

Concord Public Schools
and
Concord-Carlisle Regional School District Special Education Parent Advisory Council (SEPAC)
Thursday September 24, 2020 7:00-9:00pm
www.concordsepac.org concordsepac@gmail.com
Meeting Notes

Concord -Carlisle SEPAC is inviting you to a scheduled Zoom meeting.

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83144459343?pwd=R0lFVEwya2liU1RaV1grbnJrZG9tQT09>

Meeting ID: 831 4445 9343

Passcode: 518711

Find your local number: <https://us02web.zoom.us/u/kziOAQobl>

1. Open Meeting at 7:04 p.m. and Attendance (see below) (5min)

“In accordance with Governor Baker’s executive order permitting virtual meetings during the COVID pandemic, the Concord and Concord-Carlisle Special Education Parent Advisory Council (SEPAC) is conducting this meeting today, June 3, 2020 at 7:00pm eastern on the Zoom platform and in accordance with the Town’s Policy Directive and Guidelines issued on April 1, 2020 and amended on May 7. I ask that all SEPAC committee members, town staff, and presenters activate their video and mute their microphone unless they have something to say or are participating in committee dialogue. All committee votes will be taken via roll call. We will start with an attendance roll call. I will announce your name, please reply. For members of the public, please unmute yourself when I’ve opened the meeting to public comment.”

2. Approval of minutes from 8/27/2020 Board Meeting (5min): Unanimous vote for approval

3. Chair Updates

a. Technology (10min) Becky Robichaud

- i. New website: We didn’t ask for the business upgrade (cost difference is \$200), so there is no accessibility feature for this year.
- ii. Request district funding for website renewal (October - \$99 +tax Wordpress Premium, \$18 domain registration). District approved funding.
- iii. Becky is resigning from communications role but will continue on as technology chair

b. Events (10min) Tracey Marano

- i. 20-21 workshops/parent sessions-
 1. Hoping to have a school psychologist from Carlisle come and to talk to SEPAC about emotion regulation in November. Keeping the meetings to 1 hour is helpful.
- ii. Basic Rights in Special Education- Someone from the Federation of Children with Special Needs will provide a workshop as part of our

MassPAC Plus membership. Lexington SEPAC is interested in collaborating with our SEPAC on this.

- iii. Let's do it earlier than January. Helen will work with Tracey on organizing. There are three topics including Basic Rights and Know your IEP.

4. Special Education Parents School Re-opening Meeting (10min)

- a. Themes & feedback- Seemed to be well attended and parents found it helpful
Recording available-

[https://concordps.zoom.us/rec/play/TwSFzYRqaQtvCh2A-1xX2OZ2zXeRLXeipZ7vWoXUA4IXOyTvE4HJEDj0ZLzVWFWWhR8F3IWNsnLwanRs5-4uPnsKo0K4gjU_a?continueMode=true&xzm_rtaid=6z_hS0SZTBOtSdfF3nYP2w.1599251405028.47a0fdfcae965325cf804742f48930bf&xzm_rhtaid=148&fbclid=IwAR3fwXRYcgp2f7Nayx8GcZXukc-9y17bSkIodv1vPFOTLTPVhWITs5k5kvg](https://concordps.zoom.us/j/804742f48930bf&xzm_rhtaid=148&fbclid=IwAR3fwXRYcgp2f7Nayx8GcZXukc-9y17bSkIodv1vPFOTLTPVhWITs5k5kvg) Above is link to the special ed recording.

5. Objectives for 2020-2021 (15min)

- a. Brainstorm/listing of top board priorities- What do you hope to accomplish this year in your role on the SEPAC board. Goal ideas:
 - i. Shaina: Recruitment is important for this year. Let's pull people in to serve on the SEPAC in any capacity that they can. She wants to find someone to shadow her this year, since this is her last year to serve as co-president.
 - ii. Becky: Her goal is to make SEPAC's social media more robust. She would like others to contribute to the Facebook page. Would also like SEPAC recruitment to be a high priority.
 - iii. Carol: She wants to develop a positive communication process with the school committee liaisons.
 - iv. Helen: As well as echoing the need for recruitment to SEPAC, she would like to develop a way to communicate with the parents with students on 504 plans.
 - v. Tracey: She is a former special ed teacher. She would like to be a resource and support for parents and focus on the programming available within the district.
 - vi. Sarah B.: Get more families to get involved in and benefit from SEPAC. What do parents need from SEPAC?
The Board discussed this more: New families should be receiving a welcome packet from the district. The Special Education department sends out all information from the SEPAC board. Parents can reach out to

the SEPAC but we are unable to contact them directly. Parents are struggling as a result of the pandemic and SEPAC would like to provide support and help parents feel connected and not alone. It would help parents of children in sub separate programs to be able to connect with each other during the pandemic. Could all programs have a room parent? We will follow-up with administration. Question was raised about PTG funding and equity between general education and special education classrooms. Need to determine whether Willard sub separate program has changed to a full day program and should be funded as such.

