

Items from the Director of Special Services- Ms. Juceyka Figueroa

- Open Discussion Introductions- Diane Perez, chair- Disclaimer representing the SEPAG not the BOE at the SEPAG meeting, Kim Heiner and Michele Katz, Tracey Acosta.

Ms. Figueroa-Dir of special services- Commented that there was a nice start to the school year, fully staffed year for CST team and related services. There are openings for paras for all levels and some special education teachers.

SEPG flyers are handed out by the CST

- Staffing Updates- There are openings for paras for all levels and some special education teachers.

Presentations/Speakers

- None currently

Items from SEPAG Chairs- Tracy Acosta- Kimberly Heiner-Michele Katz- Diane Perez

- Activities planned for the school year- presence at community activities- PTAs
- This is our fourth year in existence
- Did not attend the fall fest this year. May do the carnival that takes place in May/June 2024
- May want to attend more town events and PTA.
- Will attend the JTEF
- SEPAG has asked the BOE for a budget, since we do not fundraise, and the SEPAG is mandatory by the State.Boe provides funds for Zoom meetings.
- Kids are welcome, we will have snacks and sensory items. Although we do not have babysitting.

Old Business:

- None currently

New Business:

Discuss concerns present to SEPAG at Parent Social 9-27-2023

Concerns:

1. **Communication Concerns-** Parents felt like they had to dig for their information.
2. **Case Managers-** parents were not sure who they were at the beginning of the year. Figueroa and CST determine the cases and assignments within the first day of school. Parents should be informed within the first week. If there is no change, then they will not be informed.Will be informed via email or mail. Some email has been found in Spam folders. Used to be on the portal with the student's name. Or it could be on the correspondence tab.

3. Department of CST- knowledge of SEPAG and sharing our information- can we be more proactive in spreading the words
4. **PRISE**- is usually in the link. But they can request a hard copy. CST will ask if parents want a hard copy.
5. **Supervisor of Special Education and Behaviorist**- Some of the parents did not know that we had a new behaviorist or special supervisor of special education. Behaviorist (Kathleen Taylor) sent out communication to the parents that they serve. There is no special announcement with new staff. Maybe technology can help with that? Maybe we can have a special education supervisor in both spots on the website. Admin or special services. Could we collaborate with technology to make things clearer on the website for Special Services?
6. **Transition from one school to another.** Parents were concerned that the CST did not collaborate. Students were brought over and met their case managers. CST in high school meets with the students and the teams. Then they decide who they have. Happens from Cozy to White Rock. Sometimes transitions are hard then the cst can have a special night. Stanlick had a special meeting.
Encourage CST to meet at the end of the end of the year meeting to introduce.
Middle School- and elementary school can collaborate.
Case managers can arrange a more individualized tour of the next building.
Parents should reach out with questions about transitions or individuals.
All events are planned to be inclusive.
7. **Goals and Objectives**- Still a lot of education needs to be done for parents to understand them. How often are they rolled out? 4 times per year at the high school and at the same time as the marking period. The elementary school should be 3 times per year with report cards.
8. **Speakers**- can the department share more information about community events that they may get sent to them? We can present more on how to read an iep.
9. **State Assessments**- How are they accommodated for students that need them? Is Assistive Technology available?- It is always an IEP team decision and there is a state mandate about what can be done. If a student does not use it during the school year, they should not use it for a test without being familiar with it. Do not want it to be a hindrance. It should be the same as what they use every day in class.
When parents meet with the team, speak with them about what they can use and what works. If they have not used it before, they should have not sprung it on them. Paras are not in the room for state testing. They are outside the testing room. Students can have breaks. The tests do give them extra time. Discuss with the case manager anything that is needed or concerns.
10. **Evaluation and testing**- Parents still do not know how to refer children- can we make it more prevalent? Evaluation referral process should be on the website.
11. **Placement and programs (Curriculum)**- Parents were frustrated about the program that is used. The team did not seem to have the answer for the parents. An example is touch math. All students follow the curriculum, except for the md class in the high school. Programs are used

to assist the students with the current curriculum. Touch math and reading mastery as a supplement. Autism helper(program) - is an additional supplement. Depends on the students level and their needs. Dr Jinks is the contact for the curriculum and the supervisor of special education and curriculum answers.

12. **Can a parent find out how a teacher is certified and what they are certified for?** They are certified with the dept of special education. Specific programs aren't listed on IEPs, so that is not limited. If it is on the iEP then the district does have someone certified in it.

If a parent feels that the IEP is not implemented appropriately then reach out to the case manager.

13. **Community activities-** We weren't advertising community events enough to fit different needs, we are now putting up different activities on the website. We have to be careful what we put up and make sure that we have researched it. Encourage parents to reach out if they have information and we can communicate it.

Public Comments-

Parent comment

1.Can the parent find out what is used so that they can find out more info about it so the can reinforce it. Is there a general list of the different programs? Figueroa will look into the programs that are helpful for the students.

2. Parents need better communication, how to read an iep, programs within the district. Students with IEP test scores. Dr Jinks may be a possible speaker to address that.

Parents are encouraged to please give us suggestions for more outreach.

Key Take-Aways: We covered all of the material and have appropriate feedback and info .

- Ms. Figuero will reach out to technology dept about making things clearer on the website on where to find special education information, and case manager information on the portal.
- Ms.Figueroa will look into sharing more community events with perhaps a disclaimer that the district does endorse it.
- SEPAG will reach out to Dr Jinks about having him come to the SEPAG meeting with the special education supervisor to present on curriculum, test scores and interventions to improve them and the special education supervisors role.
- Parents are encouraged to please give SEPAG suggestions for more outreach.
- Parents are encouraged to reach out to the case manager about testing accommodations.
- Goals and objectives are released at the same time as report cards.

- Parents are encouraged to reach out to the case manager about transitioning to a new school for individual tours or meeting with someone from the new school.
- A hard copy of the PRISE can be asked for by parents.

Next Meeting:

Parent Social: November 29, 2023, 6:30P- 8:00P JTHS Media Center

Submitted by Michele Katz 11/5/23