

SEPAC Meeting Minutes June 19, 2018
Location: Chelmsford High School, Learning Commons

Board Members Present: 3
Ali Barnes, Co-Chair
Kristen Eriksen, Co-Chair
Jane Zhao, Treasurer

Director of Student Services: Amy Reese- Present
School Committee Liaison: Donna Newcomb- Present

Other Members: Approx 8 members present
SEPAC sign in sheet filed in Secretary SEPAC binder

Handouts:

Agenda, Meeting Minutes, SEPAC bylaws, Needs Assessment Survey

Meeting called to order by Ali Barnes at 6:35 PM.

Ali announced that 3 Board members present- Ali, Kristen and Jane. Ali also announced that Laurie will be stepping down as secretary. She handed the SEPAC binder in for the board to keep. The board members thanked Laurie for her hard work and dedication to this SEPAC and school district. Ali asked for a volunteer to be secretary, Kristen Eriksen offered to do so.

Agenda item: listed in accordance to posted agenda sheet format

1. Approve minutes from May 22nd meeting

Suggestions for amendments - none. Motion to approve Jaimie 1st, Jane 2nd.

2. Liaison Update:

CHIPS: Maryellen reported good news. Transitions went very smoothly. Several students visited their next school, many paras and teachers visited, and transitions were much more coordinated. Amy Reese agreed but stipulated that's not all children need to visit, depends on the needs of each child.

Byam: not present

Center: Laurie did not attend last meeting. Did meet with principal and Sped staff to discuss flowchart for SST process (in Secretary binder). Center has their own flowchart as well. That was forwarded too. they also discussed open house. Center is very receptive to SEPAC presence at OH. Laurie offered to speak to give basic info re SEPAC. Lots of parents don't know what a SEPAC is. She also suggests a gen ed vs sped info session or workshop

describing inclusion. Principal Fulreader offered to come to a SEPAC meeting to explain the SST process. Amy Reese echos sharing of info re SST. It uses the RTI model as part of gen ed classroom. She states that evals occur either through the SST process or parent referrals. She stated that there are 3-4 parent referrals to one SST referral, with an exceptionally high number of evals this year, a majority per parent request. Donna Newcomb stated that SSTs are more pertinent at the high school level because there are so many different departments involved in high school. Laurie suggests that SEPAC look into the reason for such a large number of parent referrals. Unfortunately, the Zen Den for the Race for Education had to be cancelled due to illness.

Harrington: Jaimie is sad to report that the school psychologist at Harrington has resigned. They have a lot of upcoming social events, and the new principal is starting in July.

South Row, McCarthy, Parker and HS- not present.

3. School Committee Update: Donna Newcomb

The therapeutic program being developed for South Row is coming together for September.

Donna states that she has been speaking with Committee members and advocating for investigating a new language based reading program, and she feels there has been good movement in that direction. This has been discussed in many towns, not just Chelmsford. There is a push for this at the state level, and Bethany Rapoli and Decoding Dyslexia have been working hard for this cause as well. There are lots of initiatives up on the hill, and some concerns about cost issues and unfunded mandates.

Gen Ed transportation is open for enrollment. This is not for Special Ed. All students have to register, even if you don't pay a fee. This is important for planning. There are not a lot of transportation companies out there, so there are slim pickins to change companies. there are always going to be problems with transportation, but most important is to log complaints so the right people are aware, can intervene and track issues. Special Ed transport does not go to bid, but Gen ed does need to go to bid if they are going to change companies.....but again, there are not a lot of choices out there.

SC is updating policies and student activities, and working on a Comprehensive Facilities Plan.

There had been some debate about continuing open input sessions at SC meetings, but it was decided to continue with that practice. Some districts have people sign in, and have time limits. Donna states that at time it is difficult because people do not understand Open Meeting Law requirements. The SC can not discuss an item if it was not posted on the agenda.

4. Old Business:

a. 2018-19 meeting schedule: Parent feedback is that 6:30 PM is too early. Tuesdays conflict with SC meetings at times. Ali proposed Monday or Thursdays. PTO meetings are on either Mondays or Thursdays, both could work for Amy Reese. Jaimie suggested alternating days might increase attendance. Laurie suggested a poll of parents through a connected or a poll of PTO's. Ali states we will have to continue discussion of days for next years meetings.

b. Workshops:

True colors: Team building workshop for SC and SEPAC board. Federation offered two possible dates (9/27 and 10/1), one would possibly have a conflict, so will go with 9/27. Ali will follow up with Leslie about time.

