



**Special Education Committee Meeting**

11/1/2018 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 6:00.

The minutes of the 10/4/2018 meeting were approved.

**Old Business**

- Fundraising

Alyssa Marton: How we might continue with programs like the art program from last year, which was funded by a donation?

Question/Comment: How much money did it cost?

A: The art program cost \$4000. Two sessions per month. Oct-May.

Comment: Someone mentioned a Lego based program out of Doylestown.

A: Maybe we can brainstorm those types of things so we know how much money we'd need to raise.

C: A couple dance programs that work with kids and special needs. Pairing up with other kids.

Q: What about a mini special Olympics for the district? Central Bucks has one.

A: I can call them and find out what they've done.

A: Let me introduce Megan, she works in the HS and is doing her special ed internship with me.

Megan: The buddy program started when I was in Central Bucks. It's a nice opportunity for everybody. I know who ran it last year at CB West.

A: Legos, art, dance, mini special Olympics, but if there are other things you think of you can email them to me.

## **New Business**

- Understanding the IEP

Out of our survey, we had a question about understanding the IEP. An IEP is an individualized education plan.

- Purpose – to remediate skill deficits and help create successful young adults. Success is individualized. The end goal is to close the gap and the student no longer needs these services.
- Eligibility – we do not diagnose children; you have to meet the state criteria.

A: We have a system in place in New Hope called a multi tiered system of support and it is a pre-referral process. It's pre-special education. That team puts together a plan and data, before we go to a referral. Post is the IEP team's evaluation.

Changing the eligibility category doesn't change anything.

Q: What happens to kids on the border of these eligibility categories?

A: There's another set of documents and supports. An ADA accommodation which is a 504 plan. When you're eligible for an IEP you have a disability and you need a specially designed instruction. When a team says a child has a disability but doesn't need special instruction, they create a 504 plan for accommodations to make you successful.

Megan: If a student or child has an eligibility, but it's not impeding their education, but just need some accommodations, then the 504 plan would be necessary.

Q: For speech, is that any level of delay?

A: Expressive and receptive. Either way you'd be eligible.

- Forms – you should get an invitation ahead of time, sign it, you sign the attendance, procedural safeguards notice (parent rights), form about medical assistance billing – in the state of PA it's a supplemental insurance for children with disabilities. Has to be renewed every year. A whole set of supports and services outside the district.

C: Certain services are not provided until they're 21.

A: Lenape Valley will come to our next meeting and explain this. LV Foundation would determine eligibility. These service units are the hub of coordination, Lenape Valley Foundation, Penn Foundation.

The reason why you sign the medical assistance billing we can recuperate some of the cost for behavioral services. It's a completely separate school district pot.

NOREP (Notice of recommended education placement) – agree or disagree with the services. You don't have to sign it at the table. Even if you sign it, it's a fluid document to revise and update. If you take it home, you have 10 days to sign and return it. If not, we take that non response as consent.

- Who attends the IEP meeting? LEA (typically building principal), a representative of general ed, a special ed teacher, your child when appropriate, related service personnel, we can excuse a member from an IEP team meeting, you sign a form to signal you agree. One caveat, if we've reached out numerous times, we must meet within 1 year, we will meet without you because we have no choice.
- Present Levels of Academic Achievement and Functional Performance

Academic – math, reading, writing

Daily living, social skills, behavior, sensory skills, communication skills, mobility, vocational skills

You'll see evolution and progress over time. Educational benefit.

- Where does the info come from? A new IEP comes from tests and observations, evaluations
- Transition services: 14 and up (just for IEP, not 504)

3 areas to look at post secondary education – what training or schooling after HS

Access their preferences

- Annual Goal – expected rate of progress, not a promise of achievement

A well written IEP goal should be positive and describe a skill that can be seen and measured.

- Services and Supports SDI (specially designed instruction) describing all of the instruction. School sponsored extracurricular activities included. IEP follows through all school related activities.

Q: Any accommodations for Keystone tests?

A: Extra time is not an issue, a scribe can be done, read alouds, etc.

Q: Is there project based assessment?

A: There was a project based assessment, but that seems to have gone away now. There are other ways for children to demonstrate mastery. Very recent.

Dr. McKenna: This is very new, and there will be modifications.

A: There are 3 keystones. After taking it one time, the IEP team can say that's it.

Q: PASA?

A: They'd take it in 11<sup>th</sup> grade. That would meet the requirement.

- Services and Supports in Special Ed: some happens in a general ed setting, others in special ed setting, or a combo.
- Special Education is a service not a placement
- Services and Supports related services, example, assistive tech, audiology, counseling, OT, PT, Mobility services, etc.
- Additional services might be adapted equipment, staff training, one on one, extracurricular activities.
- Location and Duration: how often and for how long, when do the services begin and end, and extended school year if eligible.
- Least Restrictive Environment (LRE) what PA dept tried to put in place so children with special needs are put with general ed as much as possible. Every child should be included appropriately – a balance and looks different for each child.
- Final words: Learning process, with time it gets easier, maintain a sense of humor and try to relax. When parents and schools work together the results are realized.

Dr. McKenna: I'll share the link of high school graduation requirements.

Q: How many students or what % fall into this category?

A: 211. [for IEPs]

Does not include 504s or gifted and special ed.

Q: Would a 504 look different?

A: Yes, there are no IEP goals, just accommodations.

Q: What's the difference?

A and Megan: If it doesn't require specialized instruction, if it isn't a skill deficit. Not a concepts issue. We don't need to remediate that.

C: Example from my son, who has a 504, if he has a journal for English class, he can type it on a computer rather than write it out. He's doing the same worksheets, but just in a different way.

Q: Something we discuss in our group, we don't know the services we can ask for our kids. I need something but don't know exactly what. How can we know what to ask?

A: We're bringing to you everything we think will help your child. We want your child to be just as successful as you do. Everything depends on the level of need. It's so individualized. If you're hearing things like that, just ask your case manager.

Megan: It could be something new, so if you bring it to us, we'll inquire about it and see if it works.

C: There is no great universal list.

A: We all have expertise in different areas.

Megan: It's all about communicating and talking. If you hear about something that's working for someone else, it's important to tell us.

C: We're afraid to ask for a trial.

A: Don't be afraid. No fear.

C: I've never asked and been turned down.

Q: Unrelated and we're out of time, are we allowed to get the results from the state survey?

A: I did share in an earlier meeting that we had a completely clean audit, I can go in depth with you at our next meeting. It was all extremely positive. I can give you a summary of the findings of the audit. They go back 3 years.

### **Public Comment**

- No public comment.

Dana Schwartz adjourned the meeting at 7:05pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Alyssa Marton  
*Director of Student Services*