

## **APPROVED at 10-23-24 SEAC Meeting**

### **SEAC Meeting Minutes - August 21, 2024 Ascension Special Education Advisory Council**

August 21, 2024

12 p.m.

In-Person Meeting (with virtual option)

ITTC Building - Central Middle School

#### **Call to Order**

(12:00 pm) by Director Lynn Hathaway, co-chair

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

Quorum Met:

1. Kheri Monks - Present
2. Natalia Dickson - Present
3. Adrienne Kelly - Present
4. Raven LaBiche - Present
5. Jacqueline Page - Present
6. Marvin Reed - Present
7. Jasmine Gray - Present
8. Shelton Williams - Present
9. Lorene Phillips - Present
10. Jeremy Tarver - Present
11. Lynette White-Pierce - Present
12. Melissa Rollins - Present (virtual)

Chairpersons - Lynn Hathaway and Jodi Rollins (both present)

Chair (Hathaway) introduced herself and Jodi Rollins. Explained the growth of the council over the years, explained team members and roles. Explained process for public comment. Reviewed agenda items to be discussed. Read over the meeting agenda and reviewed the open meeting and public comment procedures.

#### **Old Business**

##### **1.a Approval of minutes from June 26, 2024 SEAC meeting - (Action Required)**

Motion to approve minutes - Nathalia Dickson

Second - Raven Labiche

Approved

#### **New Business**

## **2.a. SEAC Members for 2024-2025**

L.Hathaway gave a chance for each member and chairperson to introduce themselves.

J. Rollins - co-chair, parent - parent advocate. Started advocating during Covid, realized there is a need. Excited to be co-chair. She works closely with Dr. Walker and L. Hathaway.

N. Dickson - 2nd year term member, parent - New to Louisiana, new to the system. Thankful that we have advocates, satisfied with services, and want to be more involved with helping to create more inclusion in our district. Wants a parent liaison at each school.

J. Gray - 1st year term member, parent - Would like for special needs students to get recognized more. I'm here to learn from and to teach others.

A.Kelly - 2nd year term member, parent - Originally I joined to figure out the system, but now I want more recognition for special education in our industries/plants.

R.LaBiche - 2nd year term member, community stakeholder - Arc of East Ascension. 20 years in disability services. I want to be a source for families, prepare kids for when they exit school. Want people to use our agency as a starting point.

K. Monks - 2nd year term member, parent - Goal is to collectively get together and fill gaps.

J. Page - 2nd year term member, special education teacher - teacher at East Ascension, 2nd year on SEAC. Nice to get parent perspectives on things. Would like to be a bridge to school level

L. Phillips - 1st year term member, parent - Wanted to get more involved and learn how to help SWSD classes and transitions.

M. Reed - 1st year term member, local pastor and parent - Want to help everyone find their purpose. Want educators to see that every child is wonderfully made and has value.

M. Rollins - 1st year term member, parent - Have been feeling the pull to get more involved.

J.Tarver - 1st year term member, parent - Want a structure of people to stay in place as long as possible. Want us all to work together.

L. White-Pierce - 1st year term member, parent - Would like to learn how parents can be better communicators with school staff.

S. Williams - 1st year term member, parent - I learned how to trust teachers, and want to advocate better for parents and kids.

LH - Introduced LeBlanc team that was present - N. Grimes, A. Million, T. Jones, G. Colwart, C. Grace, G. Delatte, J. Brooks, S. Recile, J. Templet - Also present is C. Francois (chief instructional director of the district)

## **2.b. Change in April 2025 meeting date** from April 23rd to April 16th at Noon.

## **2.c. Act 745 - Behavioral Health Providers**

LH - Law allows ABA providers to come into the school. Email LH directly. The district already has MOUs with CARD, Mercy, Everyday Counts, Butterfly Effects, Gulf South, Dreamcatchers. This law also includes counseling. LH explained what ABA in school looks like and the process. If an MOU with an agency is already in the system, it's a little faster. We have close to 30 scenarios currently. Sometimes there may be a delay at the start. This law opens the door to growth. LH Will broadcast this out, email blast.

J. Rollins - ABA is your own provider. If your child is not receiving services you need to sign them up first. The school can not find you a provider. Your insurance company dictates. The licensed provider dictates the services - they recommend and provide. Typically see them at the clinic first.

LH - It has been a great partnership. Collaboration has been the key and beneficial.

M. Reed - Can we add this to the website? ABA questions/providers?

LH - We will add an ABA link to our website with common questions because I think some people have the same questions.

### **3. Parent Agenda Items**

**3.a. Focus Areas for 2024-2025** - possible to include: Special needs Parent Group, Website/social media issues, parent training sessions/webinars (related to IEPs, evaluations, ABA, etc.), District wide training for Principals & Staff, Volunteer opportunities for gen ed students to interact with special education students, Special education fundraiser, parent liaison, other concerns.

