

**Woonsocket Special Education Local Advisory Committee
Meeting Minutes
February 1, 2007**

Attendees Denise Bouley- SELAC Co Chair, Lynn Kaspiskas-SELAC Co Chair, Shannon Maldonado-Parent, Tammy Beauperlant-parent, Jeanne Nespolo-Secretary, Mike Nespolo- parent,Paula Dube-parent,Marzena Piorkowski-parent,Susan Niles-parent&TA, Margie Conley-parent, Carole Lerner-Special Ed Directo, Dr. Maureen Macera-Superendent, Kit Mayers-Para 1 on 1, Michelle Johnson-parent, Jeanine Garceau-parent & TA sub, Leslie Talamini Union TA rep & TA, Ayoola A-parent, Carmen Boucher-parent, Brenda Galvin-parent & middle school PTO president, Allen Auclair-school committee rep, Olga Gariepy-WMS teacher, Shirly Parry-WMS selfcontained teacher, Matt Lee-PC student, EricaTymeck-PC student, Victoria Schnaith-PC student, Jen Hanser-PC student

Old Business

Looking for feed back on new systems for sending out SELAC monthly meeting flyers.

Flyers will be printed at the Career Tech School and will be completed by the Friday prior to the next Thursday's meeting. SELAC members will deliver flyers to all elementary schools for distribution to all students. Flyers will also be delivered to the Middle and High School for distribution to all students in Special Ed classrooms/Programs. All flyers must go home that Monday. Carole Lerner has given this information to all principals personally and thru interoffice memo.

Elaine Hazzard will be responsible for delivering the flyers to all out of district placements.

Announcements & Resources

Family Resources Community Action-Flyers showing all programs the agency provides and contact info. Listings of many resources available in the Northern RI Region also shown on the following website www.famresri.org

Governor Pothier School is having a fundraiser at Pizza Hut the first Thursday of each month, 4-8 PM, to raise money for the expansion of the school playground. It will continue until June. So have enjoy pizza then come to the meeting!

Fathers First-Super Bowl Night, February 3, 2007 for fathers of special needs children. For more info contact Mike Masse @ fathers1st.org.

Family Resources Community Action currently has openings for a new program called Project Impact for young mothers or women 16 to 18 that are no longer attending school who would like to earn a GED, life skills, employment and parent/child services. For more info contact Nery Garcia @235-6068 or e mail dgarcia@famresri.org.

The **LINK** a new quarterly newsletter that contains information on resources, activities events and upcoming workshops in the RI region. To receive this information contact Ester Brito by

email ebrito@ric.edu 456-8072 or go on the website www.sherlockcenter.org.

New Business

Carolyn Girard SELAC Co Chair notified Denise Bouley that she was unable to continue as the co-chair of SELAC. Denise Bouley nominated Lynn Kaspiskas for this position. Ms. Bouley opened the floor for any members to add other nominations, none were made. SELAC members present voted to approve the nomination of Lynn Kaspiskas for the recent vacant Co Chair position. Lynn thanked all and accepted the position. Special thanks to Carolyn and her family for all their involvement and help the last 3 years.

The updated SELAC by laws were approved by SELAC members attending today's meeting and by email.

SELAC Co Chairs will request the updated by laws be added to school committee agenda for approval.

SELAC needs someone to design the workshop flyers. Marzena Poirkowski volunteered.

