

SNAC



Special Needs Advisory Council

Nantucket, Massachusetts

Laura Steele, Suzanne Fronzuto – Co-Chairs

SNAC Meeting Minutes

November 18, 2020

(Note: The meeting was held by video conference via ZOOM App)

The meeting was called to order at approximately 6:00 PM with 14 people in attendance at the start of the meeting, including several new parents. An opening welcome by co-chair Laura Steele was followed by participant introductions. The minutes of the October 21, 2020 meeting were accepted.

Guest:

- Kathi Hackett, Program Coordinator - Family Support Center of Disability Services / MVCS

Kathi introduced Carol White, Family Support Specialist, also in attendance at the meeting, and explained that programs and services provided by their office are funded through the Department of Developmental Services. They are about ready to hire a support specialist for Nantucket with a start date of January 2021. Kathi provided information on the resources and programs available through agency, including a robust Facebook page, seasonal newsletter with updates, home activities and postings of trainings, a Thursday evening sign-in service, along with provider and agency information and other resources. A scavenger hunt was just held on both islands, and MVCS also partnered with Nantucket STAR for materials for their Adventure Pods and a cooking program with Nantucket Culinary. Future activities will be announced when the new specialist for Nantucket starts in January. Carol will be doing a virtual training on 12/9 at 6:30 on visual schedules, routines and supports at home and is also working on a sign language training for 2021. The FCSN is currently offering a three-part workshop series this month and next on basic rights – Evaluation and Eligibility, Understanding the IEP, and Transition Planning, with future offerings listed on their website. The ARC of Massachusetts is also kicking off a series beginning this month in honor of Caregiver Appreciation Month. MASS Families Organizing for Change along with MASS Advocates for Children created a log for virtual learning so parents could track progress or regression of their students. The Island Disability Coalition in partnership with the FCSN and MVCS is also hosting a transition planning workshop.

Director Update:

- Deb Gately, Director of Special Services
Deb provided an update of the transition back to in-person learning. Information will be going out to parents on the schools' partnership with Aperture Education. The social emotional universal screener,

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Director Update (continued):

the DESSA assessment, helps obtain data to get a pulse on how students are doing. Teachers do the assessment and work with families to get services. A comprehensive training on the assessment was done, and the assessment will be administered this month.

Progress reports will go out with report cards, which is not standard protocol but only a temporary practice. The date for NHS reports to come home is 12/2; all other schools 12/21. The special needs department webpage will be updated with this information.

Deb is doing educator evaluations and has been spending time in the classrooms. She additionally continues to be in the various schools four days a week working with students and teachers and truly enjoys seeing the students. She expressed her admiration and gratitude of staff for their hard work and their support of the protocols in place that promote the health and safety of the students in the schools.

CPS principal Mike Horton expressed his pleasure at the return to in-person learning. The students in the three cohorts that are back in the classrooms are getting a good education and a lot of attention. There is more concern for the Cohort D students who remain in full remote learning, which the school is monitoring. Mike has been in the school district for 20 years. His weekly CPS updates are emailed to parents every Monday, and parents should always feel free to email him directly.

Susan Oliveri, team chair at CPS and NHS expressed her regard and appreciation in working with Mike and with Deb. NES teacher Kathryn Linnell also recognized school leadership and applauded parents and fellow staff. She reported that her young students in Cohort A are doing well with mask wearing.

It was shared that Nantucket STAR will have a new director, to be announced in 2021. Susan Oliveri, who is certified in yoga, expressed an interest in possibly partnering with STAR.

Though a SNAC meeting is usually not held in December due to busy schedules around the holidays, it was voted to hold a meeting for next month: December 16, 2020 at 6:00PM. The meeting will again take place via Zoom app.

After additional welcome and comments from attendees who missed the opening introductions, the meeting adjourned at approximately 7:00 PM. All non-parents signed off so the Uncommon Parents support group meeting could begin.

Respectfully submitted,

Lora Kebbati, Secretary of SNAC

Approved through a vote of SNAC members on _____

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