

## **APPROVED at 10-25-2023 SEAC Meeting**

### **Ascension Special Education Advisory Council**

August 23, 2023

12:00pm

In-Person (with virtual option)

LeBlanc Special Services Center

### **Call to Order**

(12:02 pm) by Director Lynn Hathaway, chair

### **Roll Call - (12:03 pm)**

Quorum:

1. Savannah Veron - present
2. Darla Capello - present
3. Nathalia Dickson - present
4. Adrienne Kelly - present
5. Raven LaBiche- present
6. Jodie Landry - present
7. Kheri Monks - present
8. Jaqueline Paige - present
9. Iesha Sims - present
10. Lakeshia Taylor - present

Chair (Hathaway) introduced herself and summarized SEAC, what it stands for, what it's purpose is. She welcomed new members, took roll. She then introduced Dr. Edith Walker, superintendent, last year's SEAC members who were present, Marvin Reed and Eileen Jorgensen. Chair continued by reviewing the procedures and the agenda outline. She emphasized new business/district agenda items

- Increasing duration of membership
- Develop a solid set of bylaws to present to superintendent
- Alternate days of meetings
- opportunities for public comment for ideas.

Expressed that there are over 2700 students with disabilities in our district. Our discussions shouldn't be about your individual child's situation, but general across the district. She explained that we are operating as a public meeting. She reviewed public comment procedures and formalities ( published agenda, minutes taken, and Robert's Rules of Order, etc.)

Hathaway gave the history of SEAC, which has grown from 4-10 members with the majority of them being parents. The purpose is to provide recommendations to the superintendent and to engage in outreach, provide an annual written report in May and this will post to the state

department website.

**Old Business:**

1.a.

Approval to April meeting minutes from April 26, 2023

Adrienne Kelly - motion to accept

Lakeshia Taylor - seconded

Motion passed.

Approval of June meeting minutes (June 28, 2023- information only- no quorum)

Savannah Veron - motion to approve

Kheri Monks - second

Motion passed.

**New Business:**

District Agenda Items:

**New Members**

2.a.

Introductions of each member and the purpose/goal for participation

**Hathaway - Cameras in Classroom**

2.b.

-Law passed to give parents the opportunity to request cameras. This applies to the most vulnerable students, the students with the most significant disabilities. The law is about safety. It is specific, cameras are only in self-contained classrooms and in classrooms where the majority of students spend at least half of their day (50%). Ascension Parish took a more active approach, and didn't wait for parents to request. Instead, AP installed cameras in all of the classrooms that fit the criteria.

- Starting with the first day of 2023-24 school year, they were installed in all 56 qualifying classrooms (primary, middle, and high school)

- Videos include both audio and video

- Continuous

- Stored on separate server.

- Only the Tech Department and Lynn Hathaway have access to it.

- Procedure: If there is a concern or an allegation, parents can request footage. Requests are made on Form E which can be found on our website under Special Education, Parent Resources, Form E. You must describe the safety issue on the form and it is to be turned into the principal.

- Other students will have faces blurred to protect confidentiality

- If questions, reach out to Lynn Hathaway directly through email.

Adrienne Kelly - Is there a list of approved people to view it with parents?

L.Hathaway - Right now, it's just myself, may change.

Jorgensen - Are there deadlines/timelines?

L.Hathaway - You will get a response within 2 days, and viewing if approved within 10 days

Lakeisha Taylor - Is this the same procedure for bus issues:

L.Hathaway - No, we do not have to deal with as much confidentiality as in the classroom.

Kheri Monks - Will cameras go in other classrooms?

L. Hathaway - not at this time

L. Hathaway introduced her team members (coordinators) who were in attendance. Adrina Millien, Nicole Grimes, Cormanda Grace, Tolair Jones, Noelle Graham, Ginger Delatte, Jennifer Vicknair.

### **SEAC Bylaws:**

#### **2.c.**

No action items but want to share sample district bylaws. Want to be able to customize for ours. Important to make things clear, and put it down officially.

Parent Agenda Items:

#### **3.a.**

Action Items: from last meeting, didn't have quorum to take action

Audience member Marvin Reed: I am proposing a rotation so that the council can be made up of old members along with new. Another proposal is to rotate the days of the week for the meetings.

L. Hathaway: If voted upon, we can incorporate it into the bylaws. Can't change for this year's team, but can propose for 2024-25 a 50% rotation (off and new 50%) so at least half of the group continues on. Maybe we could also have an alternate.

