

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

Business Meeting

Wednesday, September 4, 2019, at 7:30 p.m. in the RJ Grey Junior High Library

Agenda

I. Call to Order

II. Approval of Minutes

Review and approval of June 5, 2019, meeting minutes

III. Organization/Business Issues

- A. Updates from Interim Director of Special Education
 - 1. Hiring Updates & New Department Structure
 - 2. Priorities for the Year
- B. Extended School Year Summer Program Feedback
- C. Building Project Update
- D. Concord Public, Concord-Carlisle Regional Parent Forum on Inclusion
- E. Updates on SEPAC Goals & Priorities for the 2019-2020 School Year
 - 1. Continue to Improve Outreach & Engagement—New Logo Sought; Back to School Nights; PTO Relationships
 - 2. Districtwide Use of Percentiles with Standard/Scaled Scores in Evaluation Reports
 - 3. Follow Up on Issues Found in 2019 Survey—Summer PowerSchool Access & IEP Progress Reports; Extended School Year Information
 - 4. “Intelligent Lives” Screening October 28 at 7 p.m. in the RJ Grey Auditorium; Joint Basic Rights TBD with Concord/Concord-Carlisle & Neighboring SEPACs

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 disabilities and others interested in special education to attend. Please check our website (www.absepac.org) for information regarding upcoming events.

VII. Next Meeting

Wednesday, October 2, 2019, at 7:30 p.m. in the RJ Grey Junior High Library

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

Business Meeting Draft Minutes June 5, 2019

I. Call to Order

Amanda Bailey called the meeting to order at 7:35 p.m. AB SEPAC Co-Chairs Amanda Bailey and Carrie Weaver, Past PAC Chair Bill Guthlein, Secretary Melissa Brown, Director of Special Education Pam Smith, School Committee Chair and liaison to the SEPAC Diane Baum, and five other community members were present.

II. Approval of Minutes

Meeting minutes from May 15, 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 Meeting with Student Services

Following a staff request, the SEPAC compiled a resource card for special education staff to distribute to parents during meetings. The resource card has been well received.

Student Services and the SEPAC attended a stakeholder meeting to provide feedback on the Family Engagement Frameworks being established by the Departments of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) and Early Education and Care (EEC); another session will be held on June 10 in Marlborough.

Student Services will share the findings of the mandated program evaluation portion of the state tiered-focus monitoring. The district evaluated the Learning Centers.

The SEPAC will present to the School Committee on June 12 on the year's activities.

1. Elementary Building Project Resource Rooms & De-Escalation Spaces

The new building project includes plans for four substantially-separate elementary resource rooms as well as "self regulation" spaces. The SEPAC recommends those with children who need supports for self-regulation review the district policy on seclusion and restraint and have conversations with their IEP teams. Currently, all schools except the high school, Conant, and Douglas have designated "take a break" spaces. The Director of Special Education noted that the district utilizes proactive strategies to support students before they escalate, including removing other students from the classroom and having calming spaces throughout some of the buildings, such as in nurses' or counselors' offices. While some view removing other students as disruptive to the rest of the class, the SEPAC noted that this practice is less likely to result in trauma to the student struggling with regulation. The Director concurred.

B. Seek Nominations & Elect Officers for 2019-2020 School Year

The following slate was approved, seconded, and elected unanimously:

Amanda Bailey and Carrie Weaver, Co-Chairs

Melissa Brown, Secretary

C. Review & Revise Open Issues

All open issues were reviewed and retained, including:

1. *MCAS performance vulnerable for students with disabilities*
2. *Mandatory special education training/professional development for regular and special education staff – hiring dual-certified staff*
3. *Increasing opportunities for meaningful inclusion across domains*
4. *Enhanced Extended School Year, before-, and after-school programming*
5. *Increased use of technology in IEP development, revision, & communication*

The junior high is piloting a process wherein the Team would develop the IEP together as part of the meeting. PowerSchool communication continues to be an issue as many families have not accessed documents, do not know how to access documents, or are not alerted when documents like progress reports become available.

