

**Minutes of the Needham  
Special Education Administration / Special Education Parents Advisory Council Board  
Meeting  
February 2, 2010  
School Administration Building  
Needham, MA 02492**

**School Administrators in Attendance:**

Valerie Flynn – Director of Special Education, Middle School Level, Grades 6 – 8  
Mary Lammi – Director of Special Education, Preschool to Grade 5  
Iris Miller – School Psychologist, Middle School

**SEPAC Board and School Liaisons in Attendance:**

Cathy Aikman – Co-Secretary  
Maureen Callahan – Co-President  
Sandy Cisternelli – Programming Chair  
Diane Novick – Pollard Liaison  
Margie Sokol – Liaison to High Rock  
Tee Stock – Co-President

**1. Next SEPAC talks – Sandy Cisternelli**

February 8      Effective Communication with Your IEP Team  
Presented by Cynthia Moore, Federation for Children with Special Needs

We still owe Ms. Moore \$100. Mary Lammi said she would take care of this??

March 8          Differentiated Instruction

Kori Rogers, former co-secretary of the SEPAC, will provide a speaker from Framingham State, where Kori attends school.

April 13          Executive Functioning  
Sarah Ward

The Westwood SEPAC is co-sponsoring this talk. The total cost is \$750 and Needham will have to pay half or \$375.

The Needham SEPAC will not be sponsoring a Special Needs Camp Fair this year because Sandy asked that Westwood or Wellsley take the lead on organizing and neither SEPAC did.

The Framingham SEPAC is sponsoring a Special Needs Camp Fair on Saturday, February 28<sup>th</sup> that is open to the public,

**2. Valerie Flynn leaving 6/30/10 – so sorry to hear this – all**

Valerie explained that she is able to buy back previous years of service so that with the combination of years of service and age, she is able to retire in June.

Valerie is very emotional and torn about this decision, but has added a new puppy at home, for a total of three dogs, to ease the transition.

Valerie's job has already been advertised and resumes have begun to come in. Valerie explained that the selection process is long and involves many different stakeholders, including parents.

All expressed gratitude to Valerie for her hard work, humor and dedication to our kids!

### **3. Disability Awareness Update – Tee/Mary/De etc. Broadmeadow is starting 3<sup>rd</sup> grade in March!**

Maureen Callahan and Mary Lammi met with Broadmeadow principal Emily Gaberman and Broadmeadow PTC Diversity Committee Chair Suzanne Lissy will also be the chair of the Disability Awareness Committee. Broadmeadow will pilot the Disability Awareness program this April to the 3<sup>rd</sup> grade with a focus on physical. Maureen sent an email to all Broadmeadow parents to explain the program.

Emily Gaberman will write an NEF grant to get enough books for the program. Each grade focuses on challenge. Suzanne Lissy is looking into the possibility of a grant to bring the Dancing Wheels performers to Broadmeadow. Tee will be meeting with Suzanne to help with the grant.

Lisa Mancino will head up the Disability Awareness effort at Mitchell. Suzanne Lissy has spoken with Lisa. Mitchell's program will begin with one grade focusing on either visual or hearing impairment. It is unclear what grade would pilot the program at Mitchell, but likely 1<sup>st</sup> or 2<sup>nd</sup>. Mary Lammi would like to connect with Lisa and check if Mitchell's Health and Safety committee is still involved.

Mary Lammi will check with Mark McAneny, Assistant Principal of Newman Elementary. Six people have stepped forward with interest in helping with Disability Awareness at Newman.

### **4. Follow up to social skill survey – all SEPAC**

Mary Lammi reported that as a result of the school administration's Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) survey and the SEPAC Social Skills survey, there will be a monthly steering committee composed of Chris Brumbach, Director of Student Development and Program Evaluation, and Tom Denton, Head of Needham Guidance, to coordinate the integrity of the Responsive Classroom and 2<sup>nd</sup> Step Programs. There will be a \$7,000 stipend in place for this program.

A question Mary Lammi could not answer was "What is the \$7,000 for?"

Tee commented that Superintendent Dan Gutekanst's statement at the School Committee Meeting was "the only money going toward the district SEL goal is the \$7,000". Valerie thought that what Dan meant was that the SEL budget was one of the few budget's not cut, but was increased by \$7,000.

Mary went on to say that 2 teachers will be trained as trainers in 2<sup>nd</sup> Step in March. Mary would like to extend the 2<sup>nd</sup> Step program to kids on the spectrum. This initiative will be completed this summer. Tee mentioned that the 2<sup>nd</sup> Step program was designed for typical kids.

High Rock is piloting an SEL initiative, the COLT program. No details of the program were given.

High Rock and Pollard are getting the MARC anti-bullying training.

Chris is developing a district-wide anti-bullying policy that will be complete this spring. The SHAC, a subcommittee of the Health Advisory Committee will advise the work on this policy.

Cathy mentioned that dissemination of the rules of playground games to all schools and children would help with inclusion and possibly lessen bullying. Broadmeadow has written out the rules of most playground games and school psychologist Heather Nicholson is working on bringing these to Mitchell. Tee has been trying to get these rules posted outside at Broadmeadow so all kids could view them at recess. Broadmeadow administration has agreed to do this, but no action has been taken. From the parent Social Skills Survey Tee knows of a parent interested in writing an NEF grant to work on posting game rules.

The work on tying SE:L to the new report card will begin in the 2010-2011 school year, according to Mary Lammi.

Mary Lammi does not feel she can take on the Play Group Connection that Sean has been advocating because she is not sure how the school would help.

#### **5. Extended School Year (ESY) – SEPAC liaisons suggestions/input all**

Mary Lammi is reviewing the ESY program focusing on the process of administering ESY services. She is continuing her review.

Valerie has been looking at Summer Explorations classes to identify those that would be appropriate for 6<sup>th</sup> thru 9<sup>th</sup> graders. Valerie is looking to develop these classes for the month of July and to ensure that strong Special Education teachers will be involved and that kids will be grouped appropriately.

Sandy presented a parent generated proposal for elementary ESY students which would involve an integrated Summer Explorations class with classes including an aide and involving a writing/Executive Function component. Tee suggested that an EASE program be developed with special kids in mind but then opened to all. Parents of typical kids and quirky kids are interested in social programs such as the social games group and we would be glad to see such an offering. Tee suggested that the EASE program for special kids include visuals, group work, pre-teaching and a lunch component for practicing generalization of skills with facilitation. She suggested the program be developed for the kids rather than them fit into a regular program which may get canceled due to low enrollment. The teacher should also be carefully chosen to support multiple learning styles.

Mary noted that the deadline for proposing Summer Explorations courses has passed. She is still looking at Social Detectives as a possibility because of the difficulty in week to week programming with Summer Explorations. Mary would like to move the location of the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grade social skills summer instruction to the same location as the Summer Explorations camps so parents could still sign kids up for these camps.

#### **Other**

Chris Brumbach, Director of Needham Student Development and Program Evaluation, entered the meeting room to ask the group the best time to do the parent focus group for the Middle School Director position.

It was decided that the best time for the focus group would be prior to the next SEPAC meeting. The focus group will be 6:30 – 7:30pm with the SEPAC lecture starting at 7:30pm.

Tee and Sandy attended on online webinar about surveys. They reported that Belmont did an online parent survey of special ed services and got 50% participation. Sandy volunteered to forward the link to the Belmont survey to the administrators.

After Chris left the room, Sandy asked if perhaps Chris would like to include general questions on parent satisfaction in her yearly survey on future lecture topics.