

Special Education Parent Working Group (SPWG)

Meeting Minutes

Date: 11/09/21 at 11:30 AM at Eanes Administration Bldg

Present: Molly May
Matt Zemo
Susan Stotzer
Sadia Ali
Rhonda Stout
Suzanne Wilson
Tabitha Rose
Traci Lepak
Laura Avery

Examples of Community, Inclusion, and Teamwork

Up and Adam

A former SPWG member, Debbie Zapata, is releasing a children's book on May 3, 2022. Up and Adam is a book about a boy helping his neighbors in the aftermath of a storm. Adam also happens to have Down syndrome. Molly will be purchasing copies for our school libraries. For more information about Up and Adam, go to <http://debbiezapata.com/books/up-and-adam/>

Fortlandia

Jack Wilson, the son of current SPWG member Suzanne Wilson, has designed a fort called "Connect" as part of the Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center's Fortlandia project with the help of a local architect and builder. Jack's fort will be at the Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center through January 2022, and then will move to one of the Westbank libraries. For more information about Jack's fort and Fortlandia, go to <https://www.wildflower.org/fortlandia>

Best Buddies Match Party

About 100 students recently attended the Westlake high school Best Buddy Match Party. The goal of Best Buddies is to create one-to-one friendships between high school students. With a 3 to 1 ratio of general education to special education students, the match party was a great success.

Best Buddies Middle School Expansion

The Best Buddies program will be expanding to the middle schools, with a match party target date of February or March 2022. Based on her experience with the Best Buddies program at the high-

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school level, Laura suggests asking for lots of parent volunteers to help set up and maintain the program at the middle-school level.

Best Buddies Walk

A Best Buddies fund-raising walk is planned for Spring 2022. The money raised from the walk will go to <https://www.bestbuddies.org/>. Suzanne suggested that we might want to consider selling concessions at the walk to raise money for our **local** Best Buddies program also.

Westlake Spirit Team

The Westlake spirit team has started cheering at high school games. The spirit team is having a lot of fun, with students in both general education and special education on the team.

Facebook Page

The official SPWG Facebook page is called "Eanes ISD Special Ed Parent Working Group" and is located here: <https://www.facebook.com/EISDSPWG>. If you have announcements or information to post on our Facebook page, send an email to either Molly or Susan.

Superintendent Search

The Board of Trustees has hired Thompson & Horton as a search firm to find a new superintendent of schools. Thompson & Horton will be seeking input from the community to assist in their selection process. A list of SPWG members has been provided, so the search firm might contact an SPWG member to participate in a focus group.

Inclusive Program Resources

Laura created a Google document with a list of inclusive programs that are appropriate for students in the special education community. **Action Item for all SPWG members:** Update the Google document with inclusive programs that you are aware of in your school or community.

This document will later be shared with other parents.

New Parent Information Sheet

Suzanne suggested creating an information sheet for parents who are new to the Eanes special education community. To make it easier to distribute and maintain, the information sheet would be only one printed page with links to web sites for more information. The information sheet would include links to resources (such as a link to the inclusive resource Google document above), a link to the SPWG contact list, and a link to a list of acronyms and terminology that might be new to these parents.

Progression Meetings

In the Dec/Jan/Feb timeframe, progression meetings will be held to help inform parents as their students in special education progress from one school to the next. The meetings are held for parents of students going from ECSE (early childhood special education) to kindergarten, 5th to 6th grade, and 8th to 9th grade, and 12th grade to ATS (adult transition services).

All general education and special education parents will also be invited to attend general information sessions held at the next-level schools. However, the general sessions do not always answer those specific questions special education parents have, so special education parents are encouraged to attend a special education progression meeting as a supplement to the general information session.

Special Education Staffing Needs

Eanes currently has 1 to 2 teaching positions and 9 teaching assistant (paraprofessional) positions available to be filled in the special education department.

Next Meeting

01/18/22 at 11:30 AM at Eanes Administration Building at 1601 Camp Craft Road 78746