6. *Subgroup trends for Out of District, Early Childhood, and Specific Learning Disabilities identified via 2015 and 2017 parent/guardian surveys*

We will review survey findings to identify what to emphasize in the 2019-2020 year.

7. *Need for consistent K-12 executive functioning curriculum*

This remains a critical issue, particularly as elementary schools move away from assigning homework, which provides opportunities for time and material management. Educators currently use different approaches toward executive functioning supports and instruction. Families with concerns about their child's executive functioning should work with their team to craft goals and strategies to facilitate skill development.

D. Review & Finalize Goals & Priorities for the 2019-2020 School Year

Items from last meeting as well as additional items were discussed and finalized:

1. *Continue to Improve SEPAC Outreach & Engagement*

The SEPAC will focus on building relationships with the Interim Director of Special Education and new special education staff, including IEP team chairs. We will also attend Back to School Nights and reach out to school PTOs.

2. *Participate in Search Process for New Special Education Director*

3. *Districtwide Use of Percentiles with Standard/Scaled Scores in Evaluation Reports*

4. *Monitor Early Reading Assessments & Interventions*

New state law requires early screening for dyslexia. Districts are awaiting process recommendations from DESE. Early identification and reading interventions vary among the A-B schools.

5. *Monitor PowerSchool Access and Extended School Year Programming*

6. *MCAS Analysis*

7. *Screen “Intelligent Lives”; Presentations on Basic Rights, Universal Design for Learning, Bullying & the Individualized Education Program*

IV. New Business

The SEPAC thanked Pam Smith for her service by gifting her a plaque and a plant.

V. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 8:15 p.m.

VI. NEXT MEETING

Meetings for 2019-2020 TBD

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.

Respectfully submitted by Melissa Brown, Secretary

DRAFT



SPECIAL EDUCATION

SEPAC

SEPTEMBER 5, 2019

INTERIM DIRECTOR'S UPDATE

- Staffing Update
- Priority Areas for 19-20
- News, Notes and Information
- Parent Feedback

WELCOME NEW STAFF...

- Renee Limauro, Special Education Coordinator – McT, Merriam
- Michelle Kelly, Pathways, Blanchard
- Stephanie Plotkin, Special Educator, Conant
- Bailey Ditcham, Special Educator, Douglas
- Janice Martineau, Special Educator, Douglas
- Tara Carnright, School Psychologist, McCarthy-Towne
- Julie Zide, Special Educator, McCarthy-Towne
- Amy Smider, Speech Pathologist - LTS, Merriam
- Jennifer Baldassarre, Special Educator, CLASS, RJ Grey
- Amy Bell, School Psychologist, RJ Grey
- Carrie Brown, Special Educator, CLASS, RJ Grey
- Meghan Maloney-Perez, Special Educator, RJ Grey
- Elizabeth Curtis, Adjustment Counselor, CLASS, RJ Grey
- Sean Root, Special Educator – LTS - RJ Grey
- Faith Jarger, PACE Teacher, ABRHS
- Ashli Garbett, School Psychologist, ABRHS

TRANSFERS AND VACANCIES...

- **Transfers**

- Valery Gransewicz from RJGJHS to Special Ed Coordinator at Douglas and Gates
- Heather Stouch, Elementary School Psychology Chair from McT
- Lynne Laramie, Out of District Coordinator from Elementary Special Education Coordinator

- **Vacancies**

- BCBA

TOM HEHIR SAYS...

Inclusion means...

- ❖ **Offering** *the same opportunities for people with & without disabilities*
- ❖ **Welcoming** *everyone*
- ❖ **Building** *a community where everyone feels respected and valued*
- ❖ **Emphasizing** *cooperation*
- ❖ **Seeking** *to understand, celebrate and support everyone's differences*
- ❖ **Presuming** *everyone's competence*

TOM HEHIR SAYS...

Inclusion means...

