

QUINCY SCHOOL COMMITTEE

SPECIAL EDUCATION SUBCOMMITTEE MEETING ~ May 30, 2108

A meeting of the Special Education Subcommittee was held on Wednesday, January 17, 2018 at 6:30 pm in the Coddington Building. Present were Mr. Paul Bregoli, Mr. Douglas Gutro, Mrs. Emily Lebo, and Mr. Anthony Andronico, Chair. Also attending were Superintendent DeCristofaro; Deputy Superintendent Kevin Mulvey, Ms. Kerri Connolly, Ms. Julie Graham, Mr. Richard Kelley, Ms. Maura Papile, Ms. Erin Perkins, Ms. Madeline Roy; Ms. Cassandra Beck, Quincy Parent Advisory Council to Special Education President; and Ms. Laura Owens, Clerk.

Mr. Andronico called the Special Education Subcommittee meeting to order and Ms. Perkins opened the Special Education Pathways presentation by reviewing the Special Education Department mission.

Ms. Graham reviewed that the Special Education Pre-Kindergarten program will be expanded, adding two classrooms: one Integrated classroom from Snug Harbor, a new full-day CARES classroom will be created. These students will be from the Clifford Marshall district; having the Integrated classroom along with the CARES classroom will provide inclusion opportunities.

At the elementary level, students are identified through the integrated learning team process. Elementary special education is based on providing a free and appropriate education for all of our students so they may be successful in the least restrictive environment. The specialized programs at the elementary level include CARES (autism spectrum) at Della Chiesa for Pre-Kindergarten and significant growth in the program over the course of this school year. Snug Harbor and Squantum have CARES classrooms for Grades K-2 and Snug Harbor has grades 3-5. The Learning Center program is for students with intellectual or developmental delays, Pre-Kindergarten is at Della Chiesa and Grades K through 5 at Squantum. The Language Development program is for students with language-based learning disability and may also demonstrate weaknesses in receptive and/or expressive language. The program begins in Kindergarten, with Transitional Kindergarten at Lincoln Hancock and Atherton Hough. For Grades 1-5, students will attend either Atherton Hough or Snug Harbor. Ms. Graham noted that Transitional Kindergarten students may transition to their home schools for Kindergarten or Grade 1 or move on to LDC.

The STARS program is for students who present with emotional impairment, these students may attend Transitional Kindergarten. For Grades 1-5, students will attend Parker; a teacher will transition from Point Webster so there will be 3 STARS classrooms at Parker in 2018-2019.

For middle school, CARES students transition from Snug Harbor to Sterling for Grade 6. Learning Center and Language Development students attend Broad Meadows (program expansion, an additional position). The STARS program is undergoing a transition and so the program is being split

to add PASS for students with social-emotional/mental health concerns in the middle school age group. PASS students in Grades 6-8 will attend Atlantic Middle School; the Grades 6-8 STARS students with social-emotional/behavioral support needs will attend GOALS.

Mrs. Lebo asked about inclusion for PASS at Atlantic and Ms. Perkins said wherever possible, students will have full inclusion, with alternative supports and then transition to the PASS program at North Quincy High School.

Mr. Bregoli asked about the middle school students at GOALS and opportunities for inclusion, Ms. Perkins said that Atlantic would be the site for that.

Ms. Beck asked about staffing levels, PASS has one teacher and a paraprofessional in the classroom.

Mr. Bregoli asked about the schedule for Pre-Kindergarten at Point Webster, there are different hours. The school day is 7:40 am to 1:30 pm for full-day classes. Mr. Bregoli asked about the school nurse, will be working extended hours and how will this be compensated.

For high school, special education students receive resource room and/or inclusion services based on their IEPs. Mrs. Lebo noted that North Quincy High School does not currently offer resource room services. Ms. Perkins said that these are possible, current population does not require it. Ms. Beck suggested adding information to the slide to say these are possible or to add the Learning Strategies classes offered at NQHS. Dr. DeCristofaro said wherever there is a need, we will accommodate students. If an LDC student from Broad Meadows wishes to attend North Quincy High School, we will put the supports in place for that to happen.

Mrs. Lebo requested data on how many students from outside of district attend Quincy High School for Special Education.

For high school specialized programs, Language Development students attend Quincy High School. Learning Center and CARES students attend North Quincy High School. The PASS program is also at North Quincy High School. The LEAP program at NQHS is for students between ages 18-22 and builds skills for self-determination/self-advocacy; social skills; independent living; and financial literacy.

Ms. Perkins, Ms. Connolly, Ms. Tempesta, and Ms. Leary presented an overview of the Pre-Kindergarten CARES program, which is based on the principles of Applied Behavioral Analysis (ABA). The curriculum includes communication, activities of daily living, self-regulation, and academics (reading, math, and written language). The CARES program includes adaptive physical therapy, music therapy, communication, and occupational, physical, and/or speech therapy as indicated in IEP. Applied Behavior Analysis is based on the science of learning and behavior to increase desired behaviors, decrease undesirable behaviors, teaching new skills, and generalization across all settings.

Communication is facilitated through augmentative and alternative communication (AAC); augmentative supplements existing speech and alternative is used in place of speech, such as objects, pictures, writing, communication boards/books, and speech-generating devices. Communication will change over time as physical capabilities and literacy skills developed.

Mr. Andronico thanked the presenters, the work they do is so important.

Mrs. Lebo noted that she visited the summer program last year, the care of the students and the energy level is impressive. Having this quality program in-house means a lot to the students and families of Quincy Public Schools.

Dr. DeCristofaro said it takes an incredible amount of planning to sustain this program, the communication with parents, all staff do this remarkably well.

The last item on the agenda was a QPAC Update. Ms. Beck thanked Ms. Perkins for assisting to coordinate with Sensory Night, a great turnout and a fun evening for students and parents. The last event of the school year is the annual outing to Wahlburgers. There are no general parent concerns as each issue is addressed as it comes up, such a great collaborative working relationship that all are working towards supporting students and families.

For next year, looking to have speakers at QPAC meetings, one on dyslexia and another on IEPs. Ms. Beck would like to amend the Transportation booklet to be clear that out of district student snow days are dictated by the receiving school district's open/close status. Ms. Beck is very happy to hear about the PASS strand for middle school, feels this addresses an area of parent concern. Would like to address the meeting calendar so there are four Special Education Subcommittee meetings next year.

Mrs. Lebo made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:00 pm. Mr. Andronico seconded the motion and on a voice vote, the ayes have it.