

SNAC



Special Needs Advisory Council

Nantucket, Massachusetts

Laura Steele, Suzanne Fronzuto – Co-Chairs

SNAC Meeting Minutes

September 18, 2019

The meeting was called to order at approximately 6:00 PM, facilitated by co-chair Laura Steele. There were 15 attendees, including several new faces.

After introductions, Laura Steele read the mission of the SNAC and outlined the main goal of this first meeting of the year: To create a current year plan based on the needs and interests of all its participants.

It was voted that the minutes from the May 15th meeting, with a correction made in Paragraph 5*, be accepted. Additionally, a typographical error+ was noted on the agenda for this meeting, also requiring correction.

Special Services director Michele Brady talked about her position with the Nantucket Public Schools and her role within the SNAC. She also briefly explained Massachusetts Open Meeting Law as it pertains to SNAC (the posting requirements of the committee's agenda and minutes). She also outlined the structure of the SNAC meetings: A two-hour time block; the first half consisting of the business meeting, and the second portion a parent-only support group known as Uncommon Parents. Michele expressed the availability of interpreters at SNAC meetings, with notice to her office provided in advance.

Laura Steele raised the question of possible interest in inviting the parent group for English learners (EL PAC) which meets the first Friday of every month in the elementary school conference room, to attend a SNAC meeting or otherwise partner with the SNAC.

For purposes of tracking SNAC's outreach efforts, newcomers present at the meeting were invited to share where they had learned about the SNAC. Responses included the Reminder app, teacher(s), the e-blast from the Special Services director, Facebook and fellow parent(s). With the intent of continued outreach, Laura Steele solicited volunteers to distribute flyers and answer questions about the SNAC at upcoming school open house events. Volunteers were: Grace Hull for the CPS Open House 09/25/19, Lora Kebbati for the NHS Open House 09/26/19, with Kristen Dussault attending the events at NES and NIS, representing FONPS as well as the SNAC. Utilizing the Remind app as a companion to SNAC's Facebook page and the SPED director's e-blast was discussed. Grace Hull created an account for the SNAC at the meeting, and further discussion will take place at the October meeting to determine how best to get the word out to parents on how to join.

Laura Steele provided a synopsis from her attendance at the Superintendent's Coffee held on 09/12/19, including Mr. Cozort's discussion on the TA shortage in the district. Michele was able to provide a current status on this, with an encouraging update on new hires and staffing levels at the various schools. Mandy Mason attended the NIS Principal's Coffee on 09/13/19 and shared her impressions. The SPED Director Coffee was held on 09/10/19, and Michele discussed the idea of holding an informal coffee in future where school staff could also be invited.

The SNAC is organized to empower parents, school staff and community professionals to collaborate in a positive decision making process to plan and implement educational programs for students with special needs.

The SNAC will support, guide, advocate, advise and educate parents, Nantucket schools, and the community on the rights and needs of children with disabilities and their families.

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Laura Steele provided a recap of her recent discussion with Jill Precopio, Executive Director-New England Chapter of Autism Speaks. Jill and Lauren Amendola, Director of Community Outreach had presented at the 11/28/18 SNAC meeting and invited attendees to share their thoughts and feedback on the Nantucket Autism Speaks Resource Center. Laura's conversation with Jill indicated that the search for the departing Nantucket Resource Center director in December had been suspended as the larger Autism Speaks organization continued to concentrate its resources on research and other nationally and globally focused programs.

A robust discussion regarding future meetings for the next quarter, events, topics of interest and other initiatives transpired as follows:

- Agenda ideas for future meetings:
 - OCT: New NPS Deputy Superintendent Dr. Elizabeth Hallett; Kathi Hackett and Renee Gamberoni of MVCS and Jenna Zoino from DDS (discussion of their services and an upcoming workshop 11/06/19 on financial planning for parents of children with disabilities.)
 - NOV: Potentially inviting Laura Stanley, ABA provider for Nantucket Public Schools and Mollie Whiting from Southeastern ABA.
- School Coffees and School Committee Meetings: Attendance is strongly encouraged; regular SNAC presence (through liaisons or other parents) would be ideal.
- Other Topics:
 - Pre/post-transition planning for NHS students (similar to NIS presentation at May 2019 SNAC Meeting)
 - "Roll out to Summer" presentation or workshop; invite staff from Nantucket STAR, Nantucket Boys & Girls Club and other organizations that might offer programs to increase inclusion opportunities.

The meeting adjourned at approximately 7:00 PM, with the next meeting scheduled for October 16, 2019.

Respectfully submitted,

Lora R. Kebbati, Secretary of SNAC

Approved through a vote of SNAC members on _____.

*Correction to 05/15/19 Minutes:

Para. 5 – Add the following: "**Social gathering in December**" and "**TBD**" to the 06/17/20 meeting.

+Correction to 09/18/19 Agenda:

Item 2 – The Review and Acceptance of minutes are for the **May 15, 2019** meeting.

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