



Acton-Boxborough Special Education Parent Advisory Council (AB SEPAC)

Business Meeting

Wednesday, April 10, 2019, at 7:30 p.m. in the Parker Damon Building Library

Agenda

I. Call to Order

II. Approval of Minutes

Review and approval of March 6, 2019, meeting minutes

III. Organization/Business Issues

- A. Welcome & Conversation with Superintendent Peter Light
- B. Updates from Monthly Meeting with Director of Special Education
- C. Select Parent/Guardian Survey Findings (Formal Report Pending)
 - 1. Overall Satisfaction
 - 2. Ability to Speak Freely & Disagree with Program or Services
 - 3. Access to Special Education Documents in PowerSchool
- D. Updates on Other 2018-2019 Goals & Priorities
 - 1. MCAS: Access & Achievement for Students with Disabilities at Concord-Carlisle High School 6:30-8:30 p.m. on May 14
 - 2. Updated Parent/Guardian Education Information on SEPAC Site

IV. New Business – Other topics on people's minds

V. Open Issues

- A. MCAS performance vulnerable for students with disabilities
- B. Mandatory special education training/professional development for regular and special education staff – hiring dual-certified staff
- C. Increasing opportunities for meaningful inclusion across domains
- D. Enhanced Extended School Year, before-, and after-school programming
- E. Increased use of technology in IEP development, revision, & communication
- F. Following up on communication issues noted as barriers to overall satisfaction and subgroup trends for Out of District, Early Childhood, and Specific Learning Disabilities identified via 2015 and 2017 parent/guardian surveys
- G. Need for consistent K-12 executive functioning curriculum

VI. Adjournment

All AB SEPAC 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.absepac.org) for information regarding upcoming events.

VII. Next Meeting

TBA

Acton-Boxborough Special Education Parent Advisory Council (AB SEPAC)

Business Meeting Draft Minutes March 6, 2019

I. Call to Order

Amanda Bailey called the meeting to order at 7:34 p.m. AB SEPAC Co-Chairs Amanda Bailey and Carrie Weaver, Secretary Melissa Brown, Past PAC Chair Bill Guthlein, Director of Special Education Pam Smith, School Committee liaison to the SEPAC Paul Murphy, and four other community members were present.

II. Approval of Minutes

Meeting minutes from February 6, 2019, were reviewed. A motion was made and seconded to approve the meeting minutes as written. The motion passed unanimously.

III. Organizational/Business Issues

A. Monthly Updates with Director of Special Education

The district is in the process of hiring two elementary Educational Team Leaders (ETLs) to cover Gates/Douglas and McCarthy Towne/Merriam.

The SEPAC recommends and requests the district align the reporting of test results in all evaluation reports to include scaled scores, standard scores, and percentiles. Given the range of scores falling within “average,” failing to report percentiles may mask significant ability gaps for interpretation by parents and school teams alike. Parents are advised to monitor student progress by ensuring data documenting Current Performance Level is included in IEPs and that benchmarks meet SMART (Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant, Time-bound) goal criteria.

The Director of Special Education shared about the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education program monitoring going on in the district. Student Services is in the self-assessment phase of the Tiered Focus Monitoring for special education, English Language Education, and civil rights. Information about Child Find, the SEPAC, and assistive technology devices will be submitted. The district currently contracts with CASE for assistive technology and is developing procedures and a team for in-house evaluations for devices. Student Services is also conducting a special education program evaluation.

IEPs and progress reports should be available on PowerSchool for students placed in the district. 504 Plans are not yet included in PowerSchool. Progress reports for Out of District students are individually uploaded into PowerSchool once received from the placements.

B. District Updates

1. Early Childhood Program Classrooms in Elementary Building Project

The SEPAC requested people email support to the district for keeping the Early Childhood Program (ECP) within the plans for the building project. The School Building Committee voted to move forward with the current plan that includes the ECP and to

omit language from its submission to the state indicating that the ECP could be removed later.

2. Town Elections – 2 Acton, 1 Boxborough School Committee Seats Opening

The Acton town election is on March 26. There is a contested race for two Acton seats opening on the School Committee. The League of Women Voters has a candidate forum March 15.

