



Special Education Committee Meeting

9/5/2018 at 6pm
UES LGI

Board Chair—Dana Schwartz

Administrative Liaison—Alyssa Marton

Attendance—Please see the accompanying committee attendance sheet.

Dana Schwartz called the meeting to order at 6:04pm

The minutes of the 5/3/2018 meeting were approved.

Old Business

- None

New Business

- BCIU Transition services for students 18-21 – Dr. Jen Hertwig

Alyssa introduces Dr. Hertwig.

The meeting opens with a discussion about how students become involved with the BCIU.

Dr. Hertwig: The school would make a referral to the IU about specific students and explore the options that are available.

Districts request services from us that are not classroom based, but transition services. We have a variety of transition services. 18-21 programming has many different names. These are post secondary skills – the goal is to become independent members of the community. We have a partnership here in New Hope to provide a transition based classroom program here, on this campus. It's a unique partnership, we work closely with Alyssa. It was really well received by the community and families last year, and has since grown, doubled in size. Last year there were 5 at one point, some students moved in and out, we ended the year smaller. This year we have about 6-7 students starting. It takes a year or two to get the programs up and running.

IU Hope is the name of the program on campus. All have common features, life after graduation, by the core areas you must address by the state. Maximize skills and independence, leisure skills, community relationships, and becoming a productive member of society. Post secondary education for those students for whom that is the goal. Training and employment options. Focuses a lot on the employment and training piece. College bound students usually are not in our programs. We have programs all over the county.

In the lower county we have Step, and in upper county, we have Wow, both are 18-21 programs in the communities, both have more than one classroom. Autistic support, life skills support classrooms. Focus of communication would be related to employment and leisure activities, filling out job applications, etc. And or they could be related to a post secondary education goal.

The multiple disability support classes – focus is on communication skills.

Q – can people have a tour of the facilities?

Dr Hertwig: – district will send us info about the student that outlines what they think is the best option, we take the referral, talk to the parent, do an observation on site, and then we reach out to the parent to make a recommendation. Often times there is not more than one option that is truly suitable, if there were, then parents would be invited to look at both options. Typically it's one option that fits the needs.

Q - Do you still have a program at Del-Val?

Dr. Hertwig: Yes.

Alyssa: This program is based on skill and need. Before this there were no community partnerships in New Hope.

Dr. Hertwig: It is ideal. This way you're establishing participation in the community.

Q – is the community based thing the CBI?

Alyssa: Part of the day in IU New Hope is classroom based instruction. Money management, etc. They do have CBI, that's part of it, in addition, set work rotations. We have about 13-15 community businesses that opened their doors to our students. It's not just instruction, it's also actually working. See where there are possible deficits. Back in the classroom and re-teach and go back out there. Helping support the students to be successful in the work setting.

Q: What IU are we in?

Dr. Hertwig: 22, Bucks County.

Q: What is the case load?

Dr. Hertwig: I'm just talking about our 18-21 programs. We have programs that go from birth to 21.

Q: Can they help students move past New Hope for those who might want to?

Dr. Hertwig: There are subtle differences between the many programs we have. All of our programs are similar, the maximum level of independence, all have work rotations imbedded into them. This is a model we're starting to replicate.

Q: Is there a program for a kid like mine, to go to a vocational or technical college?

Dr. Hertwig: We do have a program at Del-Val. The Spirit classroom in Middle Bucks is a life skills classroom, they have job rotations but also bring work in as well. Geared to students with a much higher degree of need of adult supervision. Another program called Voyages, is a partnership with us and Middle Bucks, accepted into a track in the Tech school, they need to be tracks that have classes that help extend the scope and sequence of instruction. The goal is to expose them to a level of interest and how to help them with skills to help find them jobs. Graduating off of IEP goals and we recognize you may not complete the program that you're in school. Versus a traditional student in the MBIT program will compete by the time they're done with HS.

Alyssa: We typically have conversations about this in 9th and 10th grade. The reason why they don't get the industry certifications is because they may not be able to pass the exams. We recommend they apply for MBIT half day HS, half day MBIT, and then they slide into Voyages after senior year.

