

QUINCY SCHOOL COMMITTEE

SPECIAL EDUCATION SUBCOMMITTEE MEETING ~ Wednesday, January 20, 2016

A meeting of the Special Education Subcommittee was held on Wednesday, January 20, 2016 at 6:00 pm at the Coddington Building. Present were Mr. James DeAmicis, Mrs. Kathryn Hublely, Ms. Barbara Isola, Mrs. Emily Lebo and Mrs. Anne Mahoney, Chair. Also attending were Superintendent Richard DeCristofaro, Mrs. Catherine Carey, Mrs. Donna Cunningham, Mr. Richard Kelly, Deputy Superintendent Kevin Mulvey, Mrs. Maura Papile, Ms. Judy Todd; Quincy Parent Advisory Council to Special Education Board Members Ms. Beck, Ms. Hurlid, Ms. Nabstedt; Citywide Parent Council Co-President Paula Reynolds, and Ms. Laura Owens, Clerk.

As there was a quorum present, Mrs. Lebo called the meeting to order at 6:05 pm. Special Education Director Judy Todd introduced Patricia Favazza, Ed.D., from the University of Massachusetts/Boston CHAMPPS program, which is currently being conducted at the Della Chiesa Early Childhood Center with 78 children in eight classes. CHAMPPS is a response to the increasing numbers of pre-school age students with special needs, many who lack age-level motor and school readiness skills.

CHAMPPS is two days per week, 30 minutes per day, whole and small group lessons, with individual support as needed. The program has seven units: Foundational Skills (personal space, body awareness; body positions); Walking and Running; Balance, Jumping, Hopping; Catching; Throwing; Striking; Kicking. A unit consists of 6 interactive lessons and features music and follows a consistent pattern and routine. Parent materials are available, with ideas for adaption using materials at home.

Dr. Favazza invited School Committee to observe the program and thanked Ms. Todd, who noted this is an outgrowth of earlier work with Dr. Denning. Ms. Todd said that Dr. Denning is writing a grant to develop a motor activity program for CARES students at Snug Harbor.

Ms. Todd introduced the next item on the agenda, the Special Education Module in Aspen. Many teams, especially School IT, were involved in planning the transition from Easy IEP, beginning with the system-wide rollout in 2013-2014 and continuing into this school year. Training began last June and continued through the fall, with over 200 staff members involved. Staff at all levels transitioned IEPs into Aspen throughout the fall, supported through Professional Development and hands-on problem solving. Each IEP begins with a checklist and timeline, ensuring compliance with special education laws. All teachers have access to online Quick Views of student accommodations. By June 2016, 100% of IEPs will be transitioned into Aspen. Special Education teams are meeting in the spring to review progress, streamline the process and plan for the second year.

Ms. Beck asked if substitute teachers have access to Aspen. Long-term substitutes do, but daily substitutes are provided with paper copies. Ms. Beck asked if parents have access to the IEP, but this

is not available through Aspen currently. Mrs. Lebo asked for clarification on the IEP process, hard copies are printed for parent signature. Ms. Hurlid asked if this is for out of district students as well and Mr. Kelly said basic information is captured in Aspen, but not the full IEPs.

Mrs. Mahoney said it is very exciting that this information is all integrated in Aspen, hopefully will assist with transitional issues, clearly much effort that went into this implementation. Mrs. Mahoney said she hoped in the future the out of district student information would also be available.

Mrs. White asked who is responsible for updating the accommodations. Mr. Kelly said the process is still the same, amendments are made through the team meeting process and once signatures are received, the accommodations are updated.

Mrs. Lebo said it must have been incredible amount of work, thanked the Special Education staff.

Ms. Todd updated on Partnerships: with UMass/Boston, a new research study called "Dance for Fitness" will be started for girls 14-22 with cognitive impairments. With the YMCA, elementary swim program for CARES students are ongoing and middle school CARES had athletic skills support in the fall. Dr. DeCristofaro and Ms. Todd are meeting next week with the YMCA to plan spring activities.

Ms. Beck provided the QPAC update, noting she has met with parents individually to answer questions. Ms. Beck was very complimentary of the Special Education team's assistance in resolving recent individual student issues. A QPAC board member will be attending a Federation conference in March. Ms. Beck encouraged parents and community members to attend

Ms. Beck has applied for grants from Quincy Credit Union, Coastal Heritage Bank, and Eastern Bank for community funding. Plans for the spring Art Contest and Show are underway and Ms. Beck would like to set up a meeting with Dr. DeCristofaro, Ms. Todd, and Ms. Hallett. Wahlburgers will host a tour and lunch at their Hingham restaurant for middle school students, details to be finalized. Sensory Activity events will be scheduled for the winter and spring; one could be an after-school enrichment and the other a parent-child event.

For general parental concerns, a broken link on the Special Education webpage was reported.

Mrs. White asked about the Policy for reporting driver issues to other parents on the same vehicle. Ms. Todd said this procedure can be added to Transportation booklet.

The next Special Education Subcommittee is March 23, 2016.

Mrs. Lebo made a motion to adjourn at 7:15 pm, seconded by Mr. DeAmicis. On a voice vote, the ayes have it.