**Special Education Advisory Committee**

**December 6, 2017**

**Members: (25)**

Monique Mawhinney, Director of Pupil Services, Chair

Jay Thornton, School Psychologist, Co-Chair

Rebecca Cunningham, Assistant Superintendent

Josh Cable, HS Assistant Principal

Marlynn Lux, MS Acting Principal

Amy Kern, Central Principal

Colleen Hannagan, Poff Principal

Laurie Tocci, Wyland Principal

Christy Edinger- Elementary Special Education Teacher (Wyland)

Kylee Harding-Elementary Special Education Teacher (Central)

Nichole Babka-Elementary Special Education Teacher (Poff)

Heather Tammariello- Speech Language Therapist (Central)

Lena Clary- Middle School Special Education Teacher

Amy Faith- High School Special Education Teacher & Department Chair

Lynn Zdinak-Elementary Regular Education Teacher (Wyland)

Julia Walls-Elementary Regular Education Teacher (Central)-**ABSENT**

Amy Rein-Elementary Regular Education Teacher (Poff)

Sheree Lucas-Middle School Regular Education Teacher

Terry Hales-High School Regular Education Teacher

Ana Hughes-High School Parent Representative

Chris Andrews-High School Parent Representative

Aaron Bernett-Middle School Parent Representative

Marie Spence-Middle School Parent Representative

Amanda Frischling-Wyland Parent Representative

Jessica Dixon-Poff Parent Representative

Trisha Webb-Central Parent Representative

**Agenda Items:**

* Introduction of Mr. Andrews, SEAC HS Parent Representative
  + Dr. Mawhinney introduced Mr. Andrews as the additional HS SEAC parent representative and thanked him for volunteering his time to support the special education program.
* Tonight’s SEAC Parent Evening Event
  + The committee discussed the cancellation of the evening parent event due to a low RSVP. The presenter, Dr. Dodd, agreed to do a voice over PowerPoint presentation and promised to have it to Dr. Mawhinney to post via the website prior to the holiday break
* Subcommittee Updates
  + Socialization
    - Dr. Tocci provided an update on how the individual levels are enhancing socialization opportunities for students.
      * The elementary buildings have a growing together club that consists of students with and without disabilities and they complete a lot of service learning activities and seasonal activities. The attendance for these activities is high.
      * The middle school has expanded the growing together club and branched out to connect with other clubs such as the hiking club, basketball club, etc. This has increased the attendance and socialization opportunities for the children.
      * The high school continues to get the Best Buddies program up and running and has completed several meetings and activities to date.
      * Dr. Tocci reported the committee established three goals for this year: 1) maintain the number of students who participate 2) maintain or increase the number of activities/get-togethers 3) improve the balance between the number of students with and without disabilities who participate.
    - Dr. Mawhinney informed the members that the initial implementation of the Social Scoop! (Social Thinking) program has begun. She explained that it is a structured program that will be available to both students with and without disabilities to increase socialization skills. The goal is for the Social Scoop Team to work with students in small groups who are identified as having a need for learning social skills. Michelle Lubetsky, AIU consultant, is facilitating the training and working with a team from Central Elementary to pilot the implementation. The goal is for this program to be implemented in all 5 buildings for the start of next school year. More information will be shared when the logistics of the program are worked out. Right now, the team is in the initial set-up phase of implementation.
  + Communication
    - Mrs. Tammariello, Chair, provided an update on the progress of the Welcome Packet and explained that they are still working out the final details of what will be included in the packet
    - Trisha Webb, Central parent rep, reported that she has gotten feedback from other parents that they miss the personalized emails they used to get from their parent building reps. In addition, she indicated that some parents still haven’t created an account on Infinite Campus, so they may not be getting the mass emails sent from the special education department.
    - As a result of this feedback, the committee decided to send an email blast to all parents informing them that if they would like to receive additional emails from their parent reps that they should send their contact information directly to the identified parent representative from their building. The email will list the individual parent reps from each building with their email addresses.
    - Dr. Mawhinney will continue to send email blasts with various notifications as she has in the past and will continue to post everything online via the special education website.
* Results from ESY Survey (***see attachment)***
  + There was a lot of discussion around this topic. The results of the survey are listed in more detail in the attachment.
  + Some of the issues addressed from the survey were:
    - Inability to change dates of camp programs-Dr. Mawhinney explained that the dates are established by the organization facilitating the camp program and some are not able to be changed.
