

***Ascension Special Education Advisory Council Meeting - MINUTES  
August 31, 2022, 6:00 p.m.***

***✓ Approved during October 26, 2022 SEAC meeting***

Prior to meeting beginning- (6:02) LH Informed participants (24) that we will get started momentarily. We are still admitting participants.

**Chair: Lynn Hathaway, Director of Special Education**

- Call to order

6:03

LH: Explained that this is our Kickoff meeting for 22-23. Welcomed everyone to the meeting. Meeting called to order. Agenda dropped into the chat box by Nicole Grimes, SPED Supervisor..

- Roll call

Asked participants to use hand raising to acknowledge team members.

Unmuted members who are present for the meeting.

S. Williams - present

L. Bacala - present

L. Borskey- absent

J. Brignac- absent

W. Moreau- present

L. Gros- present

E. Jorgensen - present

E. King - present

B. Landry - present

M. Reed - present

*A total of 31 participants logged on.*

- Public comment procedures

Informed participants of procedures for public comments. Team members will be able to discuss openly. Non team members, use the chat box and enter name, parent/agency, agenda item to comment on. Will have an opportunity to speak. Three minutes for response.

Reviewed agenda items verbally. Welcomed late arriving team members.

*A total of 34 participants logged on.*

- SEAC Purpose & Process - new law regarding SEAC

LH discussed the purpose: To provide advice and recommendations regarding special education policies, procedures. Not to discuss individual needs. To engage in outreach... To provide superintendent with an annual report. Annual report will be submitted to LDOE. Important purpose and responsibility of team.

- Robert's Rules of Order

Follow RROO as best as we can in format. Take motions, second by team. Reminded participants of the process for public comments.

SEAC Law was updated to increase membership to increase parent numbers. Minimum was 8. We have increased from 4 to 10 members with 8 parents. We have community stakeholders and a sped teacher on the committee.

### **Old Business:**

- 1. A. Approval of minutes from June 29, 2022 SEAC meeting

All members had opportunity to review minutes from the last meeting.

Motion to approve: S. Williams

2nd to approve: L. Gros

Motion passed

LH informed participants that team members can comment as a team member.

- 1. B. Update on welcome binder and one-page IEP information sheet

From last year's SEAC team came about, information for parents and resources and info regarding special education. One info source is a one page IEP reference sheet.

Welcome Binder (Parent Toolkit)- Great feedback from last year's team. Team members should have received a draft to review. Has been submitted to the digital department at LSSC. This is a work in progress. We are hoping to send ongoing information regarding district and SPED processes. After feedback is received, it will be finalized. Will be sent to all parents who have a child with an IEP. One pager will be sent home before IEPs to all parents to provide helpful information about what to expect in IEPs/meetings.

*A total of 38 participants logged on.*

### **New Business:**

- *District Agenda Items*

## 2.a. New SEAC members for 2022-2023 - Welcome & Introductions

Opportunity for new members to introduce themselves and tell why they want to be a part of the team.

1. S. Williams - parent to two IEP recipients. Joined for that reason and to expand the voice of many parents. To learn more and support myself to be a better advocate for my children. Want to be in front of the change.
2. L. Bacala - retired APSB employee. Former sped teacher. To bring in community involvement. To coordinate more with the school system. Often called to give information about sped.
3. L. Borskey - not able to join this evening (via L. Hathaway)
4. J. Brignac - Asked to jump into chat box if present (via L. Hathaway)
5. W. Moreau - Invited to respond in chat box due to technical difficulties. (via L. Hathaway)
6. L. Gros - Wife, mother of 3. HS child has an IEP. Enjoyed many years of well-done inclusion. Last couple of years, have had difficulty in the school system. Want to speak up for children who can not speak for themselves.
7. E. Jorgensen - Mom of 3 children. All in AP schools. Youngest is special needs. This year has been more involved with the IEP process and services. Want to continue and help in any way.
8. E. King - Lead SPED teacher in the district. 7 years in the district. Passionate about what she does. Important to advocate for students with the highest needs. Important that student outcomes continue to improve.
9. B. Landry - "Bree". Parent of child in school with IEP. Own an art studio. Joined because it helps her son as well as other children. Hearing of people in other districts who do not have the resources we have here.
10. M. Reed - 2 Special Needs children in HS and one in 504. First diagnosed in K. Encouraged by a former parent facilitator to join the team. Hope to provide insight to help others.

