

SEPAC Meeting Minutes May 23, 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
Vyas Sanzgiri, Treasurer - Present

District

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

Members

Attendees Present: 7

Handouts: added to SEPAC Binder

The Chelmsford SEPAC thanks Jane Zhao for her dedicated time in volunteering as SEPAC Treasurer for the 2018-2019 school year. Thank you Jane! Congratulations to the elected board members above for the 2019-2020 school year.

Co-Chair Ali Barnes calls meeting
Start: 7:02 p.m.

Agenda Item

1. Review and approve minutes from *April 24, 2019 regular meeting and *May 13, 2019 and *May 16, 2019 subcommittee meetings:

Ali stated there was to be a ***Correction on Agenda** - minutes that need review at this time are from Feb. not April. Amendments to Subcommittee meetings can only be made if you were at Subcommittee meeting. Motion to accept - Seconded. All in a favor. Unanimous.

NOTE: May 13th and May 16th 2019 Recess Subcommittee Meeting Minutes added to SEPAC binder.

2. Good News:

Chelmsford was chosen and participated in the Federation for Children with Special Needs, Advancing Parent-Professional Leadership in Education (APPLE) Institute training as a district! Certificates were given out to the parents that partook in the 2 day training, located in Framingham, MA on May 2 and 3, 2019. Participants included: administration attendees; Amy Matson and Amy Reese and parent attendees; Ali Barnes, Cara Dellaterra and Laurie McCarron. More details will be brought to the SEPAC about a Vision and Plan of Action.

NOTE: The Vision and Plan of Action Outline added to SEPAC binder.

3. 2019-2020 Board Elections:

Co-Chair, Kristen Eriksen - Vote: Unanimous. *Kristen spoke about what she would like to add to the SEPAC including pursuing a role as a Family Support Co-ordinator.*

Co-Chair, Ali Barnes - Vote: Unanimous.

Secretary, Laurie McCarron: Vote - Unanimous

Treasurer, Vyas Sanzgiri: Vote - Unanimous

Prior Treasurer Jane Zhao was mentioned and thanked for her time and dedication with the SEPAC.

4. Liaison Reports

CHIPS: Mary Ellen - talked about a mentor program in Chelmsford, a new teacher at CHIPS and Teachers supporting Teachers. Mary Ellen stated it is nice to have this support throughout the district. Social Worker had LifeLinks come to help parents fill out forms. CHIPS having ELL teachers come to CHIPS evaluated students and trying to make connections for parents early. Arts and Technology Education Fund Grant - CHIPS received Grant - "tactile and sensory". Received \$500 this year. Playground is coming along fast. Vyes: and Ali discussed distributing information on CHIPS website and a Blog and/or update to the resource page on SEPAC website.
Center: Suggestion - have SEPAC board member at Kindergarten parent information session.
Byam, Harrington, Parker, McCarthy and High School: No update.

5. Special Education Report:

Amy R. not present to update.

6. School Committee Report:

Donna Newcomb. Donna discussed budget initiatives after July 1. Hires, 1-1 initiative, looking forward to getting under way in the new fiscal year, process . Superintendent Evaluation is in June. Setting Goals in Aug. Strategic Plan expires in 2020, want to have next one ready to go when one in place runs out. Bus registration is now open! Concerns: how do we choose bus stops? There was a good discussion at the school committee weeks ago. Want to provide safe and efficient transportation - traffic and time spent on bus. Traffic Hearing on June 12 at Senior Center 7:00p. to hear from people about traffic concerns. Registration is open whether paying or not, to get an accurate count. Q. about a Family Cap? Yes, family cap is still in effect. No parking fee at High School, the district recently eliminated the parking fee for HS students. They continue to be working on school website and are looking at procedures, trying to take care of smaller details. Donna asks to be reminded about SEPAC tab on district Website. Concerns about class size were discussed and district is working on addressing that. Need true numbers to look at demographics.

7. Paren Support Group Update a - c:

No updates regarding Topics of Interest, Topics of Concern. Volunteers welcomed to host in person monthly meetings. Meetings held on an "as needed/as requested" basis.

