

Concord Public Schools
and
Concord-Carlisle Regional School District
Special Education Parent Advisory Council (SEPAC)
Thursday, March 28, 2019 Minutes
12:30-2:30pm
Location: Hunt Rec Center Conference Room
90 Stow St, Concord
www.concordsepac.org concordsepac@gmail.com

1. Open Meeting 12:34 p.m.
2. Public comments - No comments from the public
3. Approval of minutes from February 28, 2019 Board Meeting (5 min) Carol moved to approve the minutes. Helen seconded the motion. Approved
4. Sherry Kenin and Magi Lindeman shared information about the Timbernook Sensory Nature Programs which are under the umbrella of Minute Man Arc. These nature programs were developed by an Occupational Therapist and enable children to experience a variety of sensory inputs and challenge their fine and gross motor skills. Timbernook programs discussion by Sherry:
Presentation at Acton Discovery Center May 21st
Developed by Angela Hanscom. Run like a camp, but is a program. 18 month with adults and up. Get kids unplugged, back to nature, learn things in an unstructured way. Kids need down time with just a little bit of guidance. Jumping, climbing, and get sensory inputs. That is what we did with neighbor kids. Unfortunately, the world has changed. It hasn't changed as much as we fear. Timbernook is a way to get that experience in a sheltered environment. In playgroups, parents may follow kids around and resolve the conflicts for the children. Children need to learn to resolve these on their own.
Angela is an occupational therapist who began a structured camp in NH. Kids need freedom to play and use their imagination and take risks. She started researching it. Timbernook is the result. Nature based play is becoming popular. We're an inclusive camp. In nature, playing, it levels the playing field. Kids can participate at whatever level they are comfortable. Leaders and followers come forward.
Circle time, theme for the week or day. One theme might be 3 little pigs. What is your favorite book? Then, we head into the woods. While the kids have their snack, we read the book "The 3 little pigs." Now you can recreate the story. The materials have been hidden in the woods and the kids can find them. Counsellors get low to the ground and stay present, but don't intervene.
There are rocks to climb, a tire swings to play on. Kids spread out and find things and then they come together. The kids want to do it again the next day. If, toward the end

of the session, the kids are starting to get tired, we bring them together and play a game.

One little girl was feeling off that day. Her Mom was there. They encouraged the mom to sit back next to a tree. They had a fire going. She and her Mom sat in front of the fire and read books. She and her mom had a wonderful time that day.

We're getting out of the rut that makes each child have the same experience. Everyone plays in the way that they are comfortable.

Magi: It is our job as counsellors to step back and read the room. There was a capture the flag game where kids kept moving to the winning team. It was a positive experience for everyone, so the counsellors didn't intervene.

Magi: 7 year olds were given hammers to use and there were ground rules set. The kids were trusted to use things in a responsible way, and the counsellors supported their growth.

Magi: This program is science based. We support child growth.

Carol: where is the camp?

Sherry: We don't have the land yet. Need to be licensed as a recreational camp. We have to have somewhere to go if there is inclement weather. We'll be out there, unless it is dangerous.

Magi: It takes 45 minutes until they start to organize themselves.

Sherry: Sites in Carlisle, Concord, Acton.

Sarah: What kind of a space do you need?

Sherry: Somewhere we can take the kids if there is a tornado

Sarah: Need a bathroom? How many bathrooms?

Sherry: 15 kids.

Joanne: 15 kids within a program.

Sherry: 2 male and 2 female bathrooms, 3 acres of woods.

Carol: There is a place in NH

Sherry: We have a license for Middlesex, Suffolk programs

Newest rollout is for school systems. Focus is on kids.

Joanne: Would be good for High School age teens.

Sarah: Liability insurance through Minuteman Arc.

Sherry: This is a shameless plug for "Extra Steps."

Carol: Outdoor programs.

Sherry: we need to use the space all year round.

Casey: Have you checked with Concord Rec about Fairyland.?

Sherry: we need land that doesn't have underbrush.

Magi: Parking is enough for 2 cars. Drop off, pick up would be a concern.

Sherry: Carlisle, behind town hall would work. It is paved. Dirt parking lot. They would need to be able to get into the building in case of inclement weather.

