

SELAC MINUTES

March 6, 2008

Attending: Brenda Galvin, Linda Majewski, Susan Niles, Dawn Cote, Jennifer Lange, Christine Bonagura, Beverly Bulksey, Danielle Schaetzle, Kait Witte, Leslie Talamini, Denise Bouley, Lynn Kapiskas, Carole Lerner

Old Business

1. Website - Minutes still not posted to website (2/07, 5/07). Ms. Lerner indicated that she believes that they are all on the website. October, November, December and January were emailed to Denise and they will be emailed to Elaine Hazard. They will be sent to McFee in word, reviewed and returned to us, then converted and returned to McFee in PDF format.
2. Provision for Long Term Absences by SLPs, PTs, OTs and other Service Providers – including notification to parents if services are not being provided and alternatives offered to such parents. Ms. Lerner advised that a sample notice would be sent to the extent that one exists. However, many of them are being arranged by phone so no letter may have actually gone out to those parents. Make up services are being done already by the COTA and, once completed, the COTA will be assigned to Pothier.
3. Shortage of slots for preschool 10:1 classrooms for students for whom community placement is not an adequate solution. No further discussion was held because this is currently a non-issue – there are several open slots.
4. RTI (Response to Intervention) update – is there a formal policy on implementation and notification yet? The policy and notices are completed and have been sent to RIDE for approval. Parent notification is one of the forms (that is, those parents are notified of the referral of their child to RTI. We are currently awaiting RIDE's approval as these forms and policies are not currently being used. They hope to start using them ASAP, even before the end of this year. Linda Majewski attending a conference, which she believed, was on RTI but was really on asking school committees to come up with policies in support of special education and the new changes – so that school committees will not use regulations to cut staff to balance their budgets.
5. SELAC Elections. They will be held in May. Looking for chair, vice-chair, or co-chairs, and secretary. Liaison to school committee will be deleted as Linda Majewski is actually serving in that capacity. She does not feel that this is a conflict for her. She reports to the school committee but is not in the position of an advocate, which is what a liaison is anyway.
6. Change in SELAC schedule. We are considering going to a bi-monthly format. We are exploring this issue as we have many months (generally in the winter) when there isn't much happening and there is very poor attendance. We will look at the attendance

sheets and try to determine which months have the greatest attendance. Parents indicated that several presenters give good workshops and were concerned that a change in the schedule may affect this. It was indicated that this was not a real concern. We would continue to try to present our Visual Supports seminar at the beginning of the school year again as it is the most helpful then. We are also open to suggestions from the membership how to best do this.

New Business

1. Loss of OTs. Ms. Lerner indicated that the losses were across the board in terms of lay offs, not just OTs. OTs have just been more active. They had to notify them all by March 1st by state law if there was even a chance that they might be laid off next year. Music and art were devastated because they are not state-mandated. This is all a simply financial reaction to not really knowing what our budget is. Some if not all may in fact be rehired for the coming year. However, in an effort to be financially responsible, the OT services has been sent out to bid to see if they can obtain like services from an agency at a lower cost. This is just being explored at this point. The bottom line is that they have to supply the services if they are in IEPs. The concern expressed by the co-chair of the need for consistency (it needs to be the same provider each week for these children) was also addressed and Ms. Lerner advised that agencies that have been interviewed are aware of this and believe they can comply with this request. Some agencies that have been contacted about the OT services going out to bid have expressed a hesitancy to bid because they do not believe that they have enough staff to meet the contract requirements. As for the COTA issue, there is no contract into which they fit so they would either have to come through an agency or be independent contractors. To clarify, COTAs can administer services but cannot evaluate, write IEPs, supervise, etc. – all of the things that our OTs can do.

2. Announcements, information and/or concerns from attendees:

a. Board of Regents presentations on proposed changes to the secondary school regulations on March 4 at Toll Gate High School in Warwick and on March 6 at The Paff Auditorium in the Shephard Building in Providence

b. Northern Rhode Island Youth Career Center March 2008 calendar.

c. March 11 – Parent/Teacher Conferences at the Woonsocket High School and Woonsocket Area Vocational/Technical School – 6-9PM – includes presentation on the new graduation requirements in the auditorium at the high school at 6PM

d. Information sheet from RI KIDS COUNT regarding proposed budget cuts

e. Focus groups on Autism regarding a new center being contemplated – dates are on the handout but parents are needed on March 12, 14 and 17 – please call the number on the handout to participate – you will receive \$75 for your participation

- f. Link to the new RIDE regulations on handout –
http://www.ridoe.net/Special_Populations/State_federal_regulations/special_education_regulations_2008.pdf
- g. RIDE and RITAP present on the new IEP process and form – dates are on the handout:
March 5 – 4-6PM – Cumberland High
March 10 – 4-6PM – Tollgate High
March 17 – 4-6PM – East Bay Collaborative
April 7 – 4-6PM – Southern RI Collaborative
- h. Blackstone Millville Youth Soccer TOPS program for special needs children – contact is Bill Champlin at 508-883-4757 or Coachbill8611@yahoo.com or TOPSoccer@bmyso.org
- i. FEAT's 5th Annual Conference on Autism – April 25, 2008 – at Butler Hospital – registration information at www.featri.org or call 401-886-5015
- j. Circle of Parents Support Groups through RIPIN – 1st Monday of every month from 10AM-11:30AM – schedule is on the handout
- k. RIPIN Workshop Schedule handout
- l. SibLink at Hasbro is looking for children to participate in a research study. Looking for families with one neurotypical child aged 8-15 and one developmentally disabled child aged 3-18 – will take 2 neurotypical children for control group as well – call 401-793-8575
- m. Autism Project calendar of trainings
- n. 2007-2008 Principal and School Contact List
- o. April 10, 2008 – DHS Transition in the Ocean State Transition Conference – Sheraton Hotel in Warwick
- p. RI Dept of Elementary and Secondary Education Office of Diverse Learners – informational sessions to provide overview of major changes to regulations adopted by board of regents effective 7/1/08
-3/31/08 – Southern RI Collaborative – contact Pam Pittman @ 295-2888 x 110
-4/3/08 – East Bay Collaborative – contact Judy O'Donnell @245-4998 x 333
-4/28/08 – West Bay/Tollgate High – contact Eileen Botelho – 456-8411
-4/30/08 – Northern/Cumberland High – contact Debbie Jannetta – 658-5790 x 223

Meeting adjourned.