

Minutes of Meeting of Suffolk Special Education Advisory Committee

May 18, 2022

Attendees:

Voting: Holly Boyce, Saul Godinez, Regina Hall, Katie Morse

Consultant: Vivian Evett, Julie Masters

Guest: Sarah Bailey

Absent: Angela Bickerton, Deborah Kliche, Shawynee Love, Kirstyn Oneill

I. Welcome and Introductions

Ms. Morse welcomed everyone. Everyone in attendance introduced him or herself to the group. A quorum was achieved for this meeting.

II. Announcements and Correspondence

- A. The Endependence Center is holding another regional SEAC meeting on Saturday, May 28, 2022 from 10:00 to 11:30 am. There will be in-person and virtual options available.
- B. The Endependence Center will be holding a four-week series of workshops this summer for youth ages 16 to 25. These workshops will take place on Monday through Thursday each week, from 1 to 5 pm. They begin on July 25th and end on August 18th. They will cover topics such as goal planning, advocacy, work readiness and social interaction.

III. Public Comment

No public comment was made to the SEAC committee at this meeting.

IV. Special Education Reports

A. Director's Report

1. Little Feet Meet was held at nine of the elementary schools in the district on May 12 and May 13, 2022. This event pairs elementary-age students with intellectual and developmental disabilities with their peers without disabilities. Together they participate in fun activities with the goal of promoting inclusive school environments. A video was prepared for the participants in this event, and it can be viewed at <http://youtu.be/h07TMCgkj-A>. Some schools made a really big deal out of Little Feet Meet, including having a parade through the hallways and

having students present as spectators. Parents and volunteers were also able to attend. Everyone had a great time!

2. A Big Feet Meet is planned for the middle schools in the Fall, and Achilles Kids is planned for the high schools.
3. This summer, the Special Education department will be presenting workshops. These will be presented in the morning and in the evening. Five workshops are planned for now, on topics such as instructional strategies and sensory integration techniques.

B. PRC Report

1. The Disability Resources and Awareness Fair was held on April 27, 2022. Although attendance was low, a well-rounded group of resource organizations and support teams was available to assist attendees. Exit surveys show that participants were pleased with what the fair had to offer and that future events would be desirable. The next fair is being planned for October, which is Disability Awareness Month.
2. The PRC participated in the first Parent and Partner Night meeting in April. This was titled Understanding Special Education. Parents attended this event in order to discuss issues they were facing regarding their children with disabilities. Mr. Godinez led the discussion. The next Parent and Partner Night is schedule for June 16th from 6:00 to 7:00 pm at the PRC.
3. The Pilot Club of Suffolk is a community-based volunteer service organization. Each year, they hold a Civic Night to honor local heroes. The PRC would like to congratulate the 2022 Pilot Club Civic Awards Nominees who were recently honored, including Tracey Harrell Parada (Northern Shores – Special Education Teacher of the Year), Rainey Chapman (Creekside – Special Education Paraprofessional of the Year), Tina Williams (Special Education Bus Driver of the Year) and Kelvin Boone (Special Education Bus Aide of the Year).
4. The Regional PRC online seminar entitled Project DE-STRESS is still scheduled for September. This event will help parents develop strategies and tools to address various behaviors that often affect students with disabilities. This event is a collaboration between the PRCs in Suffolk, Chesapeake, Newport News, and Virginia Beach.

V. Old Business

A. Approval of March minutes (action required)

The March 2022 minutes were approved with the addition of a few minor language changes from the initial draft, which were detailed prior to the approval process.

VI. New Business

A. Subcommittee Reports

1. Disability Awareness Subcommittee

The Disability Awareness subcommittee held a meeting, which was attended by Kate Morse, Saul Godinez, and Vivian Evett. The Disability Awareness subcommittee has decided to proceed with two projects. The first is to assist with the development and promotion of the Disability Awareness Fair planned for October. The second is to develop a curriculum that it will propose to the school board to improve disability awareness in our schools. The subcommittee visualizes this curriculum being used at about four different grade levels (around 1st, 4th, 7th and 10th grade), consisting of a variety of different activities that will help students understand what it might be like to live with a disability and how they might help to make life easier for these students. These activities will vary greatly in scope and use a variety of different strengths and skills. It is our hope that they will be an interesting and engaging break from the norm for students in these grade levels and that they might help the students to evaluate their school environment and determine where changes would be beneficial to make access to resources easier for everyone. Several such curricula have been developed in different States over the years. The subcommittee will likely pull what it likes best from a variety of them in the process of assembling a curriculum for Suffolk Public School.

VII. Public Comment Review

There was no public comment made this evening.

VIII. Open Discussion

There was no additional discussion this evening.

IX. Adjournment

The next SEAC meeting will be held at 6:30 on Wednesday, July 20, 2022.