



Acton-Boxborough Special Education Parent Advisory Council Annual Meeting

Meeting minutes – June 13, 2012

I. Call to Order

Nancy Sherburne called the meeting to order at 7.39pm. The following Board members attended the meeting: Bill Guthlein, Nancy Sherburne, Melinda Palmer, and Caroline Jarvis. Also in attendance were three other SpEd PAC members, including Carolyn Sprague, who was subsequently elected as Co-Secretary of the AB SpEd PAC and Blossom Davies, who was subsequently elected as Secretary of the Friends of AB SpEd PAC, Ltd.

II. Approval of Minutes

The May 9, 2012 meeting minutes were reviewed. A motion was made to approve the minutes as written. That motion was seconded and the meeting minutes were approved unanimously.

III. Organization/Business Issues

- A. Nomination & Election of Officers – Nancy explained that all officer positions would be for the coming 12-month period July 1, 2012 to June 30, 2013. She asked anyone interested in holding an officer position to please submit his/her name for consideration. The following slate of officers was proposed for next year: Co-Chairs, Nancy Sherburne and Bill Guthlein, Co-Secretaries, Carolyn Sprague and Melinda Palmer. A motion was made and seconded to elect this slate of officers for the 2012-13 school year. The motion was unanimously approved.
- B. Summary of Recent PAC Presentation to the School Committee (go to www.abspedpac.org for complete June 2012 SC presentation) – Nancy and Bill discussed the SpEd PAC's recent presentation to the School Committee. A summary of the AB SpEd PAC's accomplishments included: completing and releasing its Special Education Parent Handbook; designing and launching a new SpEd PAC website; analyzing the results from the PAC's recent Parent/Guardian Survey and sharing findings in a report; completing an MCAS analysis for the district; and lobbying for a new Connections Program at the High School to serve students on the autism spectrum (refer to April 11, 2012 Meeting minutes or www.abspedpac.org for full program description), as well as a K-6 continuum of special education services at both Douglas and Gates. These schools only have K-3 grade support at this time. Students who continue to need supports in grades 4-6 must currently move to a different school to finish their elementary education.
- C. Planning for Next Year –
- a. Meeting Day and Time – There was a discussion of what day and time would be best for our meetings next year. The decision was made to continue meeting on Wednesday evenings at 7:30 pm with daytime meetings scheduled for Thursday mornings. Bill suggested we consider moving our meetings up to the first

Wednesday of each month so we'd know what issues we might like to bring up at the following School Committee meetings.

- b. Priorities for Next Year – A discussion of our priorities for next year ensued. We talked about the enhancement of SpEd accessible after school/vacation/summer activities. Nancy asked what types of programs families would most like to see for their children. She shared feedback from her meeting with Bonnie Thompson and Cathy Fochtman at Acton Rec. The areas in which families seemed to be most interested in providing additional opportunities for their children were swimming lessons, cooking classes, yoga pretzels and life skills.
- c. How to Involve More People – We then discussed how to better reach and involve more people in the PAC. Suggestions were made to have more strictly social activities to help families make connections in the community. Another suggestion involved asking if Pupil Services could include a copy of the PAC flyer with each IEP that goes out to families, not just the annual IEP. Folks suggested a blog, which might allow some people concerned about privacy to participate anonymously.
- d. Speakers or workshops of interest – Nancy asked if folks had any specific recommendations for speakers/workshops next year. Several suggestions were made including:
 - i. A presentation on how to be a better advocate since self-advocacy is such a key skill – perhaps use the pitch “advocacy is the bridge to success.”
 - ii. Having Shelly Viles at Antioch come speak
 - iii. Inviting Lynn Crowley who successfully advocated for the passage of Connor’s Law in NH.

IV. New Business

No new business was discussed.

V. Adjournment.

The meeting was adjourned at 9.30pm.

VI. Next Meeting

AB SpEd PAC Meeting –Wednesday, September 12, 2012 at 7:30 pm in the R.J. Grey Junior High Library.

Respectfully submitted by Melinda Palmer