



**Acton-Boxborough Special  
Education Parent Advisory Council  
Board Meeting - Wednesday,  
January 14, 2009**

## **MEETING MINUTES**

### **I. CALL TO ORDER:**

Nancy Sherburne called the meeting to order.

The meeting was attended by: Nancy Sherburne; Terry Lindgren, Bill Guthlein, Valerie Ryan, Matt Kidder

### **II. APPROVAL OF SEPTEMBER MINUTES:**

The minutes from the November Board meeting were presented for approval. Clarification from Liza had been provided via e-mail prior to the meeting. With regard to the number of students in the ABA program Liza stated that the numbers have ranged from as few as 5 in 2005 to a high of 11 over the past three years. Liza went on to state that the current projection for FY 2010 is 3 children. Liza also provided clarification regarding the ABA programmatic model. Liza states that in the fall of 2007, a new model was introduced which had the ABA Team Leader providing program supervision (a .5 FTE), as well as teaching one session of the Integrated Preschool (also a .5 FTE). The session taught by the ABA Team Leader included the three year olds in the ABA Program (Monday – Thursday AM) and the respective staff assigned to them, providing adequate time to work with that staff and those students while leaving the remainder of the week for supervision of students and staff in other classes. Liza went on to state that the model is developmentally and educationally sound. After discussing the clarifications, a motion was made to approve the November minutes. The motion was seconded and the minutes were unanimously approved.

### **III. ORGANIZATIONAL/BUSINESS ISSUES:**

#### **A. ABA Lead at Elementary School Level:**

A brief discussion took place as Nancy shared with the group that she had heard from parents who had wanted to know the qualifications of the individual taking over the ABA program at Conant during Jana Bardsley's maternity leave. Nancy shared that the interim Lead had a waiver to serve as an academic teacher. Matt stated that she was going to be certified in the Spring of 2009 and that she is familiar to the program, the staff, and the students.

#### **Action Item:**

- **Matt offered to get additional details regarding the interim Lead's qualifications.**

- B. Pupil Services Budget:  
Liza had previously given Nancy and Terry a brief summary stating that more information was needed on potential reductions for the summer program and assistants. Matt added that more information would be available at the next meeting. Terry brought up the need for the opportunity to give feedback. He suggested the PAC have a presence at meetings to express the needs with regard to special education to add meaning to the numbers.
- C. Quarterly Meetings:  
Nancy mentioned that the first meeting prior to the winter break went well and that the meetings are part of providing a bridge between parents and the administration. Upcoming meetings are scheduled as follows:  
Tuesday, January 27<sup>th</sup> 4:00-6:00 pm, Tuesday April 14<sup>th</sup> 4:00-6:00 pm, and Tuesday June 9<sup>th</sup> 4:00-6:00 pm.
- D. SpEd PAC Contribution to Superintendent Search Process:  
Terry shared that 90 people attended the various focus groups held by the Superintendent Search Task Force. The SpEd PAC focus group had approximately 12 attendees. Follow-up is needed to ensure that our questions get asked. Nancy shared that Heather and Mike were grateful for the input from the PAC and had gained insight into the needs of parents of special needs children.
- E. SpEd PAC Survey:  
The survey is still open and there are over 60 entries now.
- F. ABA Preschool Changes:  
Nancy shared with the group that the ABA Program Lead is resigning as of Friday. A letter was sent to the parents in the program stating that Jill McGrail and Shelagh Conway will be consulting to the program while the search for a new Lead is under way. A suggestion was made that parents in the program have the opportunity to share qualities and qualifications important to them with regard to the new hire.
- G. Pupil Services' Task Force re: Technology use in IEP Development Meetings:  
Nancy shared that Liza is looking for staff to participate in the Task Force and to investigate hardware and software options. Terry stated his interest. Matt stated the need to move forward to identify critical numbers. A discussion took place around the goals of determining the important components, working out the trouble spots, and prototyping the technology. The goal is to use the technology to streamline the IEP development process. One possibility might be modifying a baseline IEP (such as the last active IEP) on a Smart Board during IEP meetings. This would allow all of the Team members to exchange information and

modify the IEP and then leave the Team meeting with a draft version of the new IEP.

H. Clarification of Parent vs. Team Vision Statement in IEP:

Reports had been made to the PAC that the district was using the Vision Statement section of the IEP for a Team Vision. Nancy stated that Liza had given her the assurance that there was no policy change with regard to the Vision Statement. It was agreed that this area of the IEP is for the parents to share their vision for their child.

I. Treasurer's Report:

Bill reported our cash balance - \$528.21 - and opened the discussion to ideas to raise revenue for the PAC. He asked about the PAC philosophy on fundraising. Discussion of ideas to raise money included bake sales and flower bulb sales, and writing grant proposals. It was mentioned in this discussion that some PACs request donations from PTOs so as not to compete for funds and to be unified. Nancy mentioned that she and Terry had discussed putting a presentation together and taking it to the PTOs and asking for \$200.00 from each school. This money could be used to fund speakers, etc. It was mentioned that it was important that fundraising does not detract from the overall focus of the PAC in providing feedback to the district and support to parents. It was suggested that we look into being identified as a non-profit.

**Action Item:**

- **Bill will look into state non-profit form**

**IV. OPEN ISSUES:**

A. Process for Combining Outside Specialists' Recommendations with District Evaluations/Recommendations and Appropriate Incorporation into IEPs:

Nancy updated the group on the ongoing conversations she and Terry are having with Liza. The goal is to have transparency into how this works. Reports continue to come in verifying that parents do not feel that the evaluations and reports from their private professionals (i.e. neuropsychological evaluations) are being given adequate consideration by the Team and/or appropriately incorporated into the child's IEP.

B. Mandatory Special Education Training/Professional Development for Regular and Special Education Staff:

Matt stated that a timetable is being developed for staff training. The district does a lot of staff development throughout the year although participation is generally voluntary.

C. Increased After school/Extracurricular programming and enhanced Summer School:

The PAC is continuing to receive input from parents about the need for better programming.

**V. ADJOURNMENT:**

A motion was made to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded and unanimously approved.

**VI. NEXT MEETING:**

Next month's PAC General Meeting is scheduled for February 10<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 P.M. at the Junior High School Library.

*Minutes Respectfully Submitted by Valerie Ryan, Secretary*