

Warwick Special Education Advisory Committee
Wednesday, January 14, 2015
School Committee Room 7:00 pm
Meeting Minutes

Attendance: Mary Townsend, Jessica Schad, David Ghigliotty, Barbara Ghigliotty, Rachael Ghigliotty, Sharon Terzian, Cindy Roberts, Gail Aldrich, Michelle Haley, Michael Matteson, Sandra Parrillo, Meghan MacKay, Joseph Gendice, Kathy Fielder, Caitlin Regan, Kristen Saunders, Dr. Jennifer Connolly and Dan McQuade.

Jessica called the meeting to order at 7:10 pm and introductions were made. The minutes of the December 10, 2014 meeting were accepted with minor corrections.

Old Business:

18-21 Connect-Ed calls – Success! Calls are being received by all “out of district” students in the 18-21 age group. Thank you to Dianne Silvia and Dr. Connolly for resolving this issue!

Workshop 2-4-15 (Dr. Lobato) – Jessica has spoken to Dr. Lobato and the date has been confirmed for Wednesday, February 4, 2015 for her “Sib-Link” workshop/presentation.

New Business:

March 2015 – Jessica will be setting up a date for Kevin Nerney to present regarding Special Needs Trusts, Power of Attorney and the Able Act.

radKIDS program – David Ghigliotty will be attending a radKIDS training for a week in February. It is a 40 hour training to be certified. David will assist Officer Steve Lombardi during our next offering to students. There was discussion regarding the age of the students (ages 7-11, grades 2-5) and the number of students to attend (10). Possible locations being Veterans High School or David’s Karate Dojo. It will run for 7 – 8 weeks as in the past. David and Jessica will update the committee in February.

March Fundraiser for Cerebral Palsy awareness – We revisited the discussion from the Fall as to remembering Anna Byrne, Tarin’s daughter. It was agreed that we will do an awareness day district wide with the proceeds going towards a plaque in memory of Anna! (Much like the Autism Awareness Day in memory of David Anthony.)

Safety Day at the Fire Station (May) – There was more discussion as to the dates for this fun and educational day at the Warwick Police Department and the Warwick Fire Station. Assistant Fire Marshall Mike Matteson has spoken to Officer Steve Lombardi and will coordinate the day with Jessica and other committee members. A tentative date of May 16-17 is being considered.

Other – Community of Practice in Autism – Dr. Connolly attended and informed the committee of the partnership with Hasbro and the videos available to “teach” and encourage play with toys. These videos are available on the Autism Project website. Other other – Mary passed out some flyers for the fundraiser for her grandson, Andrew Wheaton, as the family moves forward in their efforts to purchase a wheelchair accessible van with a lift.

Director of Special Education Report: Dr. Connolly provided this committee with a written Director's Report from which these notes are taken and additional comments and discussion added. "School Visits: To date I have visited Drum Rock, Francis, Greenwood, Holden, Holliman, Hoxsie, Lippitt, Norwood, Oakland Beach, Park, Scott, Sherman, Warwick Neck, Wyman, Winman, Aldrich, Pilgrim, Vets and the Career Center. I am working on scheduling the remaining schools in the next few weeks."

"Connect-Ed: ...We will be checking on this periodically – please let me know if anyone is not receiving these calls."

"PARCC update: To date, special educators, guidance counselors, social workers, and school psychologists have been provided training on the PARCC Accessibility and Accommodations. I will be following up with related service providers, and working on training the teachers who will be using some of the highly specialized accommodations. Additionally, the Personal Needs Plan, or PNP, has been rolled out district wide and will now become part of the IEP process."

Dr. Connolly added that training has been provided to most Special Educators. She spoke about the Personal Needs Plans and about the 504 teams. There were questions regarding a parent's right to Opt Out of the testing on behalf of their child. More information is needed.

Dr. Connolly will provide a presentation of PARCC and the accommodations to parents and others interested at 6:30 prior to our next meeting.

"The Catherine T. Murray scholarship is available to students with significant disabilities interested in attending college or a technical school. \$1,000 is available, and it can be used for assistive or adaptive equipment. Preference is based on merit, economic need and educational goals. Applications are available at www.oscil.org or by calling 738-1013 ext. 20."

"Hasbro: Toybox for Tools – instructional videos, printable materials, and playmats designed to teach children with autism and other disabilities "how" to play – available for free at ToyboxTools.com. There are accompanying videos available on the Autism Project's website."

"Disability Pride Parade – NYC" will be held in July in Manhattan.

School Committee Update: No committee member present. There was discussion regarding school committee attendance and the RFP for the consultant in regards to "school consolidation".

State Update: Sharon spoke about Andrew McQuade, the Department of Justice lawyer. She spoke about self-directed adult services and "capacity building". There was also discussion of Craig Stenning's departure from BHDDH.

Membership: Michael Matteson will be presented to the School Committee at their next meeting.

Scheduling of Next Meeting Date: Our next meeting will be held on Wednesday, February 11, 2015 at 7:00 pm at the Administration Building in the School Committee room.

Public Comment: Mike Matteson commented regarding the Warwick Public Schools Fire Code Work and the number of drills being executed district wide. Mary commented that she believes that based on her membership information, drills are being conducted regularly district wide.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:55 p.m. Respectfully submitted, Mary Townsend