C. Review Draft of Resource Card

The SEPAC shared a draft resource card to provide staff and administrators a way to easily help families navigating the special education process and/or a new diagnosis. Both the SEPAC and DESE websites offer additional resources.

D. Vote on SEPAC Position Re: All-Day Kindergarten (ADK) Funding

The conversation from January was reviewed (see notes) and a discussion followed about the benefits and drawbacks of universal district-funded ADK. A-B remains one of the few districts in the state without universal ADK. If a child with a disability requires a shorter school day, that can be noted in the IEP. Universal ADK would make the full-day gen ed classroom the Least Restrictive Environment and increase inclusion opportunities for students. A motion was made to recommend, per the SEPAC's advisory role, universal and therefore district-funded ADK to the district. All voted in favor; zero abstained.

E. Updates on Selected 2018-2019 Goals & Priorities

1. Parent/Guardian Survey Live

The 2019 Parent/Guardian Survey went live on March 5 and has already logged 80 respondents. Student Services will send out an invitation next week. Parents are strongly encouraged to participate as survey feedback helps guide the SEPAC's efforts.

2. Parent/Guardian Education

A transition resource fair for families and students age 12+ will be held from 6-8:30 p.m. at Concord-Carlisle Regional High School on Thursday, April 4, and will include information about the Department of Developmental Services (DDS), the Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission (MRC), recreation opportunities, and much more.

The Acton-Boxborough and Concord/Concord-Carlisle SEPACs are hosting a Federation for Children with Special Needs workshop on MCAS: Access and Achievement for Students with Disabilities on May 14.

IV. New Business

A member shared that the Special Olympics "Spread the Word to End the Word" campaign that began in 2009 is now "Spread the Word: Inclusion."

Early Childhood Program parents expressed concern about specialized transportation rides of over an hour. Per special education law, rides should be no more than an hour one-way. They were advised to document any issues resulting from the extended ride, continue

to contact CASE Transportation, and follow up with their team chairs. There is a driver shortage.

V. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 8:29 p.m.

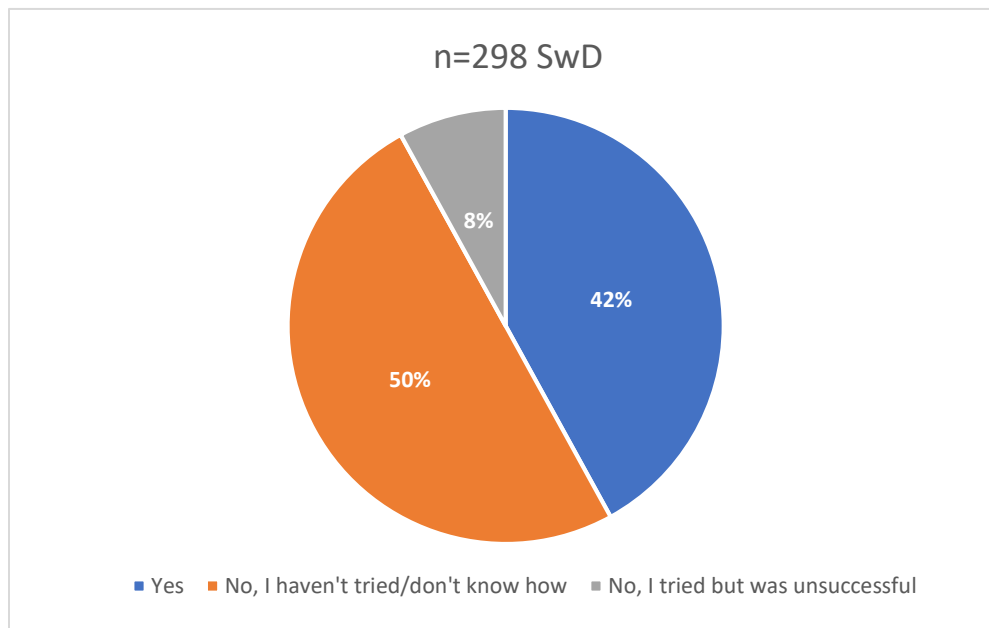
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Respectfully submitted by Melissa Brown, Secretary

Q5: Have you successfully accessed your child's special education documents in the PowerSchool portal?



Open-Ended Responses:

First I heard of it.

