



Acton-Boxborough Special Education Parent Advisory Council

Annual Meeting and Election of Officers

Wednesday, June 9, 2010

MEETING MINUTES

- I. Call to Order – Nancy Sherburne called the meeting to order at 7:10 pm. The following Board members attended the meeting: Bill Guthlein, Nancy Sherburne, Caroline Jarvis, Steve Lowe, Sasha Stavsky, and Valerie Ryan. Also in attendance were Pupil Services representative Julie Towell, Candidate for Standing Committee Chair, Heather Stouch, and two other PAC members.

- II. Approval of Minutes
The April 14, 2010 minutes were reviewed and, after mention to make an adjustment regarding Julie Towell's name, a motion was made to approve. That motion was seconded and the minutes were unanimously approved.

- III. Organizational/Business Issues
 - A. Treasurer's Report – Sasha provided a handout entitled *Acton-Boxborough Special Education Parent Advisory Council Treasurer's Report For the Period June 1, 2009 through May 31, 2010*. Two speakers were paid. A refund is expected from the district for half of the fee for the *Shut Up About Your Perfect Kid* presentation. In addition, a donation from Intel is also pending.
 - B. Fundraising – Ideas were exchanged regarding raising money to fund speakers:
 1. Organize a tag sale
 2. Organize a children's concert
 3. Conduct a direct appeal with suggested amounts
 4. Sell fair trade coffee
 5. Have a bake sale asking for donations
 6. Charge for speakers

It was agreed that pursuing the direct appeal would be of immediate value. A letter will be drafted and sent to the PAC membership. The state's new Guidance for PACs was also mentioned with respect to management of potential funds received. It was agreed that setting up a Gift Account through a Friends of the PAC organization (FOP) was preferable to the other options outlined by the state which include setting up a Municipal Account and setting up a Revenue Account through the district. 501c3 status and by-laws for the Friends of the PAC need to be established.

Action Items: Draft direct appeal letter.
Create by-laws for FOP

- C. Suggestions for speakers/presentation topics for next year – Ideas for presentations were discussed:
1. Nancy has set-up a presentation regarding financial planning for special education children.
 2. Executive functioning
 3. Technology help
 4. Bob Putnam from the May Institute
 5. Ely center
 6. SpEd Law – Tim Sindelar
 7. Mental Health - parent support, psychopharmacology
 8. Sibling workshops
 9. Junior High Wellness, positive thinking
 10. How to prepare for your IEP meeting and manage paperwork – Steve Lowe
 11. IEP workshops with Steve Lowe
 12. Drop-in session with service providers from the district – joint venture opportunity
- D. Discussion of PAC Goals for Next Year - Nine goal areas were discussed:
1. Bill and Nancy to present to the school committee with a goal of encouraging the district to use Student Growth Percentile (SGP) data in addition to the Annual Yearly Progress (AYP) data when assessing MCAS results. Concerns regarding the district's response to the low Junior High and Conant Elementary scores in the special education groups remain.
Action Item – Bill follow up on SGP – school committee in the fall
 2. Address the need for more professional development for regular and special educators. It was noted that Acton has one of the lowest spending levels for professional development in the state. The survey results were referenced in that it is high on the list of membership concerns. It was suggested that a baseline number of the percentage of teachers - both regular and special education – who have participated in special education training be obtained.
 3. Encourage development of quality in-district programming – the need to begin services as early as possible was mentioned. Continue to support the development of a Connections Program for Autism Spectrum students and expansion of Hayward Center at the High School.
 4. Implement improvements from the Autism Forums
 5. Continue pushing forward the IEP Technology Task Force
 6. Complete the SpEd PAC Parent Handbook

7. Conduct a follow-up PAC parent/guardian survey that includes a subset of the original questions asked in 2008.
8. Reach out to expand our membership – it was mentioned that while many people are satisfied and may not respond to our invitation there might be a lack of understanding regarding the value of connection with the PAC.
9. Increase visibility – It was suggested that a dedicated PR person on the Board is necessary. Nancy mentioned that she and Bill could go to joint PTO meetings and contact school principals to try to get on a regular agenda. It was also suggested that we try to improve our presence on the district's website.

IV. Election of Officers – Nancy referred to and reviewed the handout entitled *Candidates for PAC Office 2010 - Presented for Vote June 9, 2010*. In addition, she asked if anyone at the meeting would like to put forward any additional names for office. A call for candidates had been made via our listserv. The candidate handout had been e-mailed to the Board and candidates prior to the meeting and copies were made available at the meeting. A motion was made to elect the slate of officers running for the Board positions. That motion was seconded. A vote was taken and the candidates were all unanimously voted into office.

V. Adjournment – A motion was made to adjourn the meeting. That motion was seconded and unanimously approved. The meeting was adjourned at 9:12 pm.

Next Meeting – AB SpEd PAC Board Meeting September 8th at 7:00 pm in the Junior High Library.

Respectfully submitted by Valerie Ryan, Secretary.