

SEPAC Meeting Agenda

October 20, 2021

❖ ATTENDEES:

- Special Services Administrators: Jean O'Connell (Director), Stephanie Orr (Supervisor- SE gr. 9-12), Allyson Read (Supervisor- SE Autistic Program), Lisa Vitale-Stanzione (Supervisor- SE gr. K-8) - BT District Administrators: Nick Markarian (Superintendent), - Board of Education: Robin Mckeeon, Jennifer White, Tim Salmon, Guddia Singh - PEC: Somya Bhatnagar, Lauren Small (Co-Presidents) - SEPAC: Meg Findlay(PreK), Kim Fusca (MPS), Jennifer Kuhta & Liz Paolillo (CHS), Colleen Carter & Erica Bell (OSS), Monica Petraglia (LCS), Janice Corrado & Gretchen Debiasi (WAMS), Lisa McNey & Stacey Irvine (Ridge)

KEY: ★ Special Services Responses

↳ INTRODUCTIONS

↳ SS 2021-2022

→ Breakdown of placement/programs by school

★ MP CBAP = 9

CH BD = 2

WAMS CBAP = 2

RHS CBAP = 5

RHS - 3 Vocational skills classes

RHS - we also have + 21 students going to work in both CBAP and Vocational Skills.

2 LLD at WAMS

BD at WAMS is run as RR

LC - 3 LLD

CH = 2 LLD

ALL schools have ICS and RR

Relatedly, services are child-based but placement may be at another school (other than the home school) where the program is offered.

Programs must meet the needs of the child, so district programs may change year to year. Special Services also tries to keep programs in the same building so they can move through elementary school in the same school. New programs may open at OSS as incoming students enter the district.

Additionally, there can be a three year age difference within an elementary school self-contained classroom.

↳ STAFFING

→ Replacements/Substitutions of Sp. Ed. staff

- ◇ Parents feel they're not adequately informed/updated about staff changes/absences
- ◇ Current/upcoming vacancies &/or new hires?
- ◇ Behaviorist/BCBA @ CHS
- ◇ CBAP teacher @ MPS

★ Special Services continues to face staffing challenges. They are trying to recruit teachers through advertisements in the Newspaper, Indeed.com, as well as all of the usual channels. Currently, they are looking for two teachers to fill positions in the CBAP program. A new district-wide BCBA has been hired and is awaiting a start date. There is an opening for an in class support teacher for a split role at CHS and LCS.

When a teacher leaves the district, parents are notified after the BOE meeting when it has been approved. Jean will remind CM to send prompt notice of any teacher changes. Behaviorists work throughout the district so notice is not given. Substitute pool is low as well.

↳ BUSSING

→ Follow up

- ◊ Training Dates
- ◊ Qualification guidelines for bus Aides
- ◊ Covid-related staff shortage impact on Sp.Ed. bus staff?
- ◊ Wait time between arrival at school and school staff coming to accept the students

★ Training for bus drivers and aides will take place on October 26 by two Case Managers. Translation to Spanish is provided if needed. State guidelines for a bus aide are to watch a video then take a timed test at which point they will receive a certificate.

Any issues with bussing should be addressed to the school's Assistant Principal and the case manager.

Staff needs to greet busses as they arrive.

Please note, students may have different programs and/or abilities when it comes to disembarking the school bus.

↳ COMMUNICATION

- Response time/acknowledgement of parent emails- What do parents need to know?
- Forwarding parent emails
- When will CBAP parent trainings return to in-person?
- Inclusion in school events/programs provided to Gen.Ed. students *(specifically mentioned for RHS)*
 - ◊ Notify parents about upcoming events well in advance
 - impact to schedule/staff/locations
 - adequate time to make necessary arrangements for students needing support
- Sp.Ed. staff liaison to school administrators *(specifically mentioned for RHS)*

★ Special Services tries to respond to emails within 48 hours; however, September is particularly challenging. CM do not work in summer, their first day of school is the day before students begin the year. Should an issue arise during the summer, call special services and one of the supervisors will intervene.

Jean meets with CM monthly by group.

Parent Training: Covid cases are still impacting CBAP and the priority is keeping kids in class. Once COVID cases quiet down then parents will be allowed to come to the building for training.

Special Services are offering in-home parent training. This is different from home programming and is a great resource to help parents.

Parents should use the HUB at Ridge to see upcoming building and grade activities. If there is an event that a parent would like their child to participate in, reach out to the CM or teacher. The onus is on the parent to inquire about activities. Special Services will make sure there is staff to accompany students. <https://sites.google.com/bernardsboe.com/rhs-learning-hub/home>

For events during the school day, where a change in schedule is warranted, teachers will notify the parents.

