised about proper identification and investigation of bullying, the definition of bullying is very broad under MA law, are we identifying?
  - Empathy training
  - Reviewing hot spots where bullying occurs. DESE recommends that the school collect and analyzes this data.
  - Schools reviewing what kind of strategies, that can be put in place in hot spot areas.
  - By-stander awareness - making sure students aren't encouraging the behavior and supporting the victim
- Kerry Ni asked if anyone knew where the Hingham Middle School Bullying Prevention Plan was because when you try to open it on the website it states that file is not found. Liz Kurlan spoke on the issue and says that the school is saying it is a computer issue, and they are looking into it.
- Dr. Galo and Dr. James LaBillois will speak with Katie Gaughen and Courtney Orwig to discuss the bullying issues.
- Does the district have a zero tolerance policy? Liz Kurlan hasn't read the policy in a while and does not know if that is the way we operate, but that should be the general philosophy.
- Bullying is under Dr. LaBillois

- If a student is on an IEP, the IEP generally states that these children are more susceptible to bullying, if that said child is being bullied and the school is aware, how does the school handle this differently from a typical child?
- Who determines if the team will reconvene? Anyone on the team and recommend the reconvene.
- Training for all the staff and administration at the beginning of every school year and bullying is one of the topics. Dr. LaBillois has the PowerPoint.
- If there is a disconnect about what the process is for a child on an IEP being bullied, we need to get that resolved.

### SOCIAL EMOTIONAL TASK FORCE

Bryna Rogers provided an update on Social Emotional Task Force via Email “The Hingham Tiered System of Support (HTSS) which is working with Boston University to develop a survey for students (4-12), teachers and parents for all students in Hingham grades prek-12, just met to review drafts of surveys at elementary, middle and high school level, BU is doing edits, we expect to roll surveys out mid-October. Once the surveys are finalized, paper copies of surveys will be available in all 6 school offices if parents want to preview what their children will be taking. Right now, I am working with Jamie on collaborating with the Parent Ambassadors to help with a marketing plan to get work out through various methods to all parents in the community so they understand what we are doing and how this survey will work and how the information is being used.”

### Nest Steps & Recap:

- SPED Task Force will meet again on Oct. 5<sup>th</sup> at 1:30-3pm. RFP for evaluations are going out at this time.
- SEPAC needs to reconvene to look at the workplan as a whole
  - Reprioritizing
  - Some items have been completed, others have not met deadline dates
  - Further discussion regarding bullying issue
  - SEPAC will reach out to the larger work planning group, find a date and publicly post, so members can participate.
    - Larger workplan group members are: Special Education Subcommittee, Administration and SEPAC officers
  - Parent Survey - November
  - SEPAC Vision Statement - The School Committee is working on a five-year long-term plan and has asked SEPAC if they have a vision or work we want incorporated in that, that they would consider including. Draft due by October.
  - SEPAC board will have another meeting about Public Relations and Speaker Series which will be posted

The meeting was adjourned at 8:57 PM.

