

SEPAC Meeting

Attendees: Debbie Pacheco, Director of Special Education
Eric Silva, Freshmen Coordinator
Wendy Rego, Parent
Kelly Duarte, Parent
Allan Freitas, Parent
Date: November 18, 2025
Time: 6:00pm

- Welcome
 - No officers in place for SEPAC
 - Debbie Pacheco facilitating meetings
 - Eric Silva, Freshmen Coordinator presenting
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 - Background
 - 19 years in public education
 - Started at Dartmouth as a guidance counselor for 8 years
 - 11 years at Diman in guidance
 - This is the first year as Freshman Coordinator
 - Had worked for 3 years at Bradley hospital in east providence at the beginning of career
 - Freshmen Coordinator Role
 - Primary administrator for freshmen class
 - Starts in July with freshmen/parent orientation
 - Facilitate and manage freshmen attendance, discipline, and coordinates with Mr. Zajac credit recovery for attendance issues
 - Conduit between teachers vocational and academic
 - Works closely with guidance, security and Ms. DeMariano (Vocational Coordinator)
 - Working to make students successful into their upperclassmen years and after graduation
 - Vision is to provide support, services and coordinate with the special education office, guidance so students transition successfully into Freshman year
- Questions for parents for Mr. Silva
 - Positive comments from Allan Freitas
 - Kelly Duarte - Routine check-ins for students, should parent reach out if administration doesn't reach out after an issue with their child
 - Debbie Pacheco
 - Parents are welcome to reach out any time with questions
 - Wade Paiva, student liaison, reach out for academic issues
 - Bethany Mendes, Team Chair, able to answer questions

- Mindy Gauthier, Special Education Teacher, consultant to vocational teachers for all freshmen and exploratory questions
- Wendy Rego - in event a student does not do well in exploratory, what are the options if not placed in top 3 choices. Are there any suggestions to say to your child?
 - Debbie Pacheco
 - placement from freshmen from 2024-2025
 - 53 students with disabilities explore 12 out of 18
 - 19 students received 1st, 9 2nd, 6rd, 3 4th, 15 student no choice
 - based on points, not grades, not attendance and not discipline
 - Mindy Gauthier pushes into shops along with 3 paraprofessions to assist throughout the school day
 - Once your child receives notification of placement and it is not their top 6 choice, they have an opportunity to request shop change.
 - Student needs to complete rotation through a shop cycle first
 - 2nd opportunity is end of freshmen year
 - Shop change can only be made once
 - Eric Silva
 - Outside of the top 6 choices.
 - This school year Guidance is asking students to rank numbers 7-18 in order of choice
 - Opportunities for shop change request
 - One shop change request per student granted, if available
 - Parents should have a conversation with your child regarding shop placement
 - Wendy Rego - Do guidance counselors speak to students beforehand to give an idea of what shop might be the top choice?
 - Debbie Pacheco - Meeting in December with all students in auditorium to discuss shop choices and each student meets with their counselor to discuss their experiences in shops
 - If parents have specific requests for Mindy Gauthier, Brendan Costa or Wade Paiva to speak with student they are available
 - Does the student Liaison check in with students consistently or just prior to Team meeting?

- Student Liaison meets with students prior to their Team meeting, if teachers reach out having concerns
 - Student progress is reviewed monthly by Special Education Department
 - Potential meeting if issues arise with a particular student during discussion
- Brendan Costa
 - checks in with students according to IEP service delivery
- Debbie Pacheco
 - Will be scheduling parents rights training
 - Will be scheduling workshops on how to empower your child and advocate for themselves
 - Will be scheduling workshops for transition services and what is happening after high school
 - Will be scheduling workshops for parents regarding SCIL, MassAbility
- Wendy Rego - questions regarding who is responsible for what?
 - Wade Paiva assists with any academic related concerns and any assistance with modifications and accommodations for students
 - Brendan Costa will assist with social emotional needs
 - Eric Silva - any questions about schedule, post secondary conversations can be done with guidance counselor
 - Mindy Gauthier - Special Educator on vocational side can assist with any questions regarding exploratory
- Kelly Duarte - post secondary agency workshops
 - Reading social cues is there someone to assist through any of the agencies mentioned?
 - SCIL has a pre-employment training program, which referrals can be made at the Team meeting
 - Balanced Learning was spoken about at last meeting, Sarah Rodrigues is the speaker for them.
- Wendy Rego - Does Diman help students transition
 - Referrals can be made to agencies that assist (MassAbility, SCIL)
- Eric Silva
 - Take 504 and schedule meeting with student services at college and review 504 and see what is appropriate to help student at the college level
- SEPAC not meeting next month in December
- Debbie Pacheco will be working on January 27 meeting and what agencies can present to the parents at that time