8. Public Input a & b:

Idea from the Co-Chairs was mentioned, to have a form at main table for members to check off anonymously, this may help the SEPAC to keep track of desired Workshops, Topics, Concerns etc...
Discussion for SEPAC: a procedural manual.

SEPAC Bill of Rights: Kathy Healy Norton, Westford SEPAC Co-Chair spoke about the recent SEPAC Bill of Rights that was presented at the State House during the Chelmsford/Westford SEPAC Day on the Hill. Kathy spoke about other SEPACs, their needs for support and the relationships established through PAC-2-PAC (an on-line network through facebook) along with parents rights to having a SEPAC. PAC-2-PAC started with Kathy, Westford, and Laurie, Chelmsford, to help SEPACs in Massachusetts network, share information and help support. Looked at ways to raise awareness. Sat down with other parents, State Reps, Tom Golden and Jim Arceiro and others to discuss SEPAC advocacy at the Statehouse. A suggestion came up to have a starting ground, and the SEPAC Bill of Rights (BOR) was "born". The BOR are the 10 Basic Rights of a SEPAC in basic language to help strengthen and support community SEPAC leaders...to take the legal language and put it in a language for people to understand and interpret. Kathy read the 10 rights.

Kathy stated the following for members: Efforts to create a statewide advocacy event is forth coming - this event is asking all SEPACs in MA to review the BOR and vote to adopt it. Once adopted, it is to then be taken to the school committee to request a resolution of support. The hope is by next spring to have this adopted over many districts and go to StateHouse with a suggestion for a SEPAC Awareness month throughout Massachusetts. SEPAC Bill of Rights.com Website with flowchart is underway. A Sample resolution and template with legal wording and sample letting to State Legislators is anticipated to be

added. This would be a chance for families to “tell your story” as to why a SEPAC is important to you. The value of SEPAC and why they are/can be successful.

Questions and discussions from Donna and members included: the Non voting participant on a SC “Alicia’s Bill”. The Chelmsford SEPAC would like to acknowledge sincere appreciation to State Representative Tom Golden and State Representative James (Jim) Arciero for their commitment, and support toward this much needed movement. Chelmsford and Westford were welcomed at the State House with a welcome bag filled with a tee shirt, book, book mark and more at their SEPAC Day on the Hill. More information on SEPAC Awareness in Massachusetts for SEPAC board members will be added to PAC-2-PAC for future updates.

9. Old Business a & b:

Laura Miller and Cara Dellaterra.

Five schools in district, 27 families that raised concerns to parent support group. Wanted to create a 1-2 page - what does research say about recess, what kind of recommendations...Want handbook and school committee policy to combine with consistency. To be implemented. Information gathering helpful to report back. Inform all parties, to share info with the district and with the school committee. Figuring out time line, be able to share in Sept. SEPAC. Recommended we do that by SC member. Donna asked to clarify language in notes. PBIS, Tiers discussion.

Community Awards Program

Anything Audio/Video will have to be submitted to the School Committee Chair 1 week prior. June 12th is the last day of school. Printing of awards needs to be done before that. An example Community Award was distributed to members for feedback.

NOTE: The Community Appreciation Nomination Form that went out through a Connect-Ed added to SEPAC binder.

10. New Business a & b:

Meet and Greet from special ed and 4 sped liaisons. Talk about programs Q&A. Proposed BAasic Rights around Oct. 16th 2019. Workshops/Meetings breaking up meetings. Intergrated learning Jason (last name) 2nd Workshop around Dec. effective communication. Nadine Gabb - out of Boston Childrens January.

SEPAC meeting Schedule - Remind Donna and check into Planning Meeting. Suggestion: to have a quick meeting before Workshop. Half hour before. Keep brief. Update. Work Session/Planning suggestion; define for members how one differs. Work sessions held at different time.

11. New Items Expected for Fall 2019

SEPAC at Open House - script/slides discussion

SEPAC Brochure. Any questions? None. Comments before adjourning: Final results of awards through connect ed. 10th and 11th.

Close: 9:01 p.m.