

MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL EDUCATION PARENT ADVISORY COUNCIL (SEPAC) BUSINESS MEETING

Date: October 17, 2023

Board Members Present: Lindsay Conti, Eunice Kenyon, Zea Lennard and Maria Morgan

Other Presenters Present: Timna Serino , General Council Member; Dr. Jennifer Stys, Assistant Superintendent of Student Services and Allison Wright, Director of Student Services

Minutes Respectfully Submitted by: Dana Levin

Call to Order: 6:05 PM

Recording Initiated: 6:07 PM

Introduction and Board Elections

- Maria Morgan commenced the meeting and introduced the agenda, with the initial item being the SEPAC board elections.
- Seven individuals were nominated for the SEPAC board.
- The by-laws allow for 6 Board members.
- A Google form circulated in the Zoom chat for residents with children having special needs in Reading to cast their votes.
- Inquiry made regarding additional nominations, with 27 participants present.
- Discussion ensued on the possibility of expanding the Board beyond six members to alleviate workload and ensure sustainability.
- Etain O'Dea facilitated the voting process.

Student Service Update

- Dr. Jennifer Stys and Allison Wright introduced themselves.
- Presentation on the new Individualized Education Program (IEP) form, mandated by the state for full adoption by the 2024-2025 school year.
- Emphasis on student-centered language, removal of acronyms, and a shift towards collaborative, future-focused meetings involving student input.
- Para-educators underwent professional development on accommodations and modifications.
- Federal review of Massachusetts Special Education and completion of Tiered Focus Monitoring in Reading.
- Building a resource library from teacher/staff trainings accessible to parents.
- Update on Special Education Program Reviews:
 - Quarterly progress reports distributed, available on the Student Services website.
 - Upcoming evaluations for the Learning Center and LEAD (language-based program).
- Review of Michelle Goldner's Occupational Therapy Presentation.
- Executive Functioning support of "Ready Do Done" was discussed.
- Upcoming Speakers and Professional Development:
 - Phyllis Fagell in February 2024 on Building Resilient Tweens and Teens.

- Lisa Drennan as the keynote speaker on November 7th teacher professional development day.
- SEPAC invited to the professional developmental day.
- Sharing of Logo:
 - "Every Learner Everyday, All means All."

Board Nomination Update

- All nominees, due to a withdrawal, will be on the SEPAC board.
- Bylaws cannot be amended at this time.
- The new SEPAC Board will be: Lindsay Conti, Eunice Kenyon, Chris Kowaleski, Jaclyn Lee, Zea Lennard and Dilly Wilson

About Me Tool

- Introduction of Information Sharing Tool by Timna Serino, General Council Member.
- This tool can be used to give a consistent message about your child to teachers, camp counselors and other care providers.

Festival of Trees

- Alyssa Scaparotti has volunteered to decorate a tree on behalf of SEPAC for the festival of trees.
- Alyssa will create a sign-up list for community involvement.
- Dates and times of when to volunteer to be communicated in an upcoming newsletter.

Recap of Recent Events

- SEPAC continued to have monthly meetings with student services.
- SEPAC has a few great summer meet ups and events.
- SEPAC had representation on the Killam principal search committee. This was a great collaboration and we hope to continue this on other keys search committees.

Discussion of Upcoming SEPAC Activities

- Expanding resources for caregivers with students aged 18-22 for post-secondary education.
- Sepacsgiving events from November 13-19, focusing on supporting members. A link to participate provided in the chat.
- Movie nights and social events on the website calendar.
- Soliciting requests/ideas for speakers and topics for the next year.

Public Comment

- Expressions of gratitude from a participant (X) for the board's efforts.

Parents invited to a private meeting room via a link in the chat for an informal gathering.

Motion to Adjourn: 7:34 PM