Dr. Hertwig: An example is the culinary area. They may not complete the program but they can get the certificate on the way.

Q: What about film and graphic arts?

Alyssa: No, it's typically culinary, landscaping, cosmetology, building trades, - nothing computer based, not in Voyages, not in MBIT.

Dr. Hertwig: They may have a program independent of us.

Q: What about tech programs?

Alyssa: You can go for tours in January and we can talk about different types of programs.

Dr. Hertwig: DelVal Decisions program, 18-21 program at the college campus, students who attend that program need to exhibit a high level of independence. Their supervised work rotations may be on and off campus.

Q: Is all this info on the website?

Dr. Hertwig: Our website just changed, so bear with us, we're going through some challenges about the content on the website. To make sure it's user friendly and accessible.

Alyssa: You can ask us any follow up information or questions.

Q: How do these programs compare with some of the online college classes?

Alyssa: They don't compare. That truly is a college experience. This is based on remediation.

Q: But the DelVal the kids do have interaction with other people on campus?

Dr. Hertwig: They have some interaction, but more in an employment type experience. They're not taking coursework.

Alyssa: That's a great distinction between college programs and the 18-21 program.

Q: Do you have more people apply than you have spaces?

Dr. Hertwig: We have to operate according to special ed rules, sometimes we do reach capacity, if that happens and we have the ability to open more programs we would. We haven't had that experience yet. We've always been able to meet that need. All of the school age classroom based programs are offered by referral through districts, districts must make a referral to us. And therefore the district is also paying the tuition.

Q: If there was a behavioral issue, who would be the contact person?

Alyssa: The instructor's direct supervisor is off site, but I'm here.

Dr. Hertwig: The IU would work in collaboration with the district through their protocol.

Alyssa: We've never had that issue. They are very well staffed. If there was ever something I think they would have enough staff to handle it.

Dr. Hertwig: The design here works because there is not interaction with the other teachers. It's time to let go of those high school roots and move toward an adult type of experience. It is intentional that there is a separate entrance for the program.

Alyssa: They're a wonderful group of students and the staff as well. They want to give back to the school, to the community.

Q: Can you name any businesses we're working with right now?

Alyssa: Partnership with the Raven, Wawa, The Mansion Inn, The Monkey's Uncle in Doylestown, Cornerstone Gym – I can send you a list of about 13 businesses. Also, the Audubon Society.

Dr. Hertwig: I hope that gives you a framework of what our 18-21 programs look like.

All: Thank you.

Alyssa: Any additional questions, just let me know.

- Results of June survey

Alyssa: We received only 3 responses from the survey.

Discussion from members that some did not receive the survey.

Q: Could we distribute it again through the online group?

Alyssa: We can. We will resend the link to the survey.

- Agenda items moving forward

Q: One idea of a presentation, IEP goal help, for example. Out of the box ways to solve IEP problems.

Alyssa: I'd be happy to present that topic.

Q: What about those art classes?

Alyssa: Creative Bridges was a donation from a parent. We used that money to pay for that program. There have been no donations made for Special Ed. We talked about doing some fundraising, but that never got any motion.

I can also bring someone from tech to get everyone set up for all the list servs.

Q: Our biggest issue has been not knowing about something until it was too late. Classic example looking on FB and seeing something that we didn't know about it. How to get ahead of the curve, knowing what everyone else does?

Alyssa: The information does go out on list serv.

Dr. Malone: I understand missing the list servs, but what about the website?

Andrew Ordovery: Some people have stopped using the website because its not as user friendly.

Q: We have to look for our kids because they're not there yet.

Alyssa: In the meantime, we can bring someone next time from technology.

Dr. McKenna: I can help people get set up.

Alyssa: Here is my follow up: I'm going to resend the link to the survey, add discussion of IEP goals as an agenda topic, and we will still see if we can get someone from tech to help everyone get on the right list servs.

Q: Did we survey the teachers?

Alyssa: We didn't, but we can.

A brief discussion about a call for topics and speakers for future meetings that will be meaningful and appropriate.

Public Comment

- No public comment.

Dana Schwartz adjourned the meeting at 6:59pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Alyssa Marton, Administrative Liaison
Director of Student Services