    - Why isn’t the direct instruction and speech sessions held at my child’s home building-It was explained that the teacher providing the services for the summer typically works out of the building they teach in so that they have access to their resources. In addition, to avoid multiple transportation trips, both the academic instruction and speech sessions are scheduled in the same building. However, there are unique circumstances for individuals that may be adjusted
    - Transportation schedule is not appropriate-Dr. Mawhinney attempted to explain the difficulty of designing a transportation schedule that will fit perfectly into the schedule of each child receiving ESY services. For example, she explained that one child may receive several ESY services such as, direct instruction reading, math, speech services, social camp, etc. In this instance, the camp may run each day from 9-2 for 4 weeks. This child may also need to receive DI reading, math and speech services. The camps are located off-site, while the direct instruction and speech sessions are provided on-site. Obviously, there is very limited opportunities for scheduling, which most likely results in multiple transportation trips. This is not ideal, however, if the parents request the district provide transportation, we have an obligation to do so.
    - The overall number one complaint regarding the district’s current ESY program was the Hampton Parks and Recreation Program. Because of the consistent feedback, the committee decided to investigate the possibility of providing their own ESY in-house program.
  + The committee decided to develop an ESY sub-committee to investigate the possibility of creating a Hampton in-house ESY program that consists of academics, speech, social, behavioral and physical activities.
  + Parent Reps, Trisha Webb (Central Elementary) and Marie Spence (MS) will serve as the Co-Chairs of the committee. Additional members will be: Chris Andrews and Ana Hughes (HS parent reps), Nichole Babka and Heather Tammariello (Elementary special education & speech teachers) and Dr. Mawhinney (Director of Pupil Services). The committee would like representation from MS and HS in regard to teacher/administration input. It was decided to keep the committee to 10 members.
  + The parent representatives will communicate with other parents via the email distribution lists to gather input regarding the ESY program throughout the process.
  + The co-chairs of the ESY subcommittee will meet with Dr. Mawhinney to establish important timelines for the implementation.
* HS-Best Buddies Program update ***(see attachment)***
  + Dr. Mawhinney shared information regarding the events that took place to date and events that are scheduled for the near future.
  + A parent rep shared that she is getting feedback that there is concern with the low number of students with disabilities who signed up for this program. She explained that there is momentum growing with the program even from the start of the school year and that it takes time for a program to expand. She felt confident that through word of mouth and time, the program will grow.
  + A direct link to the Best Buddies Program will be shared via an email blast so that parents can learn more about the program.
* SEAC meetings for second semester
  + Dr. Mawhinney will send an email to the committee members with next date for large group SEAC meeting. However, she will try to maintain Wednesdays in the AM.
* Future parent training opportunities
  + The committee will continue to explore training opportunities based on the results of the parent survey and will look to schedule an event shortly after the new year.
* Parent Representatives: Building Reports
  + Poff-none
  + Wyland-none
  + HS-none
  + MS-
    - Parent commented that they thought it was amazing that the elementary teachers took the kids to see the movie Wonder after reading the book.
    - Mrs. Lux, MS principal, informed the group that the ***My Face*** group is scheduled to come to the middle school to talk to the students during advisory next week.
  + Central-
    - A parent indicated they wanted more personal communication from the SEAC parent representatives. This issue was addressed in the above notes.
    - One parent asked if the special education teachers have the same resources for their rooms as regular education teachers. They indicated that they realized during open house that the special education teacher did not have a smart board in the classroom. A principal indicated that most everyone has a smartboard in their classroom, with a few exceptions. However, there is the option of using a portable smartboard if needed. Dr. Mawhinney explained that the teacher this parent may be referring to had to move their classroom mid-year as a result of the special education audit. The room she was relocated to was the only vacant classroom at the time, and therefore did not have a smartboard.
    - A parent asked if the 1:1 technology initiative has a negative effect on the special education classrooms. They questioned if there are still iPad devices and other technology that the teachers can access. A principal explained that this initiative does not affect them negatively and that they can access additional devices from the library if needed.
    - On another note, Dr. Mawhinney did explain that all students with disabilities will get the same device that their classmates receive unless the IEP team determines they need a different type of device.
* Closing Remarks/Discussion
  + Dr. Mawhinney thanked everyone for their ongoing support with SEAC and wished them “Happy Holidays to you and your families.”