



Billerica Parent Advisory Council for Special Education Minutes for Meeting with SPED Directors December 13, 2006 @ 3:00 PM

Location: Special Education Department

Present: Two SPED administrators, Dr. Steven German and Thomas Walsh;
PAC Officers: Priscilla Aufiero, Joanne Barry, Michele DeParasis, Gina Maniscalco
and Carol Rose; Parent: Doreen Johansen

- **Status**

School Positions Openings - Dr. German reported that the Ditson School Psychologist position has been advertised in the Boston Globe and will be posted on the Department of Education (DOE) website.

Dr. German also reported that a Team Chairperson (at the High School and Marshall Program) will be leaving. This position will be posted on the DOE website and advertised in the newspaper. In the meantime, the department is trying to get a replacement in on a temporary basis. This should not have an impact on the annual reviews and reevaluations, as these will be covered by other staff. If parents should find this a problem, they can contact their school principal or special education liaison.

Dr. German reported that the department has hired Jodi Babaloni, an ABA Trained Specialist and Jackie Warren a BCBA specialist. Jodi will be working at the Ditson School and Project Support. Jackie Warren will provide consulting services at the Ditson and the Hajjar Schools.

Joanne Barry asked Dr. German for a copy of the open job descriptions in the event someone should call her to express an interest in one of the positions

Other - Joanne asked Carol Rose about the BPAC's website resource information link. Carol reported that the Out of District contact, K. Jarvis, needed updating. Joanne also expressed concern about the current phone system at the Special Education Department. She explained that when a parent calls the main number, the phone is left unanswered because there is no voice mail when people aren't available to answer the phone. Also, there is really no efficient way for a parent to communicate with Dr. German and/or individual chairs. Dr. German acknowledged this problem and is working with the School Department to get the communications system updated for the department. In the



meantime, people can contact Diane, Dr. German's secretary, to relay any urgent messages.

Also, it was recommended that a Chair in/out board be placed in a visible place in the department. This way, when parents call, the secretaries can easily see if people are in the building or at another location. This will improve the perception of the Department to outsiders and make more efficient use of the secretaries' time.

Joanne reported that based on the school committee's vote, the standard for all school delays (due to inclement weather, etc.) will be two hours. Michele expressed that a delay could have an impact on scheduled IEP meetings. Dr. German stated that there isn't much that can be done to rectify any inconveniences that this may cause. History has proven this to not be an issue. Carol will post a general notice on the website for parents to view in the event of a school delay.

- **New Business**

Gina Maniscalco reported that she went to the recent School Committee Meeting and learned that the Marshall Middle School has a Math Incentive Program and was wondering why the Locke Middle School didn't offer the same. This is something that can be discussed at the middle school principal's meeting.

Gina asked what type of training/education a general education teacher needs to teach children with special needs or receiving services on an IEP. Dr. German reported that it would depend on the grade level; the higher grades mandate SPED certification. The Superintendent sets the guidelines.

Joanne will give Dr. German topics for consideration to be reviewed by the middle school principals (i.e., implement language arts study skills, etc.). These items should be brought to the School Committee for budget review since this is for the good of the entire middle school student population.

Doreen asked Dr. German about the Vocational Component at the High School level. How can we prepare the Compass Students to be successful citizens in our community? Dr. German said the student needs to be ready for this component and that the Team needs to recommend this in order to include it in the student's IEP.

Meeting Adjourned.