

Monday, February 10, 2010

Needham Sepac Meeting

Officers: T. Stock, M. Callahan, S. Cisternelli, C. Aikman, D. Springer recording.

Administration: Dr. V. Flynn, C. Heller, D. Dunham

School Committee: C. Barr

Approximately 20 parents at large

T. Stock called the meeting to order at 7:34 pm.

Introduction of Cynthia Moore, Special Education Advocate and FCSN presenter.

Topic tonight: Effective Communication and the IEP. For “slides” of Ms. Moore’s presentation, the link is available on our website. Do not hesitate to contact Ms. Moore or FCSN with your questions at 800 331 0688.

Announcements: Mar 8 – our next Sepac meeting will present Differentiated Instruction; April 13th in conjunction with the Westwood Sepac at the South Norfolk County Arc, 189 Clapboardtree Road, Westwood, we are co presenting Executive Functioning with Sarah Ward. This talk is great for parents of children in Elementary Grades through High School.

Dr. Valerie Flynn is retiring. If you would like to serve on the interview committee for her replacement, please send a letter of interest to Tom Campbell. Applicants must be available on certain dates to meet with candidates.

Broadmeadow is kicking off a Disability Awareness program this April – starting with the unit on physical disabilities. Volunteers are still needed for Mitchell and Newman. Please contact Mary Lammi.

Further announcements were addressed by co-president M. Callahan.

We need 2 volunteers to recruit members to replace the current co-presidents and speaker series coordinator positions and to manage the election process. Minimal time commitment involved, and specific guidelines/directions will be provided. Please consider volunteering in this capacity. Please email Maureen Callahan (maurcallahan@comcast.net) or Tee Stock (edandtee@rcn.com) if you can help SEPAC with this process.

Join Marie Chieppo and other SEPAC parents for coffee at Finagle a Bagel on Tuesday, February 23 at 9:30 a.m. Please RSVP to Marie at chieppo@rcn.com if you plan to attend. These coffees are well attended and fun.

There are sports for our kids offered through the Dedham Challenger Program, please contact M. Callahan for further info.

Advances Learning Center is offering a 2 hour workshop Wednesday, February 10th, 10am-12pm Cost: \$30. This workshop will teach you how to: Motivate your child to play with peers, Structure the play date so it goes smoothly, Select an ideal peer for a

play date, Help your child be a good friend so peers will want to come over and play again and again! Advances Learning Center, Inc. 85 Main St. Suite 102 Watertown, MA

The Framingham SEPAC is holding its annual Summer Camp and Recreation Expo for Children with Special Needs on February 28 from 12-3 at the Framingham High School. They do not yet have the list of exhibitors for this year, but you can view last year's participants. It is quite a lengthy list of camps serving a variety of needs. http://www.f-sepac.org/f-sepac.org/summer_camp.html

Masspac has shared that a brand new group is forming on Yahoo for parents of kids who will be transitioning into adult life. Sign up at: <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/life-after-high-school>

The Bridge Center in Bridgewater, MA is offering after school and weekend activities for fun and skill development in addition to their February and other school vacation camps. Visit www.TheBridgeCtr.org or tel. 508-697-7557.

Advice highlights from Ms. Moore's presentation include:

1. Self Assess your own listening skills and how YOU communicate: what you say, how you say it and observe your own body language. Think about how you look/sound to others.
2. Enter the room with mutual respect: don't treat anyone in a way that you yourself would not like to be treated. Courtesy counts.
3. Bring someone to take notes. And go to that parent's meeting and take notes for them.
4. Prepare yourself before the meeting: be nourished and well rested.
5. Prepare for the meeting with what your concerns and goals are. Write them down. Do research and bring it. Do the vision statement or update it. Visions and challenges change.
6. Be honest. Get the conflicts out on the table and talk about them.
7. Take a break during the meeting if you need it, i.e. are becoming too emotional.
8. If you are a parent with a disability, you must also be accommodated. State your needs. You do not need to reveal your disability.
9. If you need more time, you can re-convene.
10. Some Team members can leave early or arrive late. Don't take it personally. A form acknowledging their leaving is required for you to sign.
11. Sit next the person with whom you have the most difficult relationship.
12. Extended Year Services should be discussed in Jan or Feb by the team with parents, usually in a separate team meeting. Please see Cynthia's presentation on ESY which she sent the SEPAC. There are more criteria for ESY besides regression.

Helpful book: Lions Don't Lead to War Helpful website: whatworks.com.

Meeting ended @9:15 pm.