Question and Answer Session with the Superintendent and Special Ed Director

- Q:** Concerns with the STRIDE program. What are the expectations of the program?
- A:** Dr. Marcera is aware that there are problems with the program. There are currently consultants that are reviewing the program. Also there have been teachers from Feinstein placed into the program. All teachers must be highly qualified by fiscal 2006.
- Q:** Highly Qualified, does that mean teachers are also trained for special need students?
- A:** Teachers should be trained for all areas of the class room/students. Specialist will be brought in to train teachers and staff.
- Q:** Has the school partnered with Bradley Hospital?
- A:** Yes, There will be training for children with Autism, learning disabilities and developing a team for Behavioral issues due to disabilities.
- Q:** Can SELAC members be involved in the restructure of the 07/08 yr Middle School program?
- A:** Yes.
- Q:** How will parents be informed of the 07/08 school budget?
- A:** Dr. Macera will be asking Carmon Boucher PAC member to possibly hold a forum for parents. Dr. Macera is also looking to possibly stagger the school starting times for the next school year to cut cost in bussing.
- Q:** Has there been any procedures put in place for special need students to meet the required portfolio requirements?
- A:** The portfolios are meant to show case the students best work. As there is alternate assessment testing for special need students there is also alternate assessments for these students. There are also alternative programs that

some students can use to help in achieving the graduating requirements.

Q: Can the Virtual Learning Academy (VLA) be used for home schooling? The

A: VLA is not just for special need students. The use of this program for home schooling can be discussed. You would need to contact Pat Dubois, Director of Grants and assessments at (401) 767-4614.

Q: Does a passing mark on the student's report card include the required portfolio? A Passing grade means a student will graduate?

A: Yes

Q: If a student is non-proficient what does a parent/student need to do to correct the problem?

A: The parent and student would need to meet with the teacher to see what needs to be completed for the student to be proficient.

Q: How long have portfolios been in effect? Portfolio requirements have been in place for 2 years. The class of 2008 will need to meet the portfolio requirements to graduate.

Q: ESL Students-Special NECAP Testing, how is the district working with schools to bring up students grades? The school is creating multi cultural classrooms. There will also possibly be split grades leaving students with the same teacher for more than 1 year. All teachers will be highly qualified

Q: ESL students with special needs are having major problems meeting requirements. What is being done to help these students? There are 3-4 teachers that are qualified ESL and special education teachers. There are also teacher assistants assigned to these classes. The concerns with the High School requirements for these students are currently being worked on.

Q:

A: Are assessment test being used for ESL students? Are the classes being multi grade classes or looping? Yes assessment testing is being used and trying to use the looping process for these students.

Q:

A: What is looping? Student will have the same teacher for 2 years.

Q: What are the requirements for resource teachers? What happens when

A: resource teacher is out? Resource teachers have master degrees and many are special education qualified. There should always be a replacement if the resource teacher is out.

Q:

A:

What if a replacement is not available. Can a teacher assistant fill in? The Special Education chair should make the necessary arrangements to make sure the position is covered if the resource teacher is out. Special education department can give you the names and contact info for the 4 chairs.

Q: How come the High School students do not have agenda books? Can a parent purchase one?

A: The costs of the books are very expensive. A parent can contact Mr. Benjamin to see if a parent can purchase the agenda.

Q: If a parent has a question on 504's who does the parent contact?

A: The 504 plans are handled by the school nurse and the school principal. Diane Engles is the head nurse. She is trained to write 504 plans. There is also a Department handbook for the 504's process.

Q: Has the district decided to add resources for 504's?

A: Resources are for IEP students but temporary arrangements can be made for 504 students.

Q: Can Resource teachers currently handle the workload?

A: The current workload is 30 students per resource teacher.

Q: When will contract books be available?

A: Leslie Talamini (Union Rep for TA's) will handle and provide a copy to Denise Bouley.

Q: Can the VLA be used for extra learning? Can a parent purchase?

A: Parents can purchase the VLA at a cost of \$350 per year per student. The parent can contact Jonathan Gallishaw, Director of Technology at (401) 767-4639 for grades 2-12.

Q: Students with behavioral issues due to disability, how is this handled?

A: The intervention team would review each child individually and handle accordingly. There would be resources put in place to help the child.

Q: Do the teachers have the right to restrain a child?

A: A teacher can restrain a child only if the child is in danger or endangering another student. All teachers should be trained for this.

Next Meeting

The next meeting is schedule for March 1, 2007

Meeting Agenda is How to use the Picture Exchange Program to enhance Communication. Presenters will be Leslie Paterson (OT) and Beth Murray (SLP)