

October 16, 2024 SEPAC meeting minutes:

Meeting start at: 5:34pm

Introductions given: 5 parents/ 1 admins

Old business:

1) How is the new IEP format going?

-Parent voices that they have had a meeting. It went okay, felt like a re-do but the meeting was led by someone new to the district and this was their first meeting. The format didn't seem much different.

-Another parent voiced that she has one coming up and isn't sure what the difference is compared to the old IEP.

-Strengths and needs in a more organic approach with the child front and center. If the student is involved with their IEP meeting, having them help lead it to find their interests and help target those as an approach for helping support their needs.

-Making sure that teachers are looking at IEPs . Finding a way that the district can support teachers to make sure that they are understanding IEPs. Teachers need to sign off in Powerschool that they have looked at and read each child's IEP in their class. Is there a way that we can highlight the important parts of the IEPs (like cliffnotes) for their students.

-Is there a way to highlight the "high risk" students at the start of the year? The students that may have safety plans in place or are at risk for safety concerns.

2) Plan for the meeting on non-verbal communication and speech delays.

-Bri is on maternity leave, but we would like to include her in this meeting. Also would like Jillian Smith and Courtney Bopp to attend. Parent's would like the meeting to consist of finding out what options there are for speech on the medical side vs the school side and when are certain devices appropriate? When do you know when the right time to get evals done for devices. SEPAC would like to help support parents in ways to communicate and when/where to ask for help. What resources can we have for this meeting?

-What do the resources look like for Berkshire County? Is there a way that we can bring resources to our community. Non-verbal kids and behavior.

-First meeting involving this topics would include – a panel of people that would be able to led discussion and answer questions. This would consist of people like Jillian Smith, Courtney Bopp, Diane Aduini, Amber Arnold. Would we like to have a medical person to attend to answer what is allowed and what is the expectation? How do we work with outside providers and school providers?

3) Getting a student-led SEPAC group.

We have Pathways at the school and some of those kids would like to be educators. Do we want to talk to those students to see if they want to facilitate this and start or advocate for their peers? Erica Girgenti would be great to reach out to to help get kids to start a student-led SEPAC.

New business:

1) Communication between parents and staff/support staff.

There is no good formula for this. Communication journals? It would be awesome to have a “Bloomz app” where the child is in the teachers spot for all of the providers to be connected to, that way all the providers for that child are also able to connect.

2) Review of by-laws and SEPAC goals for this year.

By-laws were looked at and approved.

Goals were approved for this year.

Do we know if the teams are giving out the SEPAC brochures at IEP meetings. Brochures were given to each school and they are supposed to let us know when they are out or running low. Kristina will check in with them.

What does it look like for supporting parents with children that are non verbal or have limited communication?

How can we help as SEPAC?

Stats on special education supports:

PT: 48

OT: 100

Speech: 152

Total number of students in the district that are on an IEP: 280

*Mary Ott-Dahill’s email is incorrect on the school website. Her email is mott-dahill@hoosacvalley.org

Next meeting scheduled for Tuesday November 12th at 5:30 at the elementary school cafeteria. Kristina will fill out a building usage form with Jamie.

Meeting end at 7pm