

Special Ed Committee

Minutes of March 20, 2014 Meeting

Current Board Chair: Adrienne Deussing

Administrative Staff Present: David Lieberman, Steve Yanni, Dr. Boccuti

Committee Members Present: Nancy Lawson, Jennifer Romett, Jennifer Wind, Gretchen Reilly, Patricia Reidy, Lauri Buchar, Mike Finley, Gabrielle Dorsam

Public Present: Melvin Band, Stephanie Marrone, Valerie Mitchell

Meeting was called to order at 6:30pm by Mrs. Deussing

Committee Liaison Updates:

Facilities Committee: Mrs. Reilly spoke to there being a few different revitalization options on the table and commented that she was reassured by the Facilities Committee that all three options will meet ADA compliance. Mr. Lieberman reiterated Mrs. Reilly's point stating that all aspects of Campus Revitalization will be ADA compliant (i.e. bathrooms, locker rooms, accessibility to all classrooms and gyms). Mr. Finley expressed concern for transition classroom utilization and Mr. Lieberman commented that it is part of the revitalization.

Policy Committee: Mr. Lieberman spoke to the mandated changes made through the Special Ed Policies 113, 113.2, 113.3, 113.3AR that were recently approved at the March 3rd school board meeting. Mr. Lieberman also touched upon policy regarding students that have specific medical conditions and their ability to go on field trips.

Finance Committee: Mrs. Deussing briefly mentioned the contracts up for renewal that were discussed at the prior Finance Committee Meeting. A budget update was given, and there were discussions regarding the financing of the Capital Revitalization.

Curriculum Committee: Mr. Yanni gave a brief update of items that were discussed at the last Curriculum meeting. He also specifically touched upon the K-12 RELA curriculum that will be rolling out. Mrs. Lawson asked about new math curriculum as most IEP's are not covered in Everyday Math. In 2015, there will be a new EDM roll-out, which provides much more practice for all learners. It does not spiral as quickly and allows all children to access the core program.

Follow-up Items: As no questions were brought up by committee members/public to take back to other Board Committees, the liaisons will give an update of their respective committee at our next meeting.

New Agenda Items:

Lexia Core 5: Mr. Lieberman gave an introduction on the implementation of Lexia Core 5 and showed the committee a short video demonstration. Mrs. Romett commented that it really stays in line with

phonetic awareness, comprehension, and has a great take-home component. Dr. Wind reminded the committee that it does not replace, but rather supplement, teacher instruction. Mr. Yanni commented that it will work with MAP assessments next year and help students really work on meaningful skills needed.

Google Read & Write: Mr. Lieberman stated that Google Read & Write is in the emerging stages, but will allow students to listen to text. Workshops and training is still on-going to bring all up to speed. Mr. Finley mentioned that it will allow to students to listen while they are following along the written text.

BCBA Surveys: Mr. Lieberman let the committee know that a survey was administered. Results have been gathered and are predominately positive. More detailed results will be shared after the results have been shared with the Board.

Gifted Survey Roll-out: Mr. Lieberman made the committee aware that a 4-question survey went out to all parents of GIEP children. Mr. Lieberman and Mr. Yanni also let the committee know that they will be getting feedback on the Gifted Program from students in grades 3-12 over the next several weeks.

“Going Green Pilot”: Going forward, Mr. Lieberman is going to pilot “going green” with 20 IEP/GIEP families. IEP/GIEP’s will be sent electronically, and IEP/GIEP meetings will be presented on smart boards. Mr. Lieberman’s main concern is keeping updated files with regards to contact information. Dr. Wind mentioned that we need to look into accepting electronic signatures as well. Mr. Lieberman stated that although we will begin emailing IEP/GIEP’s to families in the pilot, a family can request paper form if they so choose.

Other comments:

Mrs. Marrone would like to have members of the Gifted Committee welcomed to attend the Special Ed Committee going forward.

Mrs. Reidy would like to see a co-teaching survey go out with focus groups of children in special education. Mr. Lieberman commented that it was a good idea but that we would separate responses of parents whose children are in co-teaching classroom that do have IEP with responses from parents whose children are in a co-teaching classroom that do not have an IEP. Dr. Boccuti commented that he has received unsolicited feedback that is positive with regards to co-teaching. Mr. Kirsch then asked how we are doing with the general education students. Mr. Yanni commented that we are in the process of writing new curriculum and will be bringing cross-sections of teachers together to get new perspective. Dr. Wind added that the implementation of MAP will provide constructive data on all those students that fall within the “grey” area. Our upcoming 1 to 1 initiative will also help move the district forward as we roll out Lexia Core 5; it will allow us to cast the net out further with regards to students within regular education that may benefit from this program.

Follow-up items: Results of BCBA survey to be shared with committee. Results of Gifted Survey to be shared with committee. Implementation of co-teaching survey to parents and students. Co-teaching in the school system in grades 3-12 has greatly improved our percentage of students in general education where we were cited by the state for falling below the state-wide average. This information was shared with the PDE as part of our improvement plan.

Meeting was adjourned at 7:20 pm. Next meeting is scheduled for Thursday May 8th in the District Conference Room at 6:30 pm.