Superintendent Walker: I'd like to see Donaldsonville represented, male voice represented, diversity

Marvin Reed: Maybe we increase to 12 members

L. Hathaway: It is a work in progress. By the next meeting, we will have a draft of ideas to work on as we go. Let's look at other districts, it may trigger ideas.

Savanah Veron: Can we do more than 2 years? Can we maybe have 20 members?

L.Hathaway: We are open to suggestions. To allow for representation, past members may reach out to people to apply.

Jodie Landry: Who decides who the 50% that remain on the board will be?

L. Hathaway: I am chairperson, not a voting member. The majority of the team will make recommendations to Dr. Walker.

J. Landry: Who looks at applications and decides on members?

L. Hathaway: Superintendent. We need Donalsonville representation, there is a duty of this team to recruit. Jameikco, parent facilitator, can help.

Nathalia Dickson: We need to think about quorum if we increase number of members

L. Hathaway: That is important. We can't make recommendations without a quorum. No official action can take place.

Marvin Reed: Is quorum set by district?

L. Hathaway: Simple majority. 6 out of 10. We can't take action on this yet, but open to continual feedback. We want to be sure decisions impact students and classrooms.

### **Discussion: Focus areas for 2023-24**

#### **3.b.**

L.Hathaway: What areas do we need to improve? Directed to public comment

E. Jorgensen : Inclusion, opportunities for all children. Can we have more inclusive school clubs? Need more interactions with peers/friends. Her child's school has a lemonade cart which has been helping in getting peers talking.

LH: Any other focus areas?

Marvin Reed: Post-graduation (Jump Start Careers) He described a situation where he was misinformed about what was available. There seems to be a need for more information across general ed, special education, etc. Would like that information to be added to the Toolkit.

LH: Agreed. Dr. Walker's vision is for all students; post high school (pursuing the dreams of their choice).

E. Jorgensen: Another piece that needs to be looked at is the curriculum for self-contained students, Unique. Parents feel that they have very little information about the curriculum and question the effectiveness of the program.

Crystal Thompson: Social concerns are also an area of need. She feels that students should be connecting more socially through inclusive activities.

Roshawn Taylor : Life skills are an area that needs improving

LH - absolutely

D. Capello: need to let parents know around age 16 about interdiction tutorship. They need more information about attorneys, and what to look for. Cost, etc goes up the longer you wait. Sooner parents are informed, the better.

LH: post-school successes should be discussed-possibly at 8th grade meetings

Taylor: additional resources for parents, what else is out there?

Monks: Open House at school. Parent training for Dojo app, etc. I appreciated parental help. IEP 101 to make people more at ease.

LH: introduced the parent facilitators, Sara Recile and Jamekco Lewis

N. Dickson: Can we extend cameras into other classrooms (Inclusion)? Kids would benefit.

N. Grimes: Public comment (virtual)... Truancy for Hospital/HB students. Get daily calls from the attendance office. It's a painful reminder for some that they are not able to attend school, they have been sent to truancy with threatening letters. (stopping automated calls)

LH: That issue is not necessarily SEAC, but will be looked at directly.

R. LaBiche: Used to work in St. Charles Parish and they had a Resource Fair. This will help parents know what's available.

S. Veron: Suggest the fair multiple times a year. Maybe fall and spring. Can we help involve everyone in the household?

J. Paige: Parents not familiar with google classroom. Can we bring something to the school level? Parents don't always know – One-on-one learning could create a partnership.

LH: Resource Fair is a good idea and one we've been discussing. Will have all kinds of pieces: inclusion, guardianship, etc.

Monks: Sped Meet the Teacher Open House - will help parents feel more at ease - not as rushed

LH: We are making progress in that area, but want consistency at all schools. We have a lot we can push ideas for and focus areas, I will get with Mrs. Recile and Mrs. Lewis. I will share our by-laws, etc.

M. Reed: Graduation options/opportunities, April Dunn - start discussing in middle school

LH: State department closely monitoring

Dr. Walker: Thanked everyone and hopes to come again to future meetings, but she had to leave.

E. Jorgensen: Are there action lists? Will there be a list?

LH: Yes, we are excited about this team, the partnership with ARC, let's work together.

Next meeting is October 23, but we may need to adjust that date. Will decide and post soon. Will add these back to our discussions and post notices. Motion to close the meeting?

L. Taylor - motion

Monks - 2nd

Motion passes. Meeting adjourned.