



Berlin/Boylston Public Schools

Special Education Parent Advisory Council

Meeting Minutes

- Date:** September 23, 2015 7:08PM
- Meeting Place:** Tahanto Regional Middle/High School Multi-Purpose Room
- In attendance:** Karen Groccia, Christina Stille, Rochelle Peret, Lori Michalak, Karen Molnar, Jannel Fitzpatrick, Paul Mara, Jessica Meltzer, Kerry Lavalley, Dennis Duquette, Luna Duquette-Holmes, Kathy Derderian, Jake Milano, Alfred Thompson, Diane Tucceri, John Campbell, Mary Fortier, Mollee Langelier, Elizabeth Trudeau, Linda Checola, Courtney Hodgdon, Amy Gaspari, Carol Costello, Jennifer Rickard, Wendy Shepherd, Nadine Ekstrom, Matthew Hager, Bennett Milliner
- Meet & Greet:** Introductions were made and meeting proceeded with questions being brought up from parents and staff.

Nadine Ekstrom brought up that there are several families that she knows of who are starting the process of receiving special education services and really don't know what the next steps are. They feel overwhelmed and alone in the process. She wants to know how we can push SEPAC more. We will start by giving Jannell Fitzpatrick and Carla Mason either our business cards or flyers, listing our website, in order to contact one of us if desired.

General questions came up about Power School and the fact that at this point there is no way to get in to update contact info/emergency info, etc. There was also the criticism about the fact that there is no way to preview grades (for upper levels) pre-Parent/Teacher Conferences. This is important especially for children on IEPs. Nadine responded that they are trying to find a way to open the grades at maybe a specific time period so parents can have this information, but the problem is the timing when teachers enter the grades as well as how the grades are weighted – the grades shown at any given moment may not reflect their actual grade, as not everything may be entered.

The eighth grade is posting all of the class assignments on Google Calendar and it is very helpful for kids, especially those with Executive Functioning issues and helps with organizing. Parents would like to see this for all grades. Some teachers suggest that it inhibits independence with always posting every assignment, however, it was brought up that in the real world these days everything – from work assignments to college courses and posted online and high school should be the same.

One parent brought up the conflict with special education students having a conflict with trying to benefit from electives like all of the STEM initiatives being offered with their pullout support. Unfortunately, the pullout support cannot be during any of the required classes so at this time it will conflict with the electives, however, they are initiating after school and in-class STEM, so the pullout students will be able to participate in that way.

8:05 General Meeting

Membership: 97 members, 53 Yahoo! Group members.
Rochelle Peret

Election Results: Two election spots were eligible via our bylaws:
Vice-President – Karen Groccia nominated and re-elected
Boylston Co-President – Rochelle Peret nominated and elected
Two election spots were appointment for a nomination:
Berlin Co-President- Jessica Meltzer, nominated and appointed
Kerry Lavallee - Treasurer, nominated and appointed
Currently our Secretary position is vacant.

Financial: Current balance as of 9/23/15 is \$487.29. Christi Stille and Lori Michalak are no longer eligible to serve on the executive board, therefore, they need to be removed from the bank account. The new treasurer (Kerry Lavallee) and a Co-president (Rochelle Peret) need to be added to the account.
Lori Michalak

Communications: FCSN Conference in March 2016 – usually a very good conference. Does MassPac cover this?
We've been receiving many unsolicited emails wanting to list websites for our resource page and the like. We want to add a disclaimer that SEPAC does not endorse any of these websites, they are just for information only.

PR Report: The 2015/2016 Upcoming Event Schedule was passed out and available at the Meet & Greet and to include with pie distribution. It was brought up whether the Yearbook is sending out Advertiser requests yet and do we want to place an ad this year? This was tabled to the following meeting. Karen sent out PR out for August's Coffee Chat, September's Meet & Greet, and our pie fundraiser. She has also drafted the committee sheet and activities calendar, has booked the meeting rooms for all 2015/2016 meetings.
Karen Groccia

PPS The district Board Certified Behavior Analyst (BCBA) resigned at the beginning of this school year, they will have a consultant starting this week, and they expect to extend an offer for a permanent position by the beginning of next month. Carla M. and Linda C. have been covering some services.
Karen Molnar Shrewsbury has been having a Transition Fair, Karen will distribute that info.

OLD BUSINESS Lyman Pie Fundraiser – Fundraiser has been successful at the elementary school open houses.

NEW BUSINESS NISW: We currently do not have a coordinator. It will be held the week of December 7-11, and we are trying to connect the writing project coordinated by Carol Costello. Christi is willing to take over the Tahanto portion of NISW if someone else is willing to work at the elementary schools.

School Council: Tracy Frietas will represent BMS at the School Council meeting, Amy Gaspari to represent BES at theirs.

School Meeting Reports:

- BES School Council:** No SpEd issues to report
- Regional School Committee:** Christi presented End of Year Report in August.
- BMS School Committee:** No SpEd issues to report
- BES School Committee:** No SpEd issues to report
- Tahanto STAAGS PTO:** No SpEd issues to report
- Berlin LINK:** No SpEd issues to report
- Boylston PTO:** No SpEd issues to report

M/s/p to adjourn
Meeting adjourned 8:55 pm

Approved: Electronic approvals on file.

_____ Christi Stille, Co-President	_____ Karen Groccia, Vice President
_____ Lori Michalak, Treasurer	_____ Rochelle Peret, Secretary

Submitted by:

 Rochelle Peret, Secretary