I was able to log in, in response to an email prompt that my child's documents had been posted, but the only documents there were many months old. So something went awry there.

I'm not sure if I should see a copy of the IEP under the document. I do not. I see papers I have signed. I tried to access progress reports when an email was sent, but none were yet available.

I have them all on paper. The district follows protocol carefully. The reports could be easier to understand, not in their content but in their layout. I always have to sort through the dates and summaries to find my child's latest/current status.

but it's not easy or intuitive

They're hard to locate and some appear to be missing. We have had to email to request progress reports.

Some documents are listed, but none of the documents have any content available.

I see where the documents should be, but I don't see that most are available. I see meeting notices, but not current testing, IEP, etc.

It was little difficult to navigate around to find it. Not straightforward.

Havent tried yet.

I was told the documents aren't available on PowerSchool but I was mailed them instead.

I'll give it a try today.

My spouse accesses the portal.

I didn't find the file on my kid's record

Haven't tried yet

But, it was very difficult to locate and not intuitive.

I don't like having to do this. I rely on email for information as I find these progress notes formulaic anyway.

I may have tried too early. When I clicked on the tab, there was nothing there.

Only some documents are there.

It is so challenging to get to the dive and even more frustrating to try to find the most recent info hidden inside lots of other info.

It was a bit confusing and had to call the office. They had uploaded the incorrect IEP (was from last year)

I haven't tried.

Progress reports and IEP was not available until I asked multiple times

I did not receive notification when the progress reports were updated.

Haven't tried

It was difficult to find the correct links in the system for the progress report we were looking for. We had to contact the school to figure out where the correct link was - it was not obvious.

Yes, but it was a challenge.

Was never communicated to me that my child's documents are accessible here

But progress reports were not obvious

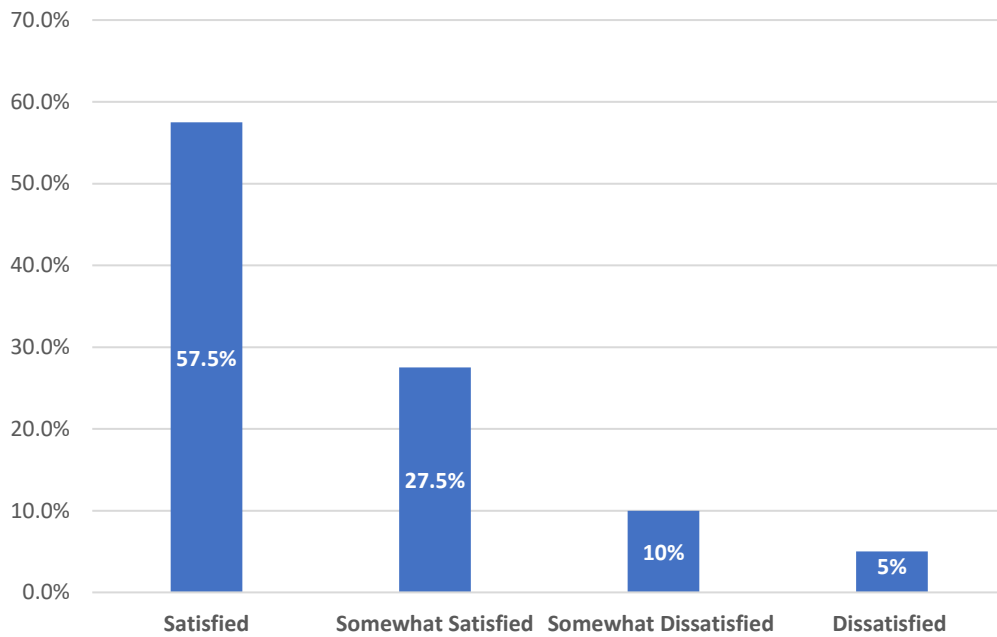
I didn't know this was an option. I don't know what this is.

They were difficult to locate. Some were missing.

Haven't tried yet for this son

did not receive notification that new materials were posted

How Satisfied Are You with the Special Education Services Your Child is Receiving? (n=283 SwD)



I Can Speak Freely with District Staff and Disagree with My Child's Special Education Program or Services without Negative Consequences (n=300 SwD)

