

SEPAC Meeting Minutes April 25, 2019

Location: Chelmsford High School
Learning Commons, located on Floor 3

Board

Ali Barnes, Co-Chair - Present
Kristen Eriksen, Co-Chair - Present
Laurie McCarron, Secretary - Present
Jane Zhao, Treasurer - Present

District

Amy Reese, Director of Special Education - Present
Donna Newcomb, School Committee Liaison - Not Present

Members

Attendees Present: 14

Handouts: added to SEPAC Binder

Co-Chair Ali Barnes calls meeting
Start: 7:08 p.m.

Agenda Item

1. Review and approve minutes from March 28, 2019 regular meeting: Approval of Minutes: Motioned, second - Unanimous.

2. Liaison Reports:

CHIPS: Mary Ellen

Demolition from playground starting on May 4. New playground is starting including the toddler area and school age area. All handicapped accessible. There is a plan for students/staff during construction.

Byam: Walkathon, a week from Sat. Trying to recruit volunteers. Kristen will plan to be there. Coaches were reached out to. End of the year 4th grade celebration held on June 10th, during the school day. Kendra reaching out...does staff know about Zen Den? Amy D. talked about Zen Den and donations that were received. More talk about Zen Den - how to join in. Ali can do a blog post about the Zen Den on the SEPAC website.

Center: June 7th 4th Grade Celebration. Zen Opportunities. 1 or 2 Volunteers Cozy Cafe - monitor Friday, Amy D can volunteer to help.
Center - move up ceremony around noon.

Harrington, South Row, McCarthy, High School - no news/updates.

Member Jessica stated Parker- very excited about Zen Den and asked what is needed/plan.

Kristen - explained Zen Den - including, bean bags, leggos, quiet and calm, sensory etc...(zip line set up at Parker, quiet corner with shade for Zen Den.

Note/Discussion: Book Marks - have been cut out from Students at HS working on Life Skills. Ali will contact Principals and Library to have book marks out.

3. Workshop Coordinator Update:

Amy D - Next Wed. May 1, 6:45 - 8:45 504 plans - a brief description Public Library at McCarthy Room. Amy D is working to set a course for next year. Free Babysitting option, need to contact CHS childcare coordinator - at the Library they go into Children's room.

Executive Functioning Workshop - Great News, 55 people! Great Workshop. SEPAC may request copies of handouts for binder (not yet received).

4. Special Education Report:

Amy Reese - APPLE training coming up next week. Program Review of Preschool and one of elementary, will have feedback. Gearing up for Extended Year and forms going out to families. The district is trying to get a sense of attendance, regarding summer vacation information.

5. School Committee Report:

Donna - not yet present

6. Public Input:

Public Input has been added to the SEPAC agenda for further community supports.

Ali encourages members and interested parties to speak at the SEPAC Public Input session added to the agenda as an opportunity to "voice in and look at any issues that SEPAC may/should look into". Ali stated for those not comfortable speaking at a meeting, the CSNPSG (local support group) will bring issues.

Questions and Answers

Programs - do they consult with special ed?

Amy R. answered - There is usually a committee. "We try to have a representation of all areas, ELL, Special Ed, Administrators with recommendations made."

Budget related - district is adding a position for Autism program

Amy R. - Team Chair position added. Amy spoke about the new position. Q/A discussion included, Patti Doherty is retiring.

Further Questions/Answers and discussion included:

Q. Are parents allowed to be on some of those committees -

A. We do involve parents - posting is up. We will look at a screening/bring in for interviews. Will establish a committee - tap into parents who have students in those programs or level. Good question

Q. That would be published? Disseminated?

A. Probably not through a connect ed but an outreach.

Discussion: For new position - Those children staying in. Q. regarding: New children, would Team Chair change? A. We haven't thought about that yet, don't anticipate that - determined on a case by case basis.

Ali, regarding Patti Doherty's position: SEPAC would be a resource to be on the Finding Committee.

Ali at this point states: Floor is still open.