Magi: municipal land.

Shaina: Is everyone on staff an occupational therapist or developmental specialist?

Sherry: We don't need a lot of people to run it, but we have OT, PT. It isn't a big drain off of a building. Main people running the program are counsellors or providers.

Magi: Inclusivity is important. It is for all types of kids. We saw that kids who were taking medicine for ADHD didn't need medicine when he came to the camp. We brainstormed for ways to make Timbernook happen. We are asking for HS kids to come and help as a buddy. So that it doesn't change the experience for the children.

Magi: it is our job to step in only when needed.

Sherry: School group came out with chaperones. The Mom who watched her son was asking the leader to talk with her to distract her from her son doing something risky.

Carol: What about a child with a wheelchair?

Sherry: We could get staffing for that. Any child that needs any kind of support, we'll talk about it ahead.

Casey: Recommends Erin Pipkin from Drumlin Farm who could help.

Magi: We've been talking with people from Nara park as well.

Sherry: Camp Acton is perfect, except there is nowhere to go when the weather gets bad.

Casey: New parcel of land, Gero parcel in Concord that could work. It is right by a pond that isn't dredged. There is a building there, a house. It is on the Bruce Freeman Rail Trail. Ryan Kane is the Director of Concord Recreation and Anna McKeown his deputy can help.

Magi: We want to serve this county based on that kind of inclusive option.

Helen: How are you publicizing this?

Magi: We're applying to healthcare companies to see if they can help cover the program.

Joanne: I work for AANE and can forward this to members.

Casey: 8 weeks \$480

Sherry: We are not trying to make money off of it. We have specialists. We're hiring people from the school systems.

5. Out of District (OOD) survey results and future event suggestions: Joanne Jensen (10 min)

We got 26 responses from the OOD survey out of 72. Families want to be connected. Families responded with students from all grades except K or 6.

9th, 5th & 12th are most represented in survey.

-What year they transferred? Most common grades when students are sent OOD are 7th & 2nd and 1st and 9th grades (tied).

-How connected do you feel to CPS/CCRHS? Most do not feel connected.

-How connected do you feel to the OOD school? Moderately to very connected.

2/3 felt it is very important to be connected.

People would like to feel more connected to CCHS.

-What does feeling connected mean? "Communication and community" Parents want to feel connected to the CCHS community. Family events would be welcome. -They want to know what is happening in the school, district and in the community.

-Next steps: Feeling connected means to the child? They want to have friends in school and in town. They want to know what the school is doing. They want the principal to know that the student should be there.

-Types of initiatives: speakers, email group, events They want to know who the administrators are.

-They want to know how they can volunteer and how their children can volunteer. Can we add community events to the calendar.

-Parents are removed from the PTG list. All the families can be added to the list.

Parents want their child to get the email lists. Add something to next month's newsletter: "to connect with your school's newsletter, click on these links." Some of the families don't have the connection to the schools because they left the school district long ago.

2 Volunteer website

Do OOD High Schoolers need to complete the volunteer hours? No

OOD events for families? Joanne will talk with Jenny about creating events like these.

Casey: Talk to Anna McKeown. She has the background.

Carol: We need to share the feedback with the people who took the survey. Or to everyone.

Joanne: Wants to find an account to Survey Monkey. Wants to use Wordle to give feedback of responses to the group.

Give a summary of the responses to Marielle.

Sarah send minutes to JoAnne.

6. Update on Director of Student Services Search Committee: Helen McKinlay and Carol Yelle (10 min)

Helen: We reviewed the resumes on 3/26 and the rest of the search committee are completing the same process during the course of this week. Kristen Herbert will then contact us to confirm the number of consensus candidates who will be invited for interviews on 4/9 and 4/10. In all the recent senior searches (Willard Principal, Superintendent and Alcott Principal), the appointment has been made from one of the consensus candidates selected by the search committee.

In the afternoon the second meeting of the entire search committee took place. We reviewed the draft interview questions in small groups and the entire committee agreed the final questions. Carol will be asking a parent focused question on behalf of SEPAC.

