**HOPKINTON SEPAC | MONTHLY MEETING**

May 15, 2018

**MINUTES**

1. **NEWS/UPDATES**

* SEPAC is awarding Navigator scholarships to 10 seniors this Spring.
* SEPAC hosted a parent workshop on ADHD that was well attended by 15-20 parents.
* SEPAC now has a shelf at the Hopkinton library for books on special education and children with disabilities. Donations are encouraged.
* SEPAC had one morning meeting this Spring for parents unable to get to evening SEPAC meetings. Attendance was low, but still important to provide this alternate meeting time a few times a year. SEPAC will hold at least one morning meeting for the 2018-2019 school year in the Fall.
* SEPAC has bulletin boards up at every school now promoting SEPAC to parents.
* Attendance is encouraged at the May 20th Autism and Special Needs Day Out at the Hopkinton Police Department. SEPAC will have a table there.

1. **ESY PRESENTATION**

* Dan Mazur, the ESY coordinator and Middle School team chair, presented on improvements to the ESY program planned for this Summer (2018) and for the upcoming 2019 ESY program.
* These improvements focus on increasing opportunities for students to socialize with each other “outside the walls of the classroom”. All agreed that it’s important for ESY students to socialize with their peers, both those with and without special needs. A goal for next summer is to provide social activities and outings with youth without special education needs.
* Specific changes for this summer’s ESY program include community field trips for students in the intensive ESY program. Older students will be going to Price Chopper and Solomon Pond Mall. Younger students be taking field trips to the library, EMC park, and Waterfresh Farm.
* Dr. Zaleski shared that they would like to include more extensive social and leisure activities for the 2019 ESY program for both moderate and intensive students. Parents had several suggestions for activities especially swimming opportunities. They recommended exploring partnerships with Milford swimming program for youth with special needs as well as the Westborough YMCA.
* **Administrative Action Item:** Dr. Zaleski and Dan Mazur will solicit ideas from SEPAC parents for social and leisure activities for the 2019 ESY program. This could be accomplished either through a regular SEPAC meeting or a separate ESY-focused meeting.
* SEPAC recommended that administration send the ESY parent handbook to all families with students in ESY.
* **Administrative Action Item:** Dr. Zaleski will send out link to the handbook via the special education email list.
* Dan reminded parents that there will be an ESY information session on June 13th at 6pm.

1. **SUPPORT FOR STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS IN AFTERSCHOOL CARE**

* Kidsborough was recently awarded contract to provide afterschool care at Marathon and Hopkins for the 2018/2019 school year (YMCA held contract for past several years).
* SEPAC asked whether the schools could provide support for students with special needs who attend their programs. Carol Cavanaugh stated that HPS does not have authority over Kidsborough as they have a separate contract with the town.
* Dr. Zaleski shared that the school can advocate on behalf of a student with Kidsborough if this would be helpful. Parents must sign a release before this can happen.
* Paraprofessionals who work at HPS may be interested in part-time employment providing support to students with special needs at Kidsborough. In addition, HHS students who need to complete internships might be another good resource for supporting these students.
* The topic of HPS paraprofessionals providing support to special needs students in HPTA extracurricular and other HPS extracurriculars was also discussed.
* HPTA can pay for paraprofessionals to provide support to special needs students in their afterschool programs at all three elementary schools. All agreed that this resource should be marketed more prominently to parents by both HPTA and SEPAC.
* In addition, Dr. Zaleski reported that she has funds to provide extracurricular support to students with IEPs. This is not widely known. SEPAC will promote this resource to parents and remind them to ask about the availability of this support for their middle and high school students in their IEP meetings.

1. **UPDATES ON ELA IMPROVEMENTS**

* Superintendent Cavanaugh provided an update on the district’s steps to improve ELA instruction for students with special needs in K-5. Highlights included:
  + 2 teachers certified in Lindamood Bell LIPS & V&V now (5 will be certified by Spring 2019)
  + 2 teachers (Elmwood and Hopkins) will be certified in Orton-Gillingham by September 2018.
* 1 teacher is being certified in Wilson and will be able to teach by Spring 2019.

1. **SPED LITERACY COACH**

* The district is hiring a special education literacy coach for grades 2-5 for the 2018/2019 school year.
* The job posting was just put up on school website.
* The district would like a parent volunteer to serve on the search committee for the position.
* All interested parents should reach out to Dr. Zaleski to express their interest.
* There will be a meeting on May 22nd at 1pm to develop interview questions.
* Job posting link: <https://www.hopkinton.k12.ma.us/cms/lib/MA01001785/Centricity/domain/485/vacancies/18-68.pdf>

1. **PRESENTATION ON NEST PROGRAM**

* Meg Tyler, SEPAC liaison to administration, presented on the ASD Nest Program which is an integrated, co-teaching model with reduced class size for students with autism spectrum disorder provided in NY City public schools.
* She provided handouts that described the components of the program including its class structure, staffing model, curriculum and instruction, and social/emotional supports. (<http://schools.nyc.gov/NR/rdonlyres/3145BEDF-9742-4EBB-A7E0-CEB1402FCEE9/0/ASDFamilyResourceGuideEnglish.pdf>)
* One of the goals of this presentation was to promote open discussion about different approaches to serving students with ASD in the school district.
* A SEPAC member wondered how the district’s co-taught classes compare to the Nest Program especially with regard to students with ASD and their academic and social outcomes.

1. **HOUSEKEEPING DETAILS**

* SEPAC will explore new fundraising ideas for the next school year including a trunk or treat in the Fall.
* Membership agreed to start next year’s SEPAC meetings at 6:30pm, instead of 7pm.
* SEPAC will hold two roundtables with the elementary principals and the MS/HS principals in the summer.

1. **MEETING NEXT STEPS**

* SEPAC:
  + Market the availability of HPTA support for paraprofessionals for elementary afterschool programs and HPS District support for paraprofessionals for middle and high school afterschool programs. Encourage parents to ask about this support at IEP meetings.
  + Encourage volunteers for the SPED Literacy Coach search committee.
  + Develop a parent checklist for IEP meetings to send out with the August parent letter from Dr. Zaleski.
  + Hold SEPAC parent support group meeting on June 4th.
* Administration:
  + Solicit parent ideas for ESY social and leisure activities for the Summer 2019 ESY program.
  + Send out the ESY parent handbook to parents via special education email list