

June 8, 2010

#### Sepac Board/SpEd Admin Monthly Meeting

Attending: Admin -- Dr. V. Flynn, M. Lammi, C. Heller, Sepac -- T. Stock, M. Callahan, S. Cisternelli, M. Sockol, D. Novick, R. Register, J. King, M. Sockol, K. Rogers, D. Springer recording.

Sepac Co-chair Maureen Callahan called the meeting to order at 12:38 pm. Some people need to leave early and the agenda will be re-ordered to accommodate them.

#### MASSPAC QUESTIONS ADMINISTRATION RESPONSE

1. Has our PAC effectively communicated with Admin and the membership? In what ways could that improve? M.Lammi commented that communication is thorough. The minutes of the board meetings have been helpful. Dr. Flynn appreciates not cc'ing everyone when an item may not need everyone's time. M. Lammi would like to get the agenda sooner to prepare, or have it be okay if an item can not be addressed in the meeting's timeframe.

2. Have we established trust?

M. Lammi states the tone of the meetings have improved since the beginning of the academic year. She does feel that we are working as a team. Dr. Flynn commented that a school committee member again told her how collaborative the Sepac and Administration seemed to be following our joint school committee presentation.

3. a. Have we been successful with sharing knowledge that parents want to know, i.e. programming options within the district? Request for evaluations -- clarifying the process and the who, when, where, and how. M.Lammi said that it is good that we have brought concerns before them and that email has been a way to clarify to staff -- even if it isn't a regulation issue. M. Callahan added that this is why the liaisons have been so important. M. Lammi agreed.

b. What is the NPS policy to let parents know when teachers/therapists are out? What is the number of absences for this requirement and what is the number of absences for compensatory svcs.?

M. Lammi cited an example of how she handled such an absence at the Mitchell school earlier this year, but acknowledged that such notification may not happen at other buildings. C. Heller suggested that she and M.Lammi work on this over the summer and come up with something. Dr. Flynn suggested making it a procedure vs. a policy. Dr. Flynn also noted that principals will need to be apprised and included in the development of this procedure. RE: compensation services/time --- there is no regulation about this. It is determined by the district based on the impact of such loss of service on the child. T. Stock said parents can request compensation services of the district.

4. In what ways could we improve our support of the membership and admin?

C. Heller isn't sure how we can increase high school parent participation -- it follows the same occurrence of lessened involvement of general ed parents as children get older. Speaker series programming that could attract them remains a possibility. She gave out info to the 8<sup>th</sup> grade parents transitioning into the high school this year. That did get the word out to them. An idea she is considering is a monthly, informal coffee -- to drop in and discuss, not IEP specific issues, but more global issues. M. Callahan mentioned the formation of a hospitality committee by the PTC at Hillside and that this might be another way to get the word out. T. Stock will forward C. Heller the link to the S. Taylor's yahoo group as a way to hook in to more high school families. Dr. Flynn made the suggestion to invite/schedule a principal to attend our meetings, as principals do with their respective school's PTC.

#### HIGH ROCK TRANSITION

S. Cisternelli expressed that she was frustrated that no one from High Rock attended the transition meeting for her child going from elementary into the High Rock School. Dr. Flynn said liaisons should be in contact within 2 months. There was some discussion about parents' individual experiences with the current process. S. Cisternelli affirmed that the overview of High Rock given to Sped parents at a coffee was very helpful. S. Cisternelli wondered if Pollard Staff attends transition meetings for students going from High

Rock to Pollard, can High Rock staff attend transition meetings of students moving from elementary school to High Rock? Transition from elementary to High Rock is a bigger one than from High Rock to Pollard – there is the new schedule, multiple teachers/learning centers/electives. Rogers concurs that this transition is not coordinated enough for special education families. The Insider's Guide to High Rock does not accommodate for special ed kids. Perhaps this is an area where the liaisons could help? K. Rogers also noted that working parents can not attend the morning coffees. C.Heller stated that teachers' contracts restrict their availability to appear at afterschool meetings and so evening meetings/orientations are often not possible, more so now given the new teachers' contract.

T. Stock raised some confidentiality problems at High Rock social/orientation and K. Rogers also reported a breach via prior email. T. Stock recognized a positive change -- the adult leader assigned the children into groups for games vs. letting the children organize their own groups – when children organize their own groups they have excluded their special needs peers.

J. King suggested that at least 1 person from the new school be at the transition/team meeting.  
D. Novick suggested that it would be good for parents to know prior to these meetings what the program looks like. Dr. Flynn admits that this is particularly hard in a year with budget cuts and that it will be hard going forward with continued budget cuts because admin and staff don't know what there may be to offer. M.Lammi said she must take on this transition piece next year with Dr. Flynn leaving and W. Verbits being new. M. Callahan observed that a focus group around transition might help. C. Heller and S. Cisternelli left at this time to make other commitments.

#### MASS PAC MEMBERSHIP

T. Stock asked if NPS will again support a MASS PAC membership. M. Lammi asked how this has been arranged in the past and how much. T. reported that C. Heller handled it last year and she was nominated to handle it again for this upcoming year. Thank you, Cathy.

#### FUNDRAISING/501-3C STATUS.

J. King read the most recent guidelines published. It is unclear which is the best way for Sepac to proceed. M. Lammi offered to speak with A. Gulati about this and J. King said she will have D. Maranci, the new Sepac treasurer contact them as well.

#### DATES to PRESET for next academic year

Tuesdays, September 7, 10:15 am 1<sup>st</sup> Sepac Board/Admin meeting. 2<sup>nd</sup> joint meeting shall be October 5, 10:15. Date for the NPS Policy on Bullying/Anti-Bullying will November 17. C. Brumbach is to present. It was suggested that all guidance personnel be invited to this presentation. Due date for mailing materials: August 1<sup>st</sup>. Date for Middle School Sped Director welcome coffee is: July 27 a.m., High Rock Cafeteria. A separate welcome coffee will be held for K. Hurley, new district wide ASD consultant. Monday 9/13, 7:30 pm Directors present, "What's New in Needham Special Education" including W. Verbits and K. Hurley. M. Lammi excused herself to attend another meeting.

#### SS SURVEY FOLLOW-UP

Sepac Board inquired what would be the best way to follow up on admin's suggestion to share the results of the Sepac SS survey with each building principal. Dr. Flynn suggested a joint coffee. Also use the opportunity to introduce the liaisons to the principals. Perhaps ask the superintendent if he hosts a district wide first of the year meeting with the principals and if we might present then?

#### SPED ACKNOWLEDGEMENT/AWARD ?

Sepac wonders what way would be best to establish and/or recognize individuals or an individual for their work on behalf or directly with special education students in our district. There were varying ideas and opinions about this idea. More input will be sought from membership and admin.

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Meeting ended 2 pm.

**ACTION ITEMS:**

Check with Anne Gulati re: 501 3C status – M. Lammi

Renew Massspac – C. Heller

D. Maranci to follow up with M. Lammi and A. Gulati re: 501 3-C status

Develop notification of teacher/therapist/aide absence procedure. - C Heller and M Lammi.

Reserve High Rock cafeteria for welcome coffee – D Springer, M Lammi

Send CH link to S. Taylor's listserv –T Stock.

Perhaps have a transition focus group? M. Lammi

SEPAC contact treasurer for town? – Jen King and D Maranci

Get SEPAC mailing to L. Hatton August 1 – SEPAC board

Invite principals to Sepac/Admin monthly meetings (one per month) – T Stock and D Springer

Present SS survey results to building principals at Superintendent mtg.- D. Springer