Concord and CCHS SEPAC Business Meeting Minutes

APPROVED

Thursday, March 3, 2016
7:00-8:30 pm
Hunt Gym, Conference Room
www.concordsepac.org
concordsepac@gmail.com

Action Items

- Joanne to send February meeting minutes to clerk and Jessica
- Tali will add a line item in the April newsletter requesting board and other volunteers
- Donna will send a mid-March publicity notice regarding volunteer openings.
- Anne will ask Pat Fernandes at Williard for background on SEPAC parent liaison position.
- Becky will reach out to Elaine Bojanic
- Joanne will look for a CMS SEPAC liaison
- Mary will send Jessica Murphy a courtesy copy of the survey as soon as possible
- Becky will email Diana Rigby for a date to present to school committee in May
- Heather and Donna will select a date for a May presentation on neuropsychological assessments.
- Donna and Joanne will discuss the idea of running webinars.
- Jessica will look into issue of why emails are going into the spam folder.
- Donna will write an article for Concord Journal regarding the transition workshop
- Board members will send Donna ideas for additional locations to post publicity announcements.
- Donna will research costs associated with using Eventbrite for invitations.
- Mary will ask Jessica Murphy to send SEPAC newsletter to principals and superintendent
- Donna will report back to the board about the Federation conference taking place on Saturday

Attendees:

- Mary Tambor, Co-president
- Rebecca Robichaud, Co-president
- Jessica Hsu, Technology Coordinator
- Donna Roman, Publicity Coordinator
- Joanne Jensen, Secretary
- Kathi Snook, school committee representative
- Bob Grom, elected school committee representative
- Anne Kilroy, parent & community representative
- Casey Atkins, parent & community representative
- Kathyrn Camgemi, parent & community representative
- Colleen Wallston, parent & community representative
- Maribeth Cusick, parent & community representative
1. Open meeting at 7:04pm

2. February meeting minutes approved. Minutes to be sent to Town Clerk and to Jessica Murphy

3. Correspondence
   • The broken handicap door at CCHS is fixed
   • There is no ramp outside the nurse’s office at CCHS. Spaced is designated for an ambulance.

4. Public Comments (Each comment limited to 1 minute)
   • Made by Anne Kilroy, parent of child at Concord Integrated Preschool (CIPS)
     “We hoped that SEPAC would consider supporting our request to an advisory committee to CSC to formalize policy for CIPS and to carry out a review of short term and long term plans for CIPS. This would be in close collaboration with SEPAC, with SEPCA reps on the advisory committee and leading the effort on review of the CIPS program and aspects concerning special education.”

5. New items for discussion
   o Board member intentions for next year
     • Mary would like to continue as Co-President one more year
     • Jessica will continue as Technology coordinator
     • Becky will step down to create a space for a Vice Chair
     • Joanne will continue as Secretary
     • Donna will continue as Publicity
     • Looking for volunteers for a number of openings including SEPAC/school liaisons
   o SEPAC liaison role - discussion on creating a SEPAC liaison role for each school. Goal of position would include attending school activities (special ed coffee, PTG meetings etc.) and bringing information back to SEPAC. A formal description will need to be created. Kathi Snook commented there used to be a SEPAC representative position on every PTG board. Pathways Parents at CCHS could use some formalization with SEPAC
   o Preschool model update: Letter from Alex Chatfield of Minute Man Arc in support of maintaining 50:50 ratio of students in integrated preschool classrooms shared. Vote to be taken by the board at the end of meeting.
     • February SEPAC meeting held discussion on goals for preschool
     • SEPAC received emails from Casey and Anne regarding their stance. Casey commented that anything the advisory committee would do, would be in compliment to the SEPAC and appreciates the need for collaboration.
6. Chair reports/updates

**Membership**
- Survey to be sent to parents of children on IEP. Jessica Murphy is aware of it and will be showed a copy as a courtesy.
- Survey to be distributed to parents the week of March 7 with a due date of April 1. Data will be collected, analyzed and presented to the school committee during the SEPAC’s end of year presentation.
- Other area towns complete a similar survey every two years

