

**Devising Seminar Task Force Meeting Minutes DRAFT
GREENWICH PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

DATE: 10-12-2020

PLACE: Virtual

ATTENDANCE:

BOE Administration:

Toni Jones, Supt.

Ann Carabillo, Deputy Supt.

Mary P. Forde, Chief Pupil Personnel Services Officer

Community Partners:

Cricket Dymont, PTAC President

Luis Velazquez, Abilis

Parents:

Jennifer Kutai

Audra O'Donovan

Anna Ksiazak

Patricia Estefano

Staff:

Suzanne Coyne, AP WMS

Gillian Thompson, Spec Ed Teacher, GHS

Cindy Boucard, Spec Ed Teacher, NL

Vicki Cappiali, Regular Education Kindergarten, NSS

Jessica McEvily, Psychologist

Key2Ed:

Joyce Little

Cassie Velasquez

1. Meeting Opening

Call to Order – 6:00 pm

Review of the Agenda

Introductions (Something positive from the COVID experience)

2. Review of two areas to focus on for solutions.

A. PPT Meeting Process

Major challenge is time challenges and adequate time for meetings

During Pandemic **Solutions**

Challenge

Elementary vs. Remote School schedules
Elementary is different due to the schedules

Both Pre and Post Pandemic

Solutions

Distribute a copy of the IEP prior to the PPT meeting (at least 5 days ahead of time)
There will be phone calls and communication before the meeting

Logistics of PPT meetings (can be a struggle)

Parent Comment: Recently no phone call or response during a meeting, no IEP before the meeting

Key 2 Ed- Do not police implementation of the process, they just train.
The parent feedback was good for staff to hear.

Need consistency for PPT meetings - different schools have various rules
Not a time bound, but a timeframe in order to complete the work

Try to get buildings to hold PPT's on a single day

Follow the guidelines for a schedule (think about the agenda before it's set)
Use the IEP facilitation training agenda - Could be very helpful

It's important to note that there is no strict time schedule, but it could mean that the meeting may need to continue on another day or time. Staff are always willing to talk.

Schools need to follow the "guidelines"

B. IEP Implementation

Staffing - adequate and appropriate is challenging in the midst of the pandemic

COVID- in and out with a substitute teacher when quarantine is needed.
Makes it difficult to fill in for

We had staffing issues before the pandemic. There were reading groups of 11 for interventions.

Parents understand Covid staffing.

Post Pandemic- Use of staff

Should have planned for hiring of special education teachers

Description of the Evolve model to trade in para positions for teaching positions. Must be done annually.

Solutions

GPS needs to hire additional staff
Re-evaluate the staffing model as this has been a discussion for years

Staff trained in behavior, need to be more diversified
Put a google doc link on the signature line of the special education teacher
Key 2 ED Website- there is a link on parent participation in virtual meetings

C. Special Education Training

There has been a lack of staff training and we need more
Trained staff for the needs of our students

Behavior, Reading training, Special Education site administrators on rules,

GPS does have Orton Gillingham trained staff, but use of those staff is building by building.

Orton Gillingham training...classroom educator. That certificate is not enough to tutor children. It's to expose staff to OG.

Do we need more OG training?

Do we need a deeper level of training?

Special Education coaching (Greenwich Way) A solution could be to have a senior special educationTeacher to help develop other teachers in the building

Solutions:

A coach or other position to support staff more. Assistant Principal may not have a special educationbackground. Had a tremendous amount of overturn, and the procedures and policies that staff follow need to be enhanced. Mentors need to be provided within your own building.

Director's Advisory happens on-going and regularly

Parents also need support, especially those new to GPS. Perhaps making short video clips that are virtually available. Staff have shared frustrations that it's difficult to get strong attendance. Parent liaisons could be helpful (Similar to what PTA has and SEAC). A current staff member is working on short videos to help explain the PPT process and other crucial elements. Perhaps, a person to call before their PPT or to ask clarifying questions.

More information on the website about the process.

Posters, brochures, more information available

Making sure parents know who is a contact within the building

Provide information to parents at every PPT meeting

First 100 Days after a child is found eligible (easy format to access and read)

Give some parents training, they could be "parent helpers" (Liaisons...)

Provide training for parents on how to work with children who are exhibiting behavior challenges

3. Next Steps

In the future, it may be that in the Action Plan we may need to revisit the other items and issues. Start a Parking Lot of items. September 2021-2022.

Will the Devising Seminar be utilized by the new consultant group? Yes, in terms of looking at the various studies which have been conducted and the Devising Seminar information. They will want fidelity of their own work, but certainly take a look at what has been the case over time.

In the final report the numbers will be provided (approximately 100 people) who contributed to the report. The conflict that was shared showed a great deal of agreement about what the challenges are from staff and the family community.

Need to focus on implementing solutions in the district. Parents must commit to implementing and working with the district in partnership.

There have been studies from 1997 to now; parents are asking for strong implementation.

The Devising Seminar process works well because the committee comes up with solutions which may work, not an independent consultant.

In the final report it is important to share the number of people who came out to have their voice be heard. The final report will have the process outlined so it is very clear, and the impressions which were given will be multiple pages. There have been “disinformation” about the process, and it will be important to clarify during the BOE meeting.

4. Debrief

Positives What Worked Well?

Worked well together even though we are virtual

People were fair and respectful of ideas

It was positive to see teachers and parents share their thinking about going forward

It was good to discuss during and post Covid

Find it hopeful when we hear from teachers and administrators what is actually going on

Excellent collaboration between people who sometimes do not agree

Challenges What Could be Changed or Improved

Perhaps one more meeting so that the action plan could be better formulated

More challenging to complete this process virtually

Perhaps small group discussion for a few minutes in groups

4. Adjournment

Meeting ended at 8:39 pm

October 22nd, 2020. Key2Ed to present to the Board of Education

Respectfully submitted,

Dr. Toni Jones, Superintendent