Meet and Greet: Amy Reese asking for some clarification on what we would like this workshop to look like- Q and A, formal powerpoint, who should attend- all Sped liaisons? Amy Matson? What venue? Possibly will be scheduled in November which is SEPAC awareness month.

Basic Rights: Suggest it be done earlier in the year (?Oct 2018), and the 2nd Federation workshop in Jan or Feb 2019.

What is SEPAC?: Jaimie D did a presentation for Harrington PTO and has offered to do for other PTO's or at a SEPAC meeting. Jaimie described it as parent support for all families. Amy Reese suggested that there be discussion about the fact that a diagnosis does not mean that SPED is a given, and Donna Newcomb agreed, adding that families need to know that you have to qualify for services. Also, plan to explain that Sped does not take \$ or resources away from Gen Ed, discuss invisible disabilities, explain what inclusion is/looks like. Plan is to establish new liaison's to PTO's at first meeting in the fall, then make a plan for this moving forward after liaison's discuss it with their PTO's. Donna Newcomb also offered to be at this workshop as back up.

c. Needs Assessment: Jaimie Dillon did a nice needs assessment questionnaire. Suggests it go to parents and teachers. Teachers could suggest needs for room, equipment, supplies. There was discussion about how to distribute the survey, and how and who would analyze this. There are many survey websites, but there is a cost, and limits to how many responders you can have. Some pull in demographic data, which could be helpful, but some families may not want to share that. It was stated that people can always skip a section. Donna Newcomb suggests we ask Bill Silva, head of technology for CPS, and possible check out Acton PAC, as they did a survey in a different way, and reports of that are online.

At this point, Kristen had to leave the meeting. A request for volunteer to take over minutes was made, with no response. Remainder of minutes were recorded by chair.

C. Needs Assessment, continued.

It was suggested that the purpose of the survey be more defined. Questions were raised about which groups/subgroups the survey could be sent to through the CPS email system. Future questions related to IT will go to Bill Silver. A suggestion was made to create a subcommittee.

D. 2018-19 Community Outreach

i. Open House: Ali stated that the principals were contacted about SEPAC presence at Open House, including Byam being open to having a representative speak. The goal is to have, at a minimum, fliers or brochures available at each school. Amy Reese stated that she would get information about the availability of color printing. SEPAC needs to create an updated newsletter, completed by before September 6 (the first open house). Jamie will send in what she has created by the end of the month.

ii. Farmers Market: SEPAC will be hosting the children's activity tent on June 14 and August 4. Looking for volunteers to help.

iii. Kick Off Event: Harrington parents would like to organize a sensory friendly event at Roller Kingdom in the fall. They would like SEPAC to support the function. Roller Kingdom does not currently host sensory friendly events. There is an overall cost for the event, which would be paid for by attendees. It is estimated that the cost would be \$3.50 per child. The event would likely be an on a weekday, open to the public, and possibly held quarterly if it is well received. Suggestions for the event were made: 2 types of skates available, slower and faster areas for skating, use dance space for a calm down area, karaoke.

Additional kick off idea of a logo design contest for SEPAC was reviewed. A motion was made by Laurie to suspend the idea until next year, seconded by Jamie.

E & F. Board members and liaisons currently stand as listed in notes. No further discussion.

G. Bylaws Proposal Review: The chair of the bylaw subcommittee stated she thought the subcommittee had been dissolved. The intent was to have the entire board involved in rewriting the bylaws and that a separate meeting needs to be held to so. Laurie made a suggestion that the officers and liaison positions be filled and the proposed regional liaison be removed from the board initially. Donna asked if voting was included in the bylaws. Laurie read verbatim the election procedures, Article IV voting membership. Ali asked if Laurie was stepping away from the board. Laurie stated that she was stepping away from the draft. Donna suggests that in the future, define how a subcommittee will be dissolved at it's creation.

5. Other Business

a. Parent Support Group - no updates

b. Public Input

A parent restated that it is a large percentage of evaluations that are parent requested result in student found ineligible for special education services. Is there something that defines or addresses the child's needs after they are found ineligible? For example: the team told the family they would get resources, but the family was confused. Amy responded that the school should not give a medical diagnosis and that a medical diagnosis does not guarantee an IEP. A parent asked if parents could be told (by the district) to go to SEPAC for support? Yes. A discussion was had about SEPAC providing information to give to families at all IEP and 504 meetings.

849PM A motion was made and seconded to end the meeting.