Concord Public Schools
and
Concord-Carlisle Regional School District
Special Education Parent Advisory Council (SEPAC)
Thursday, November 29, 2018
12:30-2:30pm
Location: Ripley Building, Conference Room 3

www.concordsepac.org    concordsepac@gmail.com

Attendance
Carol Yelle - Co-President
Becky Robichaud - Technology Chair
Helen McKinlay - Publicity Chair

1. Open meeting at 12:35 p.m.
2. No public comments.
3. Minutes from Board Meeting of September 27th, 2018 were approved.
4. Presentation by Asperger/Autism Network - AANE

**AANE - Asperger/Autism Network**

**Presentation by Debbie Curtiss, Parent Support Specialist**

The Asperger/Autism Network (AANE) works with individuals, families and professionals to help people with Asperger syndrome and similar autism spectrum profiles build meaningful, connected lives. They do this by providing information, education, community, support and advocacy, all in an atmosphere of validation and respect.

Child and Teen Services typically focus on children on the spectrum who would have been previously diagnosed with Asperger’s Disorder. The Child and Teen staff work with children and teens through the end of High School, although AANE also provides support to adults. You can start by taking advantage of a free 30 minute consultation and if desired, can schedule further appointments. Parent coaching is an hour long session with one of our clinicians when you have more on your mind and we also offer a two hour IEP Review. Parent Coaching and the IEP Review are programs associated with a fee, but if financial needs are a concern, you can contact us by e-mailing the Director of Child and Teen service, Nancy Parker at nancy.parker@aane.org. No one is ever turned away because of an inability to pay.
The best way to start learning how AANE can help you is to sign up for a phone call, IEP meeting or parent coaching. All appointments can be made electronically via our website www.aane.org

The biggest part of our work at AANE is coaching parents. There are four clinicians in Child and Teen services who can help parents, who are themselves parents with a child on the spectrum with or without mental health issues such as anxiety and depression.

We provide a bi-monthly workshop for newly diagnosed children and which is designed to help parents learn how to advocate for your child. We can also support parents with IEPs, reviewing the reports and current or proposed IEP for an hour and then holding a one on one parent meeting for an hour.

If you suspect your child is on the spectrum, you can contact the team at the Asperger/Autism network for a consultation and we can advise what you can do next to confirm the diagnosis.

We have a huge database of resources on our website www.aane.org including details of neuropsychologists, camps, dentists etc. as well as details of all our support groups and more than 100 hours of webinars.

We hold parent support groups which are all separated by age and gender and will be starting an online parent support group in January 2019. In addition we hold regular social events for parents and also support group for grandparents, LGBTQ members and also neurodiverse couples. We have very strong programs delivering support to women and girls who are the “hidden members” of the Asperger and autism community.

AANE holds conferences twice a year as well as regular workshops and events in the community. We provide free training in the summer for teachers which is contracted through us by DESE and which can be taken for credit by registering and paying a fee through Fitchburg State. We also provide training for school districts, after school programs, libraries, first responders etc.

Please visit our website at www.aane.org to learn more about what we do and how we can help you. It includes details of our LifeMap program for teens which helps kids to decide what they want to do; our WorkMap program for kids who don’t want to go on to college and which offers services such as interview preparation and goal setting. Our College Map program assists with college selection, essays and skills needed to be successful in the college environment.
AANE also provides direct services to people who have graduated from college. These include regular social events like Pizza and Game Night, Holiday parties and social outings for women.

5. **Items for discussion**
   - No report from Joint School Committee Meeting.

6. **Policy Committee update**
   - Shaina Brito reported (via e-mail) that feedback from the SEPAC September Board Meeting regarding the School Committee policies in special education was sent to Laurie Hunter in October. Laurie shared this input with Jessica Murphy who requested some further clarification. The SEPAC policy sub committee met (with 2 of 3 members present) to review our suggestions for the policies and to further clarify our intentions and input. The sub committee will be meeting with Jessica Murphy on 3rd December to discuss our recommendations and agree the next steps.

7. **Safety Committee update**
   - Wendy Frohlich attended the safety committee meeting and provided a report to the Board. A brief summary is as follows:
     - All schools (except Alcott) have gone through their ALICE drill for this year. The discussion about provision for special education students showed that further work is needed in this area.
     - There is a need for a communication app to improve the coordination of the response to emergencies.
     - The District is reviewing the school emergency plans.
     - Some additional safety items are being installed - lights, cameras and smoke detectors.
   This update will be added to the Board Meeting agenda in January so Wendy can discuss the full update with the Board.

8. **By-laws update**
   - This item will be moved to the next meeting.

9. **Co-Presidents update**
   i. Review of meeting with Jessica Murphy
The WestEd report for the Elementary Schools and Middle Schools is currently being reviewed within the Special Education Team before publication.

There has been no update about the Middle School restructuring. Carol and Shaina to raise this at the next meeting and also at the PTG Presidents Meeting.

ii. Review of PTG Presidents meeting

The League of Women Voters were in attendance and informed the meeting they have a panel discussion each month. The one held in January will be focused on education, details will be published closer to the time.

There is a home based program being developed for for snow days to try and reduce the amount of days missed.

Willard School has a ‘quiet space’ available during all events and it has been well used. This is being publicized and there is a desire to introduce this throughout all the schools.

iii. No correspondence has been received.

Events update

Wendy Frohlich provided an update via e-mail:

The Basic Rights in Special Education workshop is being held on 10th December at the RJ Grey Junior High School in Acton. We are partnering with Acton-Boxborough, Maynard and Sudbury SEPACs to deliver this Event.

ADHD and dyslexia: how they relate to each other when children have both. This event will run on February 7th at Ripley and the presenter is Roberto Olivardia who is a clinical psychologist and lecturer at Harvard Medical School.

Introduction to Special Education Mediation. Myrto Flessas from the Bureau of Special Education Appeals will be presenting on March 28th. Location to be confirmed.
Communications and Technology update

We are experiencing increased traffic on our facebook page and this is an Important communication tool for reaching parents.

Positive feedback has been received about the newsletter; it is easy to read and engaging. Becky requested an input of ideas for the newsletter and also further feedback to help with development.

Details of all the SEPAC sub committees will be added to the website.

Publicity update

The school bulletins will carry the details of the Basic Rights in Special Education event beginning 2nd December with the CMS Announcements. The external publicity will be from 4th December onwards.

Helen, Carol and Shaina will meet separately to discuss the overall planning of our communications.

Out of District Update - Joanne Jensen

Joanne provided feedback from parents who had attended the out of district parent meet up on November 27th. The questions raised were how children are placed out of district, how schools are suggested and how out of district works.

The next meeting are as follows:

Sunday, January 27th, 10:00 am at Saltbox Kitchen
Thursday, March 28th, 7:30 pm at Trail’s End (bar area)
Sunday, Mary 19th, 10:00 am at Saltbox Kitchen

The meeting closed at 1:45 pm as it was no longer quorate. The remaining Items on the agenda (Regional School Committee Presentation Sub-Committee formation and the Awards Sub-Committee formation) will be added to the agenda for the meeting on Thursday, January 24th.