**Events**
- Donna, Heather and Mary met and created a plan of events for the remainder of the year
  - Upcoming events include
    - First in a three-part series of transition workshops featuring Heather Mahoney (CCHS) to take place April 13. Workshop will cover state and federal laws, transition assessments and what they include, development of independent living skills and life after high school. Presentation planned to last two hours and will include a Q&A period. Parents will be asked to submit questions in advance. Heather is looking for feedback on content for the transition workshops
    - Second and third will take place in the fall and discuss case studies and post-secondary services.
    - Presentation on neuropsychological assessments slated for May. Date to be determined.
- Out of district networking events will continue
- Donna discussed the idea of holding webinars in the months when no other programming is scheduled.
- Donna and Heather will present next year’s calendar of events to the board by June.

**Co-Presidents:**
- Accept the Challenge: Becky reviewed event for board and attendees.
  - Carlisle is hoping to run their event in June. May use current program or create their own.
  - Trying to figure out funding. Price will be $500-1000 per school. Anne suggested approaching Willard PTG.
  - Program is very general and doesn’t highlight particular children.
  - Jessica Murphy will follow-up with principals
- Becky met with Lynne Beattie, principal of CMS about concerns being heard from parents. Lynne said she is working on Becky’s list of concerns.
- Superintendent and principal searches: SEPAC asked to be on the principal search committee and was told it’s not necessary. Tom Keane is on the committee and he will represent special education. SEPAC reached out to school committee to ask to be on the superintendent search committee. The school committee requested a Request for Proposals (RFP) from search firms; a decision will be announced at Tuesday’s meeting. Three school committee members are coordinating the effort. Kathi suggested SEPAC go back and touch base about their wish to be on the committee.
o Detective Scott Camilleri from Concord Police will meet with Becky and Mary at the next meeting with Jessica Murphy to talk about plans for creating a neighborhood database of special needs children.

o School Committee presentation: The SEPAC will present its accountability report, survey results, accomplishments to date and goals to School Committee. Date to be determined.

o Recap of monthly meeting with Jessica Murphy: Willard, Alcott and CMS didn’t meet accountability standards. Jessica’s response, schools can’t control the makeup of kids. Brief discussion on what Thoreau is doing that it performs so well on test results. Factors include methodology and school based model.

• Technology
  o Jessica updated the volunteer page on website and Exceptional lives information posted under resources
  o Jessica requested members include POST in the subject line for any information to be posted to the website.

• Publicity
  o Donna is asking for comments on publicity announcements and ideas on additional locations to post announcements.
  o Donna created a draft announcement for transition meeting
  o Becky is in favor of using Eventbrite as a program to manage event RSVPs.

• Fundraising
  o Will be discussed at April board meeting

7. Action Items (voting):
• A lengthy discussed took place prior to the vote between parents of Concord Integrated Preschool and the SEPAC regarding the parent’s request to form their own advisory committee, which would report to the school committee, to address programming and space issues.
  o Parents believe the preschool is a gem and want a group formed to address programming and space issues in their entirety and to make sure preschool issues don’t get lost among other topics. They want to put into policy that the preschool maintains a 50/50 special needs/community members classroom ratio. They also question the amount of time it will take to buy a modular room if necessary.
  o Mary and Becky don’t believe a separate group is necessary as there would be overlap. Becky believes the idea of creating a separate group would be working around what the SEPAC is charged to do, represent Pre-K to 22 years old.
  o Donna commented that the SEPAC and preschool are not mutually exclusive and cautions against short-term mission creep.
  o Mary said SEPAC can address the preschool issue at a meeting with Jessica Murphy
  o Kathi commented that the space issue is being addressed at the next school committee meeting on Tuesday. Also mentioned that Diana Rigby stated more space has become available and school committee members will learn more at Tuesday's meeting. Kathi reassured parents the issue
is being addressed and requested preschool parents give it a little time to be resolved.

- Board voted unanimously to support the new wording:
  “The Concord SEPAC believes of a 50:50 Special Education/Community model is the ideal ratio for an integrated preschool however because of rolling admissions with the Special Education community SEPAC acknowledges that this ratio can fluctuate. The SEPAC encourages the Concord Public School District to continue with the current integrated model and to create a strategic plan to accommodate the anticipated influx of students on an IEP to sustain said model.”

Meeting adjourned at 9:30pm