- ❖ **Ensuring** *a safe and socially comfortable environment for all*
- ❖ **Teaching** *that all people deserve respect, understanding and dignity*
- ❖ **Reaching** *out to people who are excluded and marginalized*
- ❖ **Honoring** *the intrinsic value of each person's life*
- ❖ **Providing** *training and support so that everyone can feel successful*

2019-20 PRIORITIES

- Inclusionary Practice
 - Review of practices, data
- District Curriculum Accommodation Plan (DCAP)
- Program Definition and Development
 - Entrance/exit criteria, continuum of service, program components and staffing
- Continuity and Consistency
 - Approach, practices, interventions
- Update Process and Procedures
 - Docu-sign

END OF THE YEAR SIMS DATA

School	Headcount Special Education/School Population	%age
Blanchard	82/470	17.4%
Merriam	73/493	14.8%
McCarthy-Towne	90/519	17.3%
Douglas	66/409	16.1%
Gates	63/374	16.8%
Conant	75/449	16.7%
R.J. Grey Junior High	138/929	14.9%
ABRHS	174/1826	9.6
CHECP	48	

PARENT FEEDBACK?

Thank you!

Have a great year!!!



ACTON-BOXBOROUGH REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

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Tele: (978) 264-4700
Fax: (978) 264-3340

PARENT COMMUNICATION MAP

2019-2020

August 2019

Dear Acton and Boxborough Parents/Guardians,

Effective communication is an essential aspect of any organization. Given the complexity of a large school district such as ours that includes multiple stakeholders (students, parents/guardians and community members), this is especially true. This *Parent Communication Map* has been designed as a tool to help guide you to the information that you need to effectively resolve concerns related to a wide-range of aspects of our school system.

At any given point in a school year, parents/guardians may find themselves in a position where they have questions or concerns about a particular issue or assistance is required to resolve a problem. This *Parent Communication Map* has been designed to assist by categorizing a wide array of issues and then identifying initial points of contact within the school system. If the desired information has not been obtained, or the issue has not been resolved through this initial contact, then the attached map identifies the “referral” for the next step the parents/guardians may pursue.

I recognize that one of the most common areas to prompt inquiry is related to a student’s progress and experience in a particular classroom. Please note that such inquiries should always be directed to the classroom teacher. As a general rule, while administrators will certainly respond to questions, parents/guardians will be directed back to the classroom teacher as a first step in the process with the belief that most situations can be resolved first at this level of contact.

In addition to the points-of-contact outlined within this map, please remember that the Acton-Boxborough Regional School District website (www.abschools.org) contains extensive school and program information that is often helpful in answering questions.

If you have further suggestions regarding this *Parent Communication Map*, or how communication in general can be improved in our district, please do not hesitate to let me know.

I want to wish you and your child an enriching and successful experience in the school year ahead.

Sincerely,

Peter Light
Superintendent

At ABRSD, our mission is to develop engaged, well-balanced learners through collaborative, caring relationships.

WELLNESS • EQUITY • ENGAGEMENT

PRESCHOOL AND ELEMENTARY LEVELS

NATURE OF CONCERN	CATEGORY	INITIAL CONTACT	SECONDARY CONTACT
<u>Policy</u>	Schoolwide	Principal	Superintendent
<u>Student Registration</u>	School Registration and Placement	Registrar	Deputy Superintendent
	Classroom Placement	Principal	
<u>Student Records</u>	Content/Availability Special Education Records	Counselor	Counseling Chairperson Special Education Coordinator/IEP Team Leader
Transfers	Within School District (Not Out of District)	Principal/Registrar	Deputy Superintendent
<u>Transportation</u>	Busing/Crossing Guards	Principal	Transportation Manager/Director of School Operations
Teaching/ Instruction	Performance	Teacher	Principal
Student Progress	Academic Progress	Teacher	Principal
	Social Development	Teacher/Counselor	Principal
Discipline	Classroom, Lunchroom, Playground/Recess	Teacher	Principal
Bullying, Harassment	Schoolwide	Assistant Principal	Principal
<u>Curriculum</u>	Content	Teacher	Principal/Specialist/Department Head
	Content/Policy	Special Subject Teacher	Specialist/Assistant Superintendent for Teaching and Learning
	Policy	Teacher	Principal/ Assistant Superintendent for Teaching and Learning
<u>Learning Concerns</u>	Regular Education/ Learning Concerns	Counselor/Special Educator	Counseling Chairperson/Special Education Coordinator/IEP Team Leader
	Preschool Screening	Early Childhood Coordinator	Director of Special Education
	Specialized Transportation	Special Educator	Special Education Coordinator/ IEP Team Leader
	Kindergarten Screening	Kindergarten Teacher	Principal/Special Education Coordinator/ IEP Team Leader
Counseling	Program/Performance	Counselor	Principal/Counseling Chairperson
Instrumental Music	In-school Lessons	Instrumental Music Specialist	Director of Performing Arts
<u>Extended Day Opportunities</u>	Programs	Community Education	Extended Day Coordinator
	Registration Information		
<u>Health</u>	Medical Issues	School Nurse	Chairperson of Nursing
On-line Emergency Card	School-related	Principal	Information Management Specialist

