



Acton-Boxborough Special Education Parent Advisory Council

Business Meeting April 12, 2017

I. Call to Order

Amanda Bailey called the meeting to order at 7:35 p.m. Board member Chair Amanda Bailey, Past PAC Chair Bill Guthlein, Standing Committee Chair Blossom Davies, Secretary Ann Iandiorio, ABRHS Educational Team Leader Susan Bohmiller, and six other members were present. Note the meeting was moved to the Parker Damon Library due to a scheduling conflict with the RJ Grey Library space.

II. Approval of Minutes

Meeting minutes from March 8, 2017 were not available.

III. Organizational/Business Issues

- A. Updates from Monthly Meeting with Special Education Director
Meeting was with Assistant Superintendent of Student Services Dawn Bentley.
- B. Andrew F. v Douglas County School Feedback Sought Ruling
Massachusetts surpasses the federal regulations in a number of areas and local impact from the ruling is likely to be limited.
- C. District School Building Plan Feedback Sought
There is still time to offer feedback. There is now an online option to look at all the building options. To date there has been no official feedback from the PAC.
Issues being considered include:
 - Advantages to having all preschool, K, and 1st graders in one location, such as creating staffing specifically for that building.
 - 6th grade in elementary schools vs. moving 6th grade to a middle school.
 - Given current 6th grade in elementary model working on better preparing 6th graders for 7th grade.
 - Consider having students with special education needs have a more complete orientation before starting in the junior high. The junior high is still offering a two-day transition program favorably reviewed by parents.
- D. April Release for Survey Highlighting Extended School Year
Qualifying is based not on just documented regression over vacations during the year. Student can qualify based on regression, risk of regression, or recoupment issues. The PAC will issue a survey to parents after the April break to follow up on how the ESY eligibility process has gone. Some parents expressed concern that they were told that the student had to show documented regression to qualify for ESY. Two current issues are as follows 1) qualifying requirements and 2) timely distribution of information about dates, staff, and services.

E. **Volunteer Opportunities: Site Updates, Outreach, Event Planning**

There are many opportunities to volunteer in a variety of areas. For site updates, volunteers can check particular areas of interest/knowledge on the PAC website, highlight issues, and send feedback to the officers. For outreach, volunteers can help with the fall open houses at the schools, attend PTO meetings, attend district subcommittee meetings, or attend joint PTO meetings. The PAC is looking for a member to serve as a liaison to the Acton Commission on Disabilities.

F. **Speakers and Support Group Schedule**

1. Basic Rights in Education Workshop Wednesday, May 3, from 7:00-8:45 p.m. in the Fowler School Library, Maynard
2. Next Support Group Meeting – Saturday May 6, from 1-3pm at St. Matthews United Methodist Church, Acton. The group is going well, looking to do more publicity of the meetings.
3. Presentations on Mental Health & the IEP, Transition, Resilience
The Arc will have a transition conference in November. Next year the district's family education series theme will be resilience. They are compiling speakers now and looking for more ideas. Please pass on suggestions for what type of information would be helpful.
4. There was a suggestion for a PAC presentation on Assistive Technology.

IV. NEW BUSINESS

The group would like to put together a list of concerns to include when considering the needs of students with special education needs in the new school building plan.

Concerns were raised about using the loss of recess as a punishment for students. Can it be put in an IEP that movement is necessary? Also movement is developmentally appropriate for all students.

Tuesday April 25 the high school is hosting a transition meeting for 8th to 9th grade. It will be 6:30-8:00 p.m. in room 184 West at ABRHS.

Considering plans for a PAC-sponsored ice cream social at the Ripley Playscape in Concord on a weekend in late May or early June.

V. ADJOURNMENT - The meeting adjourned at 8:30 p.m.

VI. NEXT MEETING

Wednesday May 10, 2017 at 7:30 p.m. in the RJ Grey Junior High Library

All AB SpEd PAC meetings are open to the public. We encourage parents of children with special needs and others interested in special education to attend. Please check our website (www.abspedpac.org) for information regarding upcoming events.

Respectfully submitted by Ann Iandiorio, Secretary