

Woonsocket Special Education Local Advisory Committee
Meeting Minutes
October 4, 2007

Attendees Lynn Kapiskas-SELAC Co Chair, Wayne Poitras, Melissa Deschamps, Donna Lee Houle, Dawn Cote, Tammy Beauparlant, M. Johnson, S. Niles, Marzena Piorkowski, Brenda Galvin, Paula Dube, Kit Mayers, LuAnn DiSpirito

Old Business

- Website
 - Minutes still not posted to website (2/07, 5/07 and 6/07) – could not be addressed as no one was present from administration
 - Current SELAC flyer needs to be posted – could not be addressed as no one was present from administration
- Changes to Elementary Special Ed Programs for 2007-2008 – Status – could not be addressed as no one was present from administration but see below -
- Changes to Middle School Special Ed Programs for 2007-2008 – Status – could not be addressed as no one was present from administration but see below

New Business

- 2007-2008 School Year Services and Information –could not be addressed as no one was present from administration
- SELAC 2007-2008 Agenda
 - November – PECs (Picture Exchange Communication) with Leslie Patterson and Beth Murray
- Announcements, information and/or concerns from attendees
 - With regard to the SELAC’s request for updates regarding how the changes in the elementary and middle school special education programs have progressed, Ms. Lerner has requested that this be done by means of formal presentations to the SELAC by each of the special education chairs. After discussion, it was agreed that this should be done over the course of two (2) meetings. Presentations could be made at one meeting regarding the elementary and high school programs and at a second meeting regarding the middle school programs. It was suggested that presenters be given a time frame of no more than 20-30 minutes. In the

course of this discussion, the issue of the new graduation requirements and how they will apply to special education students was again raised and still appears to be unresolved. It was agreed by all present that this issue must be raised at each and every meeting until some response is obtained. It was also suggested that this issue be raised before our School Committee.

- We will ask Emily Klein to return to explain the new state IDEA regulations and address any questions. This will likely occur in the spring. A summary of some changes is available on the table. Any person interested is encouraged to attend the public meetings regarding these changes. See the RIDE website for further information.

- School Committee member Anita McGuire Forcier has asked for SELAC's input regarding the interior planning for the new middle school in light of the special education population. Anyone interested in commenting is invited to contact her. (NB – She did appear at the end of the meeting and some members did have an opportunity to speak with her regarding these issues.)

- The question was raised whether SELAC should ask the school department to assign an individual to be the “go to” person for children with 504 plans. It was also suggested that the SELAC should have a speaker present at a meeting regarding 504 plans and what they really are. Some concerns were raised regarding whether school departments are turning away from 504 plans as they are, on their face, an admission of discrimination that has already occurred. This matter will be further discussed at future meetings.

- Another child with autism was switched from one school to another at the beginning of school with no prior notice and despite promises that no such change would occur. The very angry parent and grandparent were present to bring this to SELAC's attention and to ask for guidance as to whom this issue should be discussed. It was recommended that the parent and grandparent contact Carole Lerner and/or Dr. Macera. When they advised that they had done so with no response, they were advised to schedule appointments to discuss this issue.