SECONDARY SCHOOLS

NATURE OF CONCERN	CATEGORY	INITIAL CONTACT	SECONDARY CONTACT
<u>Student Registration</u>	School-related	Registrar in School Counseling Office	Principal
<u>Policy</u> Administrative Decision	School-related School-related	Principal Principal	Superintendent
Discipline, Bullying, Harassment	School-related (including attendance and tardiness)	HS: Dean of Students → Associate Principal // JHS: Assistant Principal	Principal
<u>Transportation</u>	Regular Special Needs	HS: Dean of Students → Associate Principal // JHS: Assistant Principal Counselor/Special Educator	Transportation Manager/Director of School Operations Special Education Team Leader/ IEP Team Chair/Director of Special Education
<u>Personal or school-related issues that may impact educational performance</u>	Counseling	HS: Counselor → Dean of Students → Associate Principal JHS: Counselor or Assistant Principal	Counseling Department Chairperson/ Special Education Team Leader Principal
<u>Student Records</u>	Content/Availability Special Education Records	Counselor	Counseling Chairperson Special Education Team Leader
Student Progress	Classroom issues: grades/academic concerns; pupil/teacher relationships	Classroom Teacher	Counselor/Department Leader Assistant or Associate Principal/ Principal
<u>Scheduling</u>	Placement/programs: schedules, placement, college/postgraduate admissions, career planning	Counselor	Counseling Department Chairperson Assistant or Associate Principal/ Principal
<u>Learning Concerns</u>	Regular Education and Special Needs	Counselor/Special Educator	Counseling Department Chair/ Special Education Team Leader
<u>Curriculum: course content</u> Placement: policy information and advice Approval for credit	Departmental	RDL (Regional Department Leader) JHDL (Junior High Department Leader)	Assistant Superintendent for Teaching and Learning
<u>Health</u>	Medical Issues	School Nurse	Chairperson of Nursing
<u>JH Athletics</u> <u>HS Athletics</u>	Schedules / Team Activities	Coach	Athletic Director
Teaching and Learning	Systemwide	Assistant Superintendent for Teaching and Learning	Superintendent
Home/Hospital Programming	Systemwide	Counselor/Special Educator	Counseling Department Chairperson Director of Special Education
Online Emergency Card	School-related	Principal	Information Management Specialist

Any concern should be directed first to the teacher, counselor or principal, using the charts provided inside. Should further information and assistance be needed, the following directory may be used. Call (978) 264-4700 to reach all departments.

ELEMENTARY CONTACTS

Curriculum Coordinators: Heather Haines – PreK-6
Mathematics; Peggy Harvey – PreK-12 Digital Literacy;
Jean Oviatt-Rothman –PreK-6 Science; Sharon Ryan –
PreK-2 Literacy/Social Studies; Dora Sanchez, Gr. 3-6
Literacy/Social Studies

