
Special Education Advisory Council
January 3, 2008
Minutes of Meeting

Members Present: Randy Arnold, Tom Danzl, Brianna Inkster, Emmett Keenan, Kathy Kjolhaug, Cindy Owen, Sarah Rittman, Dr. Elisabeth Rogers, Rebecca Schlough

Dr. Rogers began the meeting with a welcome and introductions. The agenda was reviewed and approved.

Budget Adjustments and Reductions

Dr. Rogers shared information about the proposed budget adjustments and reductions which will be necessary due to the unsuccessful levy this past fall, as well as the conclusion this year of an existing levy and the conclusion in 2008-09 of another existing levy. The district will need to cut 4.8 million dollars for the 2008-09 school year, and the School Board Finance Committee has been meeting to discuss this. District Administration is recommending to the School Board to do a two-year budget process to be clear about the implications of these reductions.

The district's current reserve fund is at 4.2 million dollars, and a levy promise to the community was to build this reserve to 2 million dollars. The recommendation at this time for the 2008-09 school year is to utilize 2.2 million dollars out of the reserve (which keeps the 2 million intact and would fulfill the levy promise), transfer appropriate expenditures up to 1.1 million dollars out of the district Capital budget, \$740,000.00 would need to be cut from Special Education (yielding .5 million dollars of reduction after reimbursement), the Transportation budget would be cut .5 million dollars (via re-routing/re-mapping of existing routes, etc.), and an additional .5 million would still need to be reduced to satisfy the total 4.8 million dollar deficit. For Special Education this would amount to about 10 teacher FTE's (full time equivalents) and approximately 26-28 paraprofessional FTE's (last year's reductions for Special Education were 17.3 teacher FTE's amounting to .5 million dollars).

For 2009-10 the district would be looking at going to the voters again and asking for a levy. If that levy is not passed, we would need to reduce another 4.8 million dollars. .5 million dollars would again be reduced in Special Education, the district would look at the 35 teachers who were hired as a result of the current levy which will expire by the end of the 2008-09 school year (amounting to 1.8 million dollars), student activities could be reduced at approximately \$350,000.00, and further miscellaneous reductions amounting to 2.1 million dollars would be necessary.

Much discussion about expenditures vs. outcomes, how these could be measured, the efforts in developing an integrated service delivery model, results of a recent Special Education Study that was completed, etc.

Scheduling of Meetings

Discussion about the Special Education Advisory Council meeting times. It was agreed to try every other meeting in an evening timeframe to make the meetings more accessible for all. The next meeting has been scheduled to be held at Roosevelt Early Childhood Center on Thursday, **February 21** from 6:00 – 8:00 p.m. We will also arrange for childcare so parents will be able to attend.

InnStep Program Update

Randy Arnold updated the committee about the efforts to relocate the InnStep Program as the Kelly Inn will no longer be able to accommodate this program. Two options are still being looked at: one is securing a spot in Midtown Square, and the other is utilizing the former Catholic Charities building across the street from Cathedral High School. The District's Supervisor of Building and Grounds has looked at both of these sites with regard to remodeling needs, etc. A decision will be made within the next couple of weeks to accommodate a planned move over the March break.

Update on Secondary Program Review (DCD/ASD)

Jennifer York-Barg has agreed to be the lead person to head up this team. She has provided a proposal to establish a small group of people to come up with a process/plan, and the recommendations would be brought forward to a larger group. The small group will consist of Jennifer, Gayle Garrity, Jane (principal from Twin Cities), Marg Moore, Jill Murphy, and Brenda Blackmore. The large group would consist of all members of the small group, and additionally Patty Waletzko, Rebecca Schlough, Tom Danzl, Michelle Hilden, Elisabeth Rogers and a secondary principal representative. The small group will be meeting on January 11 and present to the larger group the last week in January.

Proposed Rules Process (MDE)

Dr. Rogers shared information about several pages of new rules which MDE is proposing. There was a public hearing about this in December with questions/concerns noted. MDE will respond to these questions/concerns and present to Administrative Law Judge who may rule on this if they deem appropriate, or if questions still exist could be presented to a higher level Administrative Law Judge for ruling. Some concerns Dr. Rogers noted were FBA/Behavior Intervention Plans, SLD criteria, evidence-based practice, response to intervention, and LRE including after school and extracurricular activities.

Brochure

Randy and Elisabeth will visit with the Due Process Specialists to discuss avenues of dissemination of the brochure for SEAC membership. Some suggestions were to have information added to the district webpage, purchasing a page for advertising in the Community Ed. booklet(s), and possibly adding to individual building's newsletters.

ARC Grant Application

Cindy Owen indicated that ARC will again be applying for a Parent Training and Mentoring Grant. If they are awarded the grant, they will be recruiting parent facilitators and offering training.

Next Meeting: **February 21, 2008** at Roosevelt Early Childhood Center in the lower level (Room 44) from 6:00 – 8:00 p.m.

Submitted by: Laurie Nolden

These minutes are not official until reviewed and approved by the Special Education Advisory Council.