LH - Parent Training Sessions/Webinars - Possibly between SEAC meetings having webinar trainings. This committee's purpose is to truly make recommendations to our superintendent, but this will give us an option to answer questions and we can store the videos/webinars on the website. For example, in September maybe we can discuss the IEP process and do IEP trainings. That way we wouldn't have to follow timelines and SEAC meeting rules. These webinars could be available for any parent able to log on.

LH - Are we interested in doing a Sped fundraiser?

LH - Parent Liaison - one parent from each school to be the Welcome Committee for students new to Sped. Can we give new parents their number to have a contact?

LH - Remember we are making recommendations to the Superintendent.

JR - IEP webinar, IEP is a complex document. How would we break it down? How do we make it concise and work?

JR - Breaking training down with the IEP timeline and what do we think about how we will break down these trainings? What do you guys think about that? Do you want to see these trainings broken down?

JG - I think breaking down is a good idea because the teachers had to break it down to me.

JR - IEP goals have to be attainable, and I don't know that people know that you can amend an IEP to add to or update the IEP with a smaller meeting. Want everyone to understand these laws are there for a reason

ND - Perhaps a more general video, and state if you want to know more then go to "more info"?

AK - Before you come - what will it look like?

LH - I think the feedback from parents will lead to what is our next webinar.

AK - Break down what to look for when you have an IEP meeting, and a little bit of everything, the Arc and resources.

KM - create a backlog of items, breaking down the IEP and chunking the items, because we won't have time to discuss all of this.

JT - Can the IEP training include outside resources? Flexible Family Fund for example

JG - Get someone from each ABA to come maybe?

LWP - Our perspective - FHFamilies helped, but I also have follow up questions. Or maybe open it to parents, FAQ with parents and prioritize what to start with.

LH - Survey to parents to help identify the most troubling issues.

JR - Some parents don't want to admit to the principal they don't know something. Is there a way parents can ask questions? Email to LeBlanc, for example and have people at LeBlanc answer?

LH - we can share information, take suggestions and discuss next steps at our next meeting.

MR - I think we need to work on relationships. It's a team effort. Everyone is not the enemy, but everyone has the same goal.

LH - You are representing parents. Let's look at our Comment cards,

LH - Opens the floor to audience members.

LH - Back to agenda items, which three focus areas do we want for this school year?

MR - #5, Inclusion - Volunteer opportunities for gen ed students to interact with special education students.

JP - EA has Linking Lives. Want to see that at every high school.

MR - My son is ~~the baseball manager at East Ascension, and he's~~ part of the bowling team.

*There is another student who is the team baseball manager.* I think East Ascension is the model school. Linking Lives at EA is a model, they have activities at Christmas, Mardi Gras.

JR - Subcommittees are a must.

LH - Reminder. We make recommendations and send them to the Superintendent. Areas to hone in on?

MR - Do we consult with other parishes?

LH - At times, yes. I don't think they push to have 6 meetings like we do. I do have contact with other directors across the state.

RB - I do agree with collaboration, when we think of inclusion, EA and SAHS are doing, but what about DHS?

RL - My definition of inclusion is.. Activities that allow all.

ND - Special needs group, parent groups and parent liaison. So many parents don't know

MR - What is the difference between parent liaison and parent facilitator?

LH - Parent liaison would be a parent of a child at each school who act as a Welcome Committee to new parents of sped. Parent facilitator covers the district and can connect parents to resources, attend IEP meetings with parents, etc.

AK - What would a special needs parent group look like? Who would be the facilitator for the special needs group?

JR - All primary, All Middle, All High schools would have meetings in a central location

LH - I think that is the one that has to be real defined within the district parameters.

JR - parents support group can offer advice, but school makes decisions. We should have consistency across the district.

LWP - Parent groups switch 3 different levels: facebook group, online meetings, and in person meetings. Start in one place and build everything over time.

LH - I believe this is the starting place.

RL - I do agree with the organization, but I don't know if the parameters of the school will allow parents to open up and the needs are so broad. So a subcommittee, within a subcommittee, so the collaboration should be looked at differently.

JR - Ultimately the district will have to solve the dispute. We should have consistency if we have a child at either school in the district.

LH - Sounds like the recommendation is to create sub-committees. I need a motion that we make a recommendation to the superintendent that our focus areas will be special needs parent groups, parent training session/webinars related to IEPs, evaluations, ABA, etc, and Volunteer opportunities for gen ed students to interact with special education students.

Motion to approve - Nathalia Dickson

Second - Kheri Monks

Approved

LH - We will take recommendations to the superintendent. Recommendations will be sent by the end of the week.

Motion to Adjourn - Marvin Reed

Second - Adrienne Kelly

Approved