SNAC 

# Special Needs Advisory Council

Nantucket, Massachusetts

*Laura Steele, Suzanne Fronzuto – Co-Chairs*

SNAC Meeting Minutes

**October 19, 2022**

(**Note**: The meeting was held in-person in the NHS conference room and via Zoom)

The meeting was called to order at approximately 5:30 PM with 17 people in attendance. Co-chair Suzanne Fronzuto facilitated the meeting, which opened with greetings and introductions.

*New Business:*

- Quarterly Meeting - Nantucket SNAC and Martha's Vineyard IPAC
  With Angela Knapp and Theresa Inman, Family Support Center, Martha's Vineyard Community Services (MVCS)

  Angela did a presentation on the Family Support Center, which serves both the islands. The FSC is a MA contract through the Department of Developmental Services and provides family trainings, community connections, flexible funding, parent networking and information and referral. The FSC is partnering with Nantucket S.T.A.R on a penpal program. The Southeastern Leadership Series helps develop family leaders to create positive change within their families, communities and throughout the state. The application period is currently open for the 2022-2023 series, and funding is available for accepted applicants. Some ideas for respite solutions included staycations, Perfect Pals/Best Buddies, group getaways on the Cape, and HOPe House. The newly opened Our House on Nantucket was also mentioned as a potential partner. Angela shared some other great ideas for activities to bring the two islands together. The FSC is seeking input on what the areas of interest are for trainings, programming and support groups. Angela will be sending out via email a copy of her Powerpoint from this evening along with follow up survey. Angela noted that families do not have to be involved with DDS to provide feedback and make requests.

  When inquiring what may be lacking on Nantucket in the areas of programming and support, parents shared that more activities for children in grades 5 – 8 as well as for siblings of special needs kids. The lack of ABA services since the departure of Southeastern ABA in 2021 has been challenging for many families. Deb mentioned that NPS currently has around 100 paraprofessionals who would make very good Registered Behavioral Technicians but would not be able to afford the cost of the RBT training. Angela will be looking into possible solutions for these areas of need and will follow up.

Director Update:

- Deb Gately, Director of Special Services
  (The Director's update, as attached to these minutes, is incorporated by reference.)

Presentation:

- Jennifer Christiansen, NPS Transition Specialist

  Jennifer shared she has over 30 years of experience in special education as a teacher and principal and is learning how the State of Massachusetts handles its special ed. Jennifer's work will be focused in the high school during the roll-out period, with middle school added next year. Students and their families have a vision for a successful and meaningful life after high school, and Jennifer describes her role as being the 'keeper of the vision.' A new hire in a new position, she didn't receive a set list of duties and expects her responsibilities to grow. They will include keeping parent and teacher resources up to date available for sharing, performing transition assessments and reports, acting as consulting/co-teacher in the classroom, being an IEP team member, building community partnerships, and more.
  Jennifer's arrival coincides well with the MA Department of Education's IEP Improvement Project currently underway. The IEP will be in a new format built on student's strengths rather than focused on deficits. She explained the State will want robust assessment to inform vision, thus assessments performed will be extremely individualized so that goals can be aligned to the vision. She stressed that parents have ideas as well as teachers, but it's the student who will live life based on his or her goals, so learning self-determination is key. Deb added that there has been less student involvement in IEP meetings on Nantucket in the past, and an initiative for student led IEP meetings will be rolled out over time so students feel empowered to participate in the process.
  Jennifer has sent information to parents about transition planning and more will be sent home with their students. Greta Knaus of the Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission is the vocational rehab counsellor assigned to Nantucket and can help with pre-employment training. She plans to come to meet with students at some point in the future. Jennifer talked about her recent trip to Cape Cod to participate in the MAICEI (Massachusetts Inclusive Concurrent Enrollment Initiative) program. A parent whose child began attending 4Cs under MAICEI talked about her child gaining new skills and independence in navigating the college experience while commuting from Nantucket.
  NHS is partnering with Our House for a 3-day per week 'day school' program to work on skill building, support, modeling, coaching, etc. The program is just starting, with adjustments being made as it moves forward. Reliable transportation is being sought.

The meeting adjourned at approximately 7:15 PM. The next meeting of the SNAC is November 16, 2022 at 6:00 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Lora Kebbati, Secretary of SNAC.
Approved through a vote of SNAC members on _____

**SNAC Meeting - 10-19-22**

*The SNAC is organized to empower parents, school staff and community professionals to collaborate in a positive decision making process to plan and implement educational programs for students with special needs.*

*The SNAC will support, guide, advocate, advise and educate parents, Nantucket schools, and the community on the rights and needs of children with disabilities and their families.*

**Special Services Director's Report**

- Students from NES, CPS and NHS will be traveling to Monomoy Regional High School on Thursday, October 20, 2022 for the day to attend their **Special Olympics Game Day in Chatham**. NPS staff who will be accompanying the students on this trip include Casey Cordone, Noelle Johnson, Sarah Lavin, Olivia Gallugi, Shanna-Kay Smith, Holly Gordon, Ed Sullivan, & Adriene Lombardi.
- **Transition programming at Our House** started this week and students are being transported to and from NHS by bus.
- **Updated Child Find Dates for 2022-2023** - All screenings will be held at NES - Flyers for PreK were sent to all island daycares and schools a few weeks ago and information was published in the newspaper. Flyers for K-8 will be sent out to schools and will be published the first week of November. We will rely on the schools to send home the information to parents to reach out to Deb Gately directly.
    - **Pre Kindergarten Dates**
        - October 28, 2022
        - November 4, 2022
        - January 6, 2023
        - January 13, 2023
        - April 14, 2023
        - April 28, 2023
    - **Kindergarten - Grade 8 Dates**
        - December 7, 2022 - 12:50 pm - 3:55 pm
        - February 15, 2023 - 12:50 pm - 3:55 pm
        - March 15, 2023 - 12:50 pm - 3:55 pm
- **NHS 1st Quarter ends on November 10, 2022** - Families at Nantucket High School will receive IEP progress reports when report cards are sent home. Progress reports are always available via the parent portal in Aspen.