The communication sequence regarding questions and concerns is as follows:

1. Teacher
2. Case Manager
3. Supervisor
4. Director

↳ JOB PLACEMENT & VOCATIONAL PROGRAM

- When will off-site placements return to a regular schedule?
- With rotating drop schedule there is no 9th period. When are students going out for vocational placement?

★ Placement for postgrads has returned. There are 25 postgrads currently placed. Job sampling begins at 16. It doesn't occur every day so the rotate/drop schedule will not have an impact.

↳ **TRANSITION FAIR**

- **Date? In-person? Masks?**
- **Include**
 - ◇ College options
 - ◇ Day Programs
 - ◇ Internship opportunities
 - ◇ Legal counsel
 - ◇ Government Agencies

★ **The transition coordinators are planning a transition fair. It will take place virtually like the college fairs this year. Dates will be shared as confirmed. Transition coordinators are trying to work out whether it will be one event or a series of events.**

↳ **RHS**

- **Will Friday night social events return this year?**
- **LLD**
 - ◇ Has the program been renamed? (C.I.- Cognitively Impaired or Functionally Impaired)
 - ◇ Why do students in LLD have the same teacher for all 4 years in highschool?

★ **Special Services is trying to plan social events and movie nights this year. Students can be spaced a safe distance apart. Dates coming**

CI will have a name change and become the Functional Life Skills or Vocational Skills program. Incidentally, the BD program will also become the Bridges Program. Descriptions on Special Services website forthcoming.

↳ **K-5**

- **Sex education/Body awareness training**
- **Student Chromebooks**
- **Outdoor mask exemptions- staff remind students of the option to remove masks**
- **Older students using playground designed for younger children at MPS**

★ **Sex Ed/Body Awareness is taught based on the general education curriculum but modified with family input.**

Special Services encourages parents to reach out to CM should they think their child needs to have this as an IEP goal. Body awareness teaching usually begins in third grade, with hygiene.

Self Contained classes have Chromebooks just like general education classes. The chromebooks will not be brought home.

K--2: 15 chromebooks per class

3--5: 1:1 chromebook per student

MPS staff will begin to encourage students to remove masks when outside and socially distanced.

Both playgrounds are used at MPS. The CBAP Supervisor will remind teachers and aides to facilitate engagement and not congregate while children are on the playground.

↳ **I.E.P. & STUDENT SUPPORTS**

- **How does BTSD handle the transition of students with existing I.E.P. when transferring into the district?**
 - ◇ Especially when the student transfers in after the school year is already underway
- **Why is “instructional support” sometimes offered in place of Sp.Ed. support/services?**
- **Plan for students with I.E.P.s who have to quarantine due to testing positive or being close contact**
 - ◇ Teachers/classes available live on zoom? Would it be completely asynchronous learning?
 - ◇ Has the district considered testing to stay for asymptomatic close contacts, especially Sp.Ed. students?

- What additional SEL considerations are being implemented/considered to address the negative impact Covid restrictions have had on the emotional wellbeing & social skills of students?

★ IDEA and state law practices are followed. This includes:

The district has 30 days to review the IEP and offer services compatible with what the former IEP or Service Plan included. An IEP meeting will then take place where an evaluation and all information is discussed and a district IEP is formulated. The district may request additional information so a temporary plan may be put in place.

Instructional Support is a general education program in K-8 for ELA and math. Students may be placed in IS until November and then they will have to meet a criteria to remain. Students may have IS in one subject and also an IEP in another.

Related services will be extended to keep a student on track should a student miss sessions due to quarantine.

Ridge is initiating a new SEL program called TEA. For students in other schools, reach out to CM to discuss any student emotional concerns.
<https://sites.google.com/bernardsboe.com/rhs-tea-time/tea-time-home?fbclid=IwAR0ewURXwfce6ewLSIOHuMPioF8ZqXvIq1nzp9e2524TAa20qgcqROA0SEw>

↳ FOLLOW UP ITEMS

- We're promoting parent CBAP meetings with Allyson

<http://bernardspec.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/CBAP-Parent-Meeting-10.27.21.pdf>

- **Special Services** Lunch & Learns- we will be promoting.

■ **Special Services - Lunch & Learns 2021-2022.pdf**

↳ PEC/SEPAC UPDATES

- PEC & SEPAC Coffees have been successful, many new faces!
- PEC Family Picnic was October 10th, with visits from BT Police, local Fire & First Aid volunteers.
- Bollywood Dance program has been a hit!
- Exercise class with Mr. Tony registration is full