*A total of 39 participants logged on.*

LH: Great to have everyone on the team. Process for joining team: Send out applications every year for anyone who might be interested for the next school year. Applications will be sent in the spring.

## 2.b. Virtual vs. In-person meetings for 2022-2023

With Covid, meetings moved to virtual. Would love to move back to in-person. Team needs to discuss and come up with ideas. Could be a rotation. Up to the team members. M. Reed: If meetings were held in person, where would it be held? (via chatbox)

LH: We could rotate between the feeder schools (high schools). Anyone else on the team with opinions/feedback ?

L. Gros: Prefer in-person. More efficient - Human element can become emotional and heated, but can get a better understanding of people. Could be difficult with this population of students babysitting needs.

LH: Can leave unmuted for open discussion

Motion by M. Reed: To hold in-person meetings

2nd: E. King

Suggestion for Hybrid option : S. Williams - Move for Virtual option to remain due to members who may have an issue to arise.

Motion - S. Williams to amend the original motion for hybrid.

L.H. - Can merge that motion into one?

Parent asked if there could be an option for in person meetings with the option for some form of hybrid/virtual for those who could not attend

M. Reed - Motioned

E. King - 2nd

No opposition. Motion to move to in person with a hybrid option approved.

## 2.c. Cameras in Special Education Classroom- district update

M. Reed reminded LH that she skipped this slide. No public comment.

L.H.: Laws were passed re: cameras in Sped Class. New law was passed this summer.

Legislation approved \$8 million in funding. BESE has approved installation of cameras. District waiting on release of funding. Tech depart has already completed cost estimates. 60 days from release for funds policy and procedures to be approved. Our estimate is \$100,000.

Approximately 43 classrooms are eligible for cameras.

L. Gros: The funds have not been released yet?

LH: No. They have been approved. LDOE will determine how they are going to release funds.

L. Gros: 60 days for policies?

LH: Hope to have it sooner.

L. Gros: What are we talking about without parent requests?

LH: Can share statute with the team. (Read policy verbally for participants) We have 43 classrooms that would meet that criteria.

L. Gros: Can you explain in layman's terms? That would obviously be our LC classrooms.

LH: The classroom is a self-contained classroom. Students who are alternately assessed use LC Standards. Students in grades 3- high school age take an alternate assessment.

W. Moreau made request to unmute again.

LH: Any other SEAC team members to discuss or additional questions. Will send the law out to the team again. This is a good thing for our students and will be happening very soon.

S. Williams: In regards to the memo, will it be posted on the site?

LH: Eventually it will be posted on the site. Referring to the actual wording in the law. Will share with SEAC team.

Jodi Rollins: I'm glad that you mentioned that it's self-contained and not a LC classroom. I brought it to your attention a few months ago about removing the language from the website.

LH: We changed it on the website. If I missed it in other places, I will put fresh eyes on it again.

E. Jorgenssen - Jodi took care of her comment.

LH: Will read W. Moreau comment word for word if put in the chatbox. Any additional comments regarding cameras?

- *Parent Agenda Items*

- 3.a. Making transitions from school to school (primary to middle, middle to high) more effective and efficient for students with special needs, parents, and staff. I have several ideas.

Turned over to L. Gros.