Parent comment about Transition Piece - wondering is that happening across the district? Discussion involved: Needs looking at, a lot of work from Renee Morgan at HS. PreK - K hardest transition.

Transitioning happening at other levels. Happening 4th grade meeting with 5th grade to have transition discussions. Tailored toward what that looks like based on individualized needs. On a separate day, spend time to see what building looks like...Critical help make things be successful. Strengthen that. Talk about Communication (all discussion points).

Q. Transition meeting - will there be Parker Staff at meeting (from Elementary)? It does happen for many students...

A. Yes, that absolutely would occur If necessary, schedule a separate transition meeting...parents can always contact Special Ed to make that happen. Discussion ends.

7. Parent Support Group:

Jen B and Laurie M continue to run an online facebook group to help bring Topics of Interest, Concern, News and Updates to the Chelmsford SEPAC. In person meetings were held 1-2 times every/every other month both a.m. and p.m. Volunteers are needed to help continue in person meetings. As of this time, going forward, the Parent Support Group in person meetings will be held by request only per hosts' availability. Parent Support Groups are a valuable resource for families in the district to bring up on-going issues and topics related to students' education and services. The SEPAC has offered great support.

8. Old Business a - e:

Laura Miller - Nomination Coordinator sent Ali (Co-Chair) the list.

4 people nominated

Ali will read who the nominees are...

Invitation stated: bring in any more at this time

1. Ali Barnes - nominated for Chair/Co-Chair
2. Kristen Eriksen - Treasurer, Chair/Co-Chair
3. Vyas Sanzgiri - Treasurer
4. Laurie McCarron - Secretary

Ali Barnes accepts position of Co-Chair of Chelmsford SEPAC. Ali feels strongly about giving parents a voice to the district. "Whether in need of support, information and/or resources".

Kristen Eriksen accepts position of Co-Chair of the Chelmsford SEPAC. Kristen states "we have a nice team, would like to continue that". Kristen would like to "maybe add more ODD" (Out Of District) for SEPAC.

Vyas Sanzgiri accepts position of Treasurer of the Chelmsford SEPAC. He is "happy to help in anyway".

Laurie McCarron accepts position of Secretary. Laurie inquires about more SEPAC interested members to help with board position requirements, including learning the roles of a SEPAC and shadowing board positions, to help with the transition of board members and continuing to maintain a solid SEPAC for future success.

The voting requirements are attached to the printed agenda/handouts - Ali relays that voting is open to parents and guardians in district who attended at least one meeting during the current school year.

Ali asks all Members: "Anyone else to self-nominate or turn in any nominations?"

None.

No volunteers for the following Subcommittee - Ali suspending the Communication Subcommittee: it will be suspended until next school year.

Recess Committee: Ali read responsibilities of Subcommittee - Ali stated that one of the SEPAC Board members will Chair the subcommittee. Meetings will be posted publicly. Survey for volunteers. Ali will announce later. Email SEPAC (email for SEPAC is chelmsfordsepac@gmail.com) Ali reminded members to please refrain from sharing identifying info regarding an individual/student/child etc... Questions? Comments? None.

Teachers Awards Program.

A Community Awards Program will take place this school year from volunteers of SEPAC. A group of SEPAC members volunteered to help with this process. Plans, ideas, suggestions and information shared. Momentum was high and members were excited about this.

9. New Business a - c:

Attached to the agenda was a document entitled "SEPAC Bill of Rights"

A document that was presented to the Chelmsford SEPAC and read at the State House during the Chelmsford/Westford SEPAC Day On The Hill, April 18, 2019, outlining a SEPAC's right to: Exist, Be self-governing and parent led, expression of concerns free from retaliation, consulted in decisions and advocate for all.

Cara, Liaison: planning for 19-20 school year, Cara gave her Email cara.dellaterra@gmail.com to take feedback.

10. New Items expected for April

Ali gave update according to agenda item 10 a. b. and c.

Close: 8:32 p.m.