

Billerica Parent Advisory Council for Special Education
Meeting Minutes for November 6, 2008
7:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.

Location: Billerica High School Lecture Hall

Present: Sue Hopkins, BPAC Chair, Denise Depierro BPAC Co-Chair; Priscilla Aufiero (Secretary), Donna Gadbois (Contact), Carol Rose (Webmaster)

5 People in Attendance

- **Meet and Greet**

A discussion took place regarding the possibility of arranging for a “meet and greet” night. Sue distributed a list of new personnel in the Billerica Public school district. Since there are about 56 new hires, and the BPAC and school calendars are booked solid for the next two months, the consensus was to pass on trying to arrange the meeting. In place of the meeting, Sue will send a letter to all of the new school personnel welcoming them to the district and providing a brief overview of the BPAC and incorporate a blurb about our goals for the entire school district. Donna Gadbois mentioned that a similar letter was done years ago and will look for the sample letter in the files. Donna will forward the letter to Priscilla and she will revise it and prepare it for Sue’s signature.

- **The PAC’s Role in the District**

Sue initiated a discussion on our role in the school district and solicited ideas on how to get the principals, school staff and more parents involved with the BPAC. Some ideas included:

- 1) Perhaps, as was discussed before with Dr. Serio (Superintendent), we could propose a change in the name of the Special Education program to Support Services similar to what most school districts have. Special Education or the “SPED” label seems to have stereotypical labels attached to it. FAT CITY, a movie created by Rich Lavoie, is a great start to clearing perceptions of Special Education. Perhaps this movie could be recommended as a Professional Development workshop for teachers and paraprofessionals.

- 2) Community grants: Raise funds to schedule professional speakers for the next coming school year.
- 3) Getting the word out about our accomplishments: Taping of the School Committee Meetings, Got Books Fundraiser which benefited the entire school community, etc.
- 4) Encouraging parents to be involved in their child's education by keeping them informed of School Committee Meetings by listing dates on our BPAC website calendar.

- **Fundraising**

Sue reported that she will be meeting with Dr. Serio regarding the Got Books fundraiser.

In addition, Sue will attend the next PTO President's meeting and remind them that this fundraiser is giving back to the school district and it is a collaborating effort for the community. Their profit is 70% while the BPACs is 30%.

Proposed Fundraisers:

- a. Spring Calendar
- b. Fuddruckers

- **New Business**

Donna Gadbois mentioned that the Holiday Tree Event at the Billerica Public Library is approaching very quickly. She expressed that if we want to continue to participate in this event as in previous years, we will need to think about a theme. Donna proposed a Carnival Theme. All were in favor. She will solicit volunteers within the next week or two to get going on the decorating.

Sue announced that the next BPAC meeting will be on November 20th and the presentation will be on Dyslexia presented by the Massachusetts Branch of International Dyslexia Association.

Meeting Adjourned.