Issue with moving from school to school. Big jumps for regular children. Bigger jump for students with special needs. Different feeling for parents compared to sending typical students. Primary schools worked hard to make sure students were ready for middle. Suggested for big years for students with any child with an IEP or health plan that they get a transition day before school starts. Something more than 5 minutes once teachers to get to school. Suggested child and parent meet with a key person a day or so before school. Suggested key person is the IEP folder holder or another person on the team. Discussed meeting with the nurse, getting information to bus driver. In ideal world, provide 30 minutes with the key people. Would love to hear from the teacher perspective. Checklist? Reach out to children identified? Children with special needs have families just like a typical family re: levels of involvement.

M. Reed: Have had good transitions because of advocating. Would like to add that this year there was the 30 minute transition. Missed out on regular education children. Would be amazing to go on a separate day. Helped their son's transition. One to one para, plan in place. Agree with L. Gros.

E. King: Support 6th grade. Understand how difficult transitions can be for parents and teachers. This year, worked with LSSC to set transition guidelines. Met with teachers of students coming to her. As LT, sit with the other teachers to review all information received from the primary school. Important to have information written so info can be transferred in a confidential manner. Suggested incentivizing sped teachers to have an additional prep day as an additional day for students to tour school, take pictures, to know who is serving students and providing support.

Public comment from B. Harper: Agree with previous comments. Has been a transition to MS. Eye opener as a parent and employee of the district. Suggested same day, same time where regular ed teachers can come and assist. Or separate night where students can meet sped teachers and get information.

E. Jorgensen: Wonderful idea. Important to know the teachers we are meeting. Should also be meetings with the parents because it is a big adjustment. Has been warned that middle is a lot different from primary. Will help to navigate changes.

LH: Staff may be talking, but people change positions. Ms. Gros are you looking for official action or just asking that we start taking a look?

L. Gros: Not looking for official action. Wanted to hear from team members and teacherperspective. Will like to revisit at our next meeting. Seems like some schools are transitioning very well, while others are not. Would like to get it pretty equal across the district.

LH: Does sound like inconsistent practices. Our team can help spread the word.

M. Reed: The district having a transition policy across the district. Should we set up a subteam or continue to discuss for meetings to come.

LH: Would like to take it back to the LSSC team.

E. Jorgensen: In addition to academics, non-academics need to be addressed and talked about to help parents prepare.

E. King: Agree with parents with the whole child in the transition meetings. Shouldn't just be IEPs but all the things their parents know about them. For two students, parents came at the end of last year and during prep days.

LH: E. King can help to bring to lead teacher meeting. We can get this on the next agenda after hearing what our team might have. Can plan for this spring. All the discussion/comment of this one.

3b. Prep days/meet the teacher - specific to students with special needs across primary, middle, and high school

LH: This one kind of blended in. Ms. Gros, anything additional?

L. Gros: Bigger focus on transition year for transitioning students, new students. Point with prep days- experienced a different world going to HS. Going to meet the teacher, see the school did not happen at the HS. My typical child got that about a month before high school. Child with special needs got to experience some of it. Not sure of the student's schedule, who to call when they need help... Suggested a prep day for special needs students. Advocated for this last year. Prep days go hand in hand with transition years.

LH: Note to self: Focus on transition years, prep days, and meet the teacher in general.

S. Williams: Can transition/prep days be considered for summer too? Not a lot of communication/meeting on how much students progressed during the summer. Can there be a sub category because there is not much emphasis on how much students retained after returning from the summer.

LH: Great idea to talk about how students are progressing after the summer. We will follow up with our next meeting with follow up from our team and additional feedback from you all.

Closing of Meeting -

L.H. Next meeting: Oct. 26 - noon meeting. Will let you know the location. Will be a hybrid meeting. Will send out a survey for this meeting.

Motion to adjourn: M. Reed

2nd: E. King

No opposition.

Adjourned: 7:10 p.m.

*A total of 32 participants logged on.*

LH: Thank you for participation. Share agenda items with the team for the next meeting.