vii. Sarah N. - She hopes that what she is doing now is sufficient to sustain the SEPAC's current status.

b. Review bylaws- tabled

c. Timing for board/family workshop- will focus on clarifying board goals and action items and expand later in the year.

6. Chair updates

a. Co-Presidents (10 min) Shaina

i. School Committee Attendance (board sign-ups)

1. 9/29/20, other dates TBA

2. More accessible now that things are broadcasted on zoom, more people can attend or watch the recordings.

ii. Recruitment- we talked about that during our goals.

b. Membership (10min)- Sarah B.

i. Liaison updates- there are lots of openings for liaisons: Preschool, Alcott, Peabody, Pathways program, Out-of-District. Board members threw out ideas of people that might be available to help and will reach out to them.

ii. Engagement- She would like to do a google survey to find out why people aren't more involved in SEPAC.

c. Publicity (10min)- Helen

i. Helen is working on the new website launch with Becky and now she will be working with Tracey to develop the events, and then follow up with Sarah B. about ideas for family engagement.

d. Secretary (10min)- Sarah

i. Sarah can set up Zoom meetings and submit agendas to the town (78 hours ahead of time). Set it up through Concord or Carlisle

e. School committee liaison update (Eva) (25min)

- i. 2020-21 SEPAC SC liaisons: Eva Mostoufi (Regional SC) and Alexa Anderson (CPS SC)
 1. Alexa is passionate about education and keeping the services in this district the best that they can be. She grew up in Concord.
 2. Eva Mostoufi (Regional SC) - from Carlisle, representing the SEPAC on the regional side.
 - a. The School Committee sets goals for each year. She would like to hear what the SEPAC's thoughts are and needs for this year.
 - i. WestEd report
 - ii. Fall Forum results
 - iii. The SEPAC feels true inclusion throughout the district is important.
 - iv. If teachers are asked to make changes to be able to take back kids who have been placed out of district, the teachers need a lot of support. Where does the money from out-of-district payments go when someone is transferred back into the school? We need to take the money and reinvest it into the infrastructure of the school, hiring aides and PT staff. The conversation needs to be about how to maximize the investment by creating support within the schools.
 - v. What are the measures of success for the new programs in the district? What are the drivers for the School Committee goals such as reduction in referrals to Special Ed? Could the ability of children to meet their IEP goals or statistics sent to the BSEA be used as metrics?
 - vi. Cost savings should not be the only drivers for changes to special education. Bill Henderson spoke last fall and has excellent resources on how to create a true inclusive environment which is not focused on cost savings.
 1. One goal is to catch students who struggle early and help them and reintegrate them into the general ed programs.

- vii. Andrew Nyamekye spoke to the school committee about cultural diversity. The school committee needs to receive a presentation about the child-focused experience with Special Education. It is important for the SC to understand what drives placement. Families in special education work very hard with significant effort to support and advocate for their children.
 - viii. Concern about use of Seclusion and Restraint in the sub separate program at the Alcott school. Parents asked SEPAC for Policy, it was requested from administration and shared with families who inquired. It should be used as a last resort and reported afterward.
 - ix. Question: are students receiving all their services during the pandemic? DESE guidance says, yes, they should be.
7. Carol Yelle resigned from her post as co-president.
 8. Public comments (5min)
 9. Close Meeting at 9:07
 10. Upcoming Board Meetings:
 - o 11/19/2020
 - o 1/28/2021
 - o 2/25/2021
 - o 3/25/2021
 - o 4/29/2021
 - o 6/10/2021

Attendance:

Carol Yelle, co-president
Shaina Britto, co-president
Becky Robichaud, technology
Helen McKinlay, publicity
Sarah Bettencourt, membership
Sarah Nichol, secretary
Tracey Marano, events

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Alexa Anderson, school committee for Concord

Eva Mostoufi, school committee rep for Concord-Carlisle Regional

Carolyn Blackham, ILP rep for Thoreau school

Casey Atkins

Tim Goddard, Carlisle Town Host, not present, but hosting the zoom call