SPECIAL SUBJECTS

Reading Specialists: Kerry Cusick, Danielle Healy,
Amanda Montero, Amy Omo, Ann Marie Pastor,
Noel Powers, Maureen O'Brien
Art Teachers: Eileen Barnett, Melissa Mastrolia, Celia Knight,
Heidi Kupferman, Allyson Simes, Beth Warner
Music Teachers: Peter Broggi, Margie Callaghan, Marlee Cassel,
Kerrin Stewart, Kim Ward, Christine Wysokowski
Physical Education Teachers: Kathleen Ammendolia,
William Chan, Robert Guilmette, Peter Knowles,
Mary O'Brien, Jill Reed
Special Education Staff: Check with each building
ELE Staff: Check with each building

BUILDING LEADERS

Blanchard School Principal: Dana Labb
Blanchard School Assistant Principal: Leigh Whiting-Jones
Conant School Principal: Damian Sugrue
Conant School Assistant Principal: Abigail Dressler
Douglas School Principal: Christopher Whitbeck
Douglas School Assistant Principal: Jenna Larrenaga
Gates School Principal: Lynne Newman
Gates School Assistant Principal: Priscilla Kotyk
McCarthy-Towne School Principal: David Krane
McCarthy-Towne School Assistant Principal: Matt McDowell
Merriam School Principal: Juliana Schneider
Merriam School Assistant Principal: Bryant Amitrano

PROGRAM MANAGERS

Counseling Services: Hilary Bonnell, Chairperson
Psychological Services: Heather Stouch
Interim Special Education Director: Deborah Dixon
IEP Team Chairpersons: Valery Gransewicz (Douglas,
Gates), Renee Limauro (McCarthy-Towne, Merriam);
Barbara Maglione (Blanchard, Conant)
Preschool Services: Joseph Gibowicz, Early Childhood Coord.
English Language Services, PK-12: Maryann Young, ELE Chair.
Nursing Services: Diane Spring, Chairperson
Visual Arts: Leo Muellner, Director
Performing Arts: George Arsenault, Director
Physical Education/Health: David James, Director
Out-of-District Coordinator: Matthew Kidder
Coordinator of Food Services: Kirsten Nelson

SECONDARY CONTACTS

Department Leaders at the High School

English Language Arts: Dianne Telicki
Mathematics: Bill Noeth
Science: David Baumritter
Social Studies: David Green
World Languages: Sinikka Savukoski

Junior High Department Coordinators

English Language Arts: Christine Bryan
Mathematics: Heather Haines
Science: Elizabeth Broadwater
Social Studies: Kellie Carter
World Languages: Jean Diesso

BUILDING LEADERS

High School Principal: Larry Dorey
High School Associate Principal: Beth Baker
High School Associate Principal: Maurin O'Grady
High School Dean: Fred Hohn
High School Dean: Michael Csorba
Junior High School Principal: Andrew Shen
Junior High School Asst. Principal: David Lawrence, Gr. 8
Junior High School Asst. Principal: Jim Marcotte, Gr. 7
Junior High School Asst. Principal: Allison Warren

PROGRAM MANAGERS

Counseling Services: Todd Chicks, Chairperson
Psychological Services: Susan Root, Chairperson
Interim Special Education Director: Deborah Dixon
English Language Services, PK-12: Maryann Young, ELE Chair.
ABRHS Special Education Team Leader: Susan Bohmiller
RJGrey Special Education Team Leader: Tara Kirousis
Nursing Services: Diana McNicholas, Chairperson
Visual Arts: Leo Muellner, Director
Music/Performing Arts: George Arsenault, Director
Physical Education/Health: David James, Director
Athletics: Steve Martin, Director
Summer School: Jessica Carrabellese, Director
Out-of-District Coordinator: Matthew Kidder
Coordinator of Food Services: Kirsten Nelson

CENTRAL OFFICE

Marie Altieri, Deputy Superintendent
Deborah E. Bookis, Assistant Superintendent for
Teaching and Learning
Dawn G. Bentley, Ed.D., Assistant Superintendent for
Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

David Verdolino, Director of Finance
Amy Bisiewicz, Director of Educational Technology
John D. Head, Director of School Operations
Erin Bettez, Director of Community Education

[Peter Light](#), Superintendent of Schools
plight@abschools.org