

**Greenwich Special Education Advisory Council Meeting Minutes  
GREENWICH PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

**DATE:** 3-17-2021

**PLACE:** Virtual Meeting

**ATTENDANCE:**

**Greenwich SEAC Board Members**

Caroline Lerum  
Audra O'Donovan  
Jennifer Kutai  
Robyn Baldwin  
Katie Nogaki  
Dawn Zimmerman  
Kathy Walker  
Donald McGuire  
Danielle Green  
Erin Montague  
Jennifer Donat  
Sarah Obuchowski  
Abby Anders  
Dr. Michael-Joseph Mercanti-Anthony

**Greenwich Community**

Sabrina Motta  
Carolyn Mullins  
Alsu Khalitova  
Kara Gillespie  
Deb Baumgarten  
Michael Baumgarten

**Alternates:**

Elizabeth Forger  
Naomi Nova

**CPAC (Connecticut Parent Advocacy Center):**

Lynn Rule  
Jennifer Lussier

**BOE Administration:**

Dr. Toni Jones  
Mary Forde  
Karen Hirsh  
Karen Kowalski

## **A.) Attendance**

Call to Order – approximately 6:38PM

Meeting was called to order by Caroline Lerum

## **B.) Welcome and Opening Remarks from Chairperson**

Introduction to Abby Anders who is taking over for Jennifer DiCarlo (CL)

## **C.) Public Comment**

Floor was open for public discussion - three minutes each. No questions (CL)

## **D.) Approval of Meeting Minutes 11/11/20 and 1/13/21**

### **Asked Board to approve minutes:**

11/11/2021 Meetings were motioned to approve by Jen Kutai.  
Michael Mercanti Anthony seconded the motion.  
All approved. No dissension. No abstentions.

1/13/2021 Meetings were motioned to approve by Dawn Zimmerman.  
Katie Bistran seconded the motion.  
All approved. No dissension. No abstentions.

## **E.) Remarks from the Chief Pupil Personnel Services Officer (Mary Forde)**

(CL) Dr Greene is interested in doing a three or four consecutive workshops for parents. This will happen after Spring Break and will be free to GPS parents. Need to see what the cost would be for Dr Greene

The Bridging process is happening now. Begins with high school and works down to pre-k

As of today we have 35 responses to the IEP survey. This is a little light, so make sure to remind people to submit. We have started with the second round of IEP surveys. Going to ask PTAC to put in a reminder in their newsletter to raise awareness.

Last newsletter included parent workshops. We do have funds to support parent attendance.

Working with cirque State of CT Education Dept around workshops for IEP implementation for staff. Spending time on the legal aspects and how to look at an IEP for quality and compliance. It is still in the planning phase

Working with PTAC - we have IEP basics, but need to push out in PTA newsletters. There is now a link on the district website and we can push the link out to parents who bypass the newsletter.

## **F.) Remarks and updates from Superintendent regarding Staffing/Evolve and Special Education Review (Dr Toni Jones)**

Dr Jones - review of special education. PCG Reviewing the data and have the survey open until 3/31. Final report due at the end of June 2021

(CL) What about Evolve - we didn't use this year and did we see any impacts? (TJ) Waiting on PCG results to determine if it will be implemented. Everyone resets at the end of the year and then the school has to make a decision every year to determine if they are going to Evolve.

Cost neutral for staffing model and want to staff based on the needs of the children.

## **G.) Discuss the structure and expectation of committees for 20/21 school year**

- IEP/504 Implementation
- Eligibility Process
- Nominating
- Enrichment

Need to discuss expectations of chairs and co-chairs. We only have until June and really want to build a strong foundation for next year. You meet once a month for an informal meeting and discuss what you want to accomplish this year. Don't let the form intimidate you that is sent to the board of ed (CL)

Contact people to fill positions for next year. Put together guidelines to how this should be structured. Making sure that we have appropriate people filling the committee for next year. (KW)

## **H.) Discuss Spring Workshop**

- 504 workshop

## **I.) Enrichment Committee Member Sabrina Motta to discuss the Listening Circle**

- Our mission: To create a community of parents together with Greenwich Public School staff who are open to explore the benefits of mindfulness, self compassion and reflection to support parents through the special education process.

Members:

- Sabrina Motta, speech-language pathologist
- Alsu Khalitova, parent facilitator
- Maria Martinez-Zanghi, speech-language pathologist
- Kristen Mulhearn, district social worker
- Geanna Partland, special education teacher

General Agenda:

- Greeting
- Moment of Mindfulness
- Article/Noticing Discussion
- Other Points/Thoughts

Slow turnout, is it marketing? Think they need more time to get more people to join

I can get it to both SES PTAC committees as I oversee both - SES and 2E (KW)

**J.) Adjournment**

Meeting ended at 8:03 pm

Respectfully submitted,  
Robyn Baldwin