7. Vote and discussion regarding SEPAC position on possible Letter of Support for Town Meeting: Middle School Warrant Article #14 (10 min) Shaina Brito
Do we support the school committee's position? Will the letter of support make a difference? Is the Carlisle contingent supportive of writing this letter?
Could the letter be written in a way that allows the Concord contingent to voice their opinion? SEPAC as a whole can write a statement. Who could draft it? **Casey will draft it on behalf of the board.** Shaina voted that we write a letter to the editor of the Journal and one to be read at Town meeting in support of Article 14. Helen seconded it. Casey will send it to the Board before submitting.
8. [Concord Bike Fest](#): Aiyana Currie (call in)
Support with the Bike Fest
Carol: How can SEPAC support this on May 18th.
Aiyana: Bike to school day, Bike Rodeo at Willard on May 8th and bike to school for Alcott on May 10th. Extra police will be at road crossings. We're trying to make it organized. Both principals have signed off on it. We want everyone to feel included. Any wheeled vehicle. Should we be talking to PT? Maybe just talk with SEPAC. Any special wording?
Shaina: Federation for Children with Special Needs has an event that captures the various ways people move (Roll, walk, etc) "Roll to school day." We can put something in the newsletter about it.
Aiyana: Inclusive.
Carol: include a contact name for someone if your children have special needs. We're assuming a need that someone has, but we don't know what it is. We might be able to borrow an adaptive bicycle. If your kid can only scooter, then they can do that.
Willard has a parent who has helped set up a quiet space for PTG events: (Erika Woodhouse) who may have input. Willard liaison may also have specific thoughts.
Sarah: Send Aiyana the ideas.
We are having a Bike Fest day all morning in Concord center on 5/18. If there are any organizations that could be involved, let her know.
Helen: My daughter has a bike from "Guardian Bikes." They are fantastic. They have a braking system that is safer. Guardianbikes.com.
Shaina: should we publicize on FB?
Aiyana: Concordbikes.org
9. Board Member Positions School Year 2019/20 (10 min)
Sarah plans to continue as secretary
Carol and Shaina will continue as Co-Presidents
Helen will carry on with Publicity or add whatever needs doing.
Becky is staying on with technology.
We need to figure out where the newsletter fits in.
Ask people to do individual projects, content for newsletters,

Wendy is stepping down as events chair

10. Chair reports/updates (40 min overall)

- Co-Presidents: (Shaina Brito and Carol Yelle)
 - i. Review of meeting with Marielle Wintersteen- Administration was concerned about whether the survey make the OOD families feel more isolated? No, just sent by SEPAC. Joanne was there. The results were positive. Discussed the dyslexia/ADHD event, high attendance and parent requests for a similar talk for teachers and/or students. Publication of newsletters.
 - ii. Review of PTG meeting-
 - iii. Review of Correspondence.
- Membership: (Casey Atkins)
 - i. Update
 - ii. Liaison Update
 - iii. Liaison Positions School Year 2019/20
- Events: (Wendy Frohlich)
 - i. Update on future events
 - a. April 1, 7:00pm - 8:30pm, Overcoming Stress and Anxiety in our Youth: Strategies to Support Children's Learning and Ways to Cope", presented by Dr. Donna Pincus, CCHS Auditorium.
 - b. May 14, MCAS: Access & Achievements for Disabilities - CCHS Library 6:30pm
 - c. Caroline Maguire Presentation, "Why will no one play with me" October Date TBD
 - d. January 16, 2020 9:30am - Introduction to Special Education mediation, Myrto Flessas, Ripley Conference Room 4
 - e. Plan a DESE event
- Technology: (Becky Robichaud)
 - i. Update on website and social media
- Communications: (Becky Robichaud)
 - i. Update
- Publicity: (Helen McKinlay)
 - i. Update
 - ii. Appreciation Awards update

11. Close Meeting at 2:30 p.m.

Attendance:

Shaina Brito

Carol Yelle

Helen McKinlay

Sarah Nichol

Sherry Kenin

Magi Lindeman

Joanne Jensen

Wendy Frohlich (by phone)

Casey Atkins

Aiyana (by phone)