

Minutes of the Barrington Public Schools Special Education Advisory Committee Meeting

From February 8, 2017 (had been rescheduled from January 31)

Location: BHS Library, 7:00 pm

Attendance list on file

1. Meeting was called to order at 7:05pm
 - a. Introductions of attendees, 11 present
2. Approval of minutes from 11/29/2016 meeting
 - a. Voice approval, no dissent
3. Tracey McGee, Principal, Hampden Meadows Elementary School: Proposal for Inclusive Extracurriculars:
 - a. The initiative arises out of meetings with parents, who have expressed the desire both to connect with other parents of children with special needs, and to facilitate friendships for children with special needs.
 - b. The vision is for events or programs that could be co-sponsored by individual schools within the district and SEAC
 - c. An example would be "lunch and lego"
 - d. Classroom clubs centered around interests shared by special needs children and their typically developing peers
 - e. Meet-ups could take place at playgrounds or a bowling alley, for instance
 - f. This would foster the growth of both sets of children, and allow friendships to blossom, along the lines of a Best Buddies program
 - g. The big question is how to proceed
 - i. One step: start on a small scale with experiments through the Hampden Meadows School and community
 - ii. Another step: Inquire with other districts about the Best Buddies program for older students
4. Kristen Matthes, Director of Pupil Personnel: Discussion of School Support Visit:
 - a. School support visit takes place every 5 years and is an accountability check
 - i. RIDE School Report Card contains the most recent report and is available online
 - b. 2016 was a scaled down visit, where random IEP files were studied
 - i. RIDE has backed down from the full and comprehensive visits, perhaps under staffing pressures
 - c. Programs and compliance issues looked good to reviewers
 - d. Reviewers identified two areas for improvement:
 - i. Making goals and objectives truly measurable on IEPs
 - ii. Improving the identification of learning disabilities
 - e. Resolutions for these issues are underway
 - i. A task force of special educators addressing these issues
 - ii. Coaching coming from within district as well
 - iii. District has been using RTI to find LDs but to comply with laws will use the state form (adapting it to make it work for the district)

- iv. These initiatives will bring us into full compliance with law and best practices as well
 - v. District appreciates the opportunity to reflect on the programs, strengths and weaknesses.
 - f. Discussion of district wide special needs programs
 - i. Some teachers need more support in classrooms
 - ii. Larger numbers of social/emotional issues appearing in student population
 - iii. Principals brainstorming about anticipated needs, with possible shifting of resources among schools
 - iv. Professional development for teachers, aides, etc., is valuable and necessary
- 5. Tabled discussion of by-law edits
- 6. Upcoming events
 - a. Department of Health: Healthy Lifestyles for ages 14-21 (see attached)
 - b. RIPIN Parents of Miracles
 - c. RIPIN series
 - i. Parent advocacy
 - ii. Special health care needs
 - iii. College Planning
 - d. Possibility of posting meet-ups on SEAC website was explored with no definitive outcome. Desirable project but confidentiality and responsibility issues are complex.
 - i. It would be desirable though in a variety of ways to make SEAC more visible on the District website
- 7. Other issues/queries, open-ended
 - a. Query about curricular representation of individuals with special needs who have achieved, for positive role models and celebration by all student
 - b. Query about special education orientation to the Middle School
- 8. Adjourn 8:50pm