

**Greenwich Special Education Advisory Council**  
**Meeting Minutes**

**September 26, 2023**  
**Zoom meeting, 6:30pm**

- A. Attendance
  - a. Jenni Reynolds, Andi Cosby, Maria Jukic, Theresa Fox, Alex Saltis, Audra O'Donovan, Dr. Stacey Heiligenthaler, Beth Forger, Lisa Berluti, Pedro Campos, Kathy Walker, Mary Callison, Abby Anders, Alexis Antonecchia, Christine Zibilich, Kiera Lewis, Daniel Katz, Lauren Hannemann, Mike Mercanti-Anthony, Joseph Baynes, Alyssa Williams, Dawn Zimmerman, Danielle Polizzi, Leah Zilich, Ann Carabillo, Mary Callison Erb, Yaneli Avila, Nick Coletti, Julia Reisch, Karen Hirsh, Liz Kitselman, Steven Groccia, Rory Cunnane, Sarah Muccio, Jenn Donat, Lisa Berluti, Virginia Plath-Kelly, Suzanne Coyne, Sabrina Motta, Donald McGuire
- B. Welcome and Opening Remarks from Chairperson
  - a. Welcome back, happy to have some new membership, thank everyone for being involved.
  - b. Overview of meeting, voting rules
- C. SEAC Member Introductions: Name and grade level your kids are in/you work with
  - a. Parent members: Jenni Reynolds, Pedro Campos, Kiera Lewis, Raquel Sosa, Alex Saltis, Mary Callison, Andi Cosby, Jeannine Tanton, Daria Pestone, Kathy Walker, Don McGuire, Audra O'Donovan, Dawn Zimmerman
  - b. Educators: Jennifer Dunn, Maria Jukic, Beth Forger, Julia Reisch
  - c. Related service providers: Jennifer Donat, Lisa Berluti
  - d. Administrator: Abby Anders
  - e. Parent alternates: Lauren Bisio Hanemann and Christine Zibilich
  - f. Educator alternates: Alexis Antonecchia and Elizabeth Kitselman
- D. Public Comment: Open time for any of our general membership who are not sitting council members to speak
- E. Approval of Meeting Minutes for 5/16/23
  - a. Motioned – Beth Forger
  - b. Seconded – Maria Jukic
  - c. All in favor? – Minutes approved and will be posted on the website
- F. Discussion and Approval of New Working Committees - topics shared with Exec Board:
  - a. Literacy

- b. ESY
  - c. Staffing
    - i. Professional development?
    - ii. Resources?
    - iii. Budgeting allowances
  - d. Transitions between levels
    - i. ESY?
    - ii. After school/after care
  - e. Paraprofessionals
  - f. Co-teaching
    - i. Meeting, planning with teaching partners
  - g. Additional – Professional development around students with disabilities for gen ed teachers and paraprofessionals, resources for staff
    - i. Going to send out a survey of how to consolidate down to committees
- G. Updates from Dr. Heiligenthaler
- a. Presented at the board last week, the presentation is up on board docs with the Power Point and the recorded presentation. It will be in her Smore email this week.
  - b. On the November Meeting BOE Agenda as well
  - c. Making good progress on the recommendations. Update in July of where everything is in the action plan on the Special Education website.
  - d. Special Education coffees are happening around the district.
  - e. Each building are doing their own Smore emails for Special Education.
  - f. 2E manual is being developed.
  - g. Workshops coming up for staff and family resources.
  - h. Working with CPAC for education programs this year. First one will be in November.
  - i. Looking to put together a curriculum program for the Pre-School to highlight the new programing now being implemented.
- H. Updates from BOE: Asking Karen/Mike to comment in general after reviewing the SEAC recs and what the BOE proposes for best next steps to work together toward diving deeper and considering/potentially implementing the recommendations
- a. Reach out to Karen/Mike if you want to connect with them about anything.
  - b. SEAC is the only presentation the BOE gets that is from those who are on the front line with the kids.
  - c. Asking for a review of the Community Connections program, the program for 18-21 year old students, as well as Wind Rose and the preschool program.

- d. District is still implementing the recommendations of the audit, but the audit is a few years old now, so want to continue to hear additional concerns that need to be addressed.
- I. SEAC Spotlight: GPS Listening Community
  - a. Sabrina Motta will be speaking about this that she runs in conjunction with Kristen Mulhearn
    - i. Began in the fall of 2019 to provide a place for Special Education parents and caregivers to seek peer support. Now it is available to parents and caregivers at all grade levels.
    - ii. The focus is self-care for the parents and care givers.
    - iii. Hosted at Greenwich Library on Friday mornings 9:30-10:30 am. Beginning on September 29<sup>th</sup>-November 3<sup>rd</sup>.
    - iv. Looking for more parent participation. Open to ideas to attract more parents to take advantage of the program.
    - v. Greeting, Moment of Mindfulness, Group Discussion, Parents/Caregivers share their experiences.
- J. Announcement of Fall Enrichment Series
  - a. Happy to announce Dan Habib and Samuel Habib in a two part series on creating an inclusive life for students with disabilities. 10/10 and 10/17 via zoom
- K. Adjournment
  - a. Next Meeting is November 14<sup>th</sup> at 6:30pm