



**WESTON SPECIAL EDUCATION PARENTS ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES**

Monday November 23, 2020 9am

Meeting link:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88496304669?pwd=UUxPMINQdWxvS2dBV2o0WXNOQ1JBZz09>

Meeting ID: 884 9630 4669 Passcode: 813973

Attendees: Lisa Lappi (Co-chair), Victoria Kinnealey, Kathy Davidoff (Co-chair), Maija Cirulis-Gooch (Secretary), Rachel Stewart (School Committee Liaison)

9:10 Meeting called to order and Governor Baker's announcement regarding online meetings was read by Kathy Davidoff. She also noted the availability of past meeting minutes on the SEPAC website (westonsepac.org) given the delay

9:11 Dyslexia & new DESE guidance on screening (led by Kathy Davidoff)

- New guidelines are expected anytime from DESE this month, resources have been provided on how young children should be screened. Relevant laws and other information shared are posted on the SEPAC website and will have attached links to these Dyslexia informational documents provided by Nancy Duggan- Decoding Dyslexia MA on the minutes
- Kathy highlighted the 5 areas of reading problems that the school should evaluate and consider, including suggested tests as outlined by the Decoding Dyslexia MA, and shared
- Early intervention is key to successful reading. If any child is identified as having reading concerns they should be evaluated. Before 3rd grade a child is learning to read. After 3rd grade a child is reading to learn. Any child suspected of having difficulty and who is not proficient in reading should be evaluated and if identified as having a specific learning disability/dyslexia etc. should be provided individual support with a scientific evidence based program
- Importance of early identification stressed-that you can do Response to Intervention (RTI) and ask for an evaluation at the same time- you do not need to wait to do RTI first
- Rachel Stewart asked about SEPAC experience with dyslexia in our district
 - Lisa Lappi shared concerns about feedback from parents that some students are not being identified until middle or high school. She shared data on the number of IEPs in Weston at middle and high school levels, which are higher than at younger grades, a sign that has you question evaluation and screening- this is an area to look at in the elementary schools.
 - Kathy Davidoff shared Child Find public records request received on October 2, 2020, which outlined data for Weston and the procedure, highlighting that Weston seems to have low numbers and questioning if identifying children early in our community. For example, Weston reported no data in 2015-16 and 2016-17. Rachel Stewart had a number of clarifying questions around this data.
 - Weston's Child Find procedure has not been updated since 2011 which may potentially leave the district open to compensatory damages and other claims at a later date

minutes approved 11/23/20

- Rachel Stewart made the connection that lack of properly implemented Child Find polices may be contributing to missing kids with Dyslexia early on.
- SEPAC would like to recommend a subcommittee/task force investigating Dyslexia, Child Find, and other related issues. We will be reaching out to Dr. Carter once the DESE has sent out the Dyslexia Guidance
 - Rachel Stewart suggested SEPAC present School Committee with data and a proposal to School Committee

9:17 District Restraint Policy (led by Kathy Davidoff)

- At last School Committee the District Restraint Policy was brought up for review. SEPAC had not reviewed the policy prior to the SC meeting. School Committee members Rachel Stewart & Alyson Muzila requested that SEPAC be given allowed time to review the policy and comment.
- Kathy Davidoff shared a letter sent by Weston SEPAC with input gathered since the School Committee meeting.- document attached in minutes
- Lisa Lappi led discussion on
 - lack of reporting of extended time-outs
 - School district restraint usage data
 - Noted a concern that a Weston School principal has reported that use of restraint is not recorded/reported, nor were parents informed
- Kathy Davidoff shared SEPAC concerns that Restraint procedures have not been updated. She highlighted that the WPS published special education procedures manual was last updated in 2011, but the MA state regulations were changed in 2016 for restraints in MA. SEPAC is asking that procedures be updated as a priority and that was recommended in the letter to all school committee members, noted that violations or incidents of restraints could be a violation of civil rights, leaving our district with potential issues. Concerns were discuss regarding training in the district
- Maija Cirulis Gooch questioned what restraint program was used in our district.
 - Kathy Davidoff reported they are using CPI
 - Lisa Lappi shared that parents are reporting restraint usage that is not consistent with CPI training
 - Maija Cirulis Gooch stressed the safety implications of using restraint techniques for the safety of both staff members and students.

9:30 Child Find

- Kathy Davidoff shared Child Find data for the Weston, questioning Weston may not be identifying children in our community. For example, Weston reported no data in 2015-16 and 2016-17. Rachel Stewart had a number of clarifying questions around this data.
 - Weston's Child Find procedure has not been updated since 2011, which may be leaving the district open to compensatory damages and other claims
 - Rachel Stewart made the connection that lack of properly implemented Child Find procedures may be contributing to missing kids with Dyslexia etc. early on.
- SEPAC would like to have a subcommittee/task force investigating Dyslexia, Child Find, and other related issues.
 - Rachel Stewart suggested SEPAC present School Committee with data and a proposal to School Committee

9:45 Other Business

- Maija Cirulis Gooch shared previous minutes from September 30, 2020
- Victoria Kinnealey shared concerns around Academic Strategies class at the high school and concerns of lack of executive and organizational skills training. She brought perspective as a recent WPS graduate and family member of someone with an IEP at WHS.
 - Rachel Stewart mentioned the TEC (The Enrichment Center) program at WPS available for General Education students as a potential source of additional

- The need for standardization across the district was identified as an area of need- example...teachers in posting of assignments, zoom links, standards, etc.
- A greater need for specific identification of executive functioning needs and training is needed in the district
- Minutes September 30, 2020:
 - Maija Cirulis Gooch made a motion for approval of 9/30/2020 minutes. Ms. Kinnealey seconded it. All participants voted to approve minutes

10:11 Adjournment

- Maija Cirulis-Gooch made a motion to adjourn
- Lisa Lappi seconded it.
- All members unanimously agreed to adjourn meeting
- Kathy Davidoff adjourned the meeting at 10:12

Documents used:

Dyslexia documents:

- [Reading Goals 1-relevant laws](#)
- [Reading Goals 2-worksheet](#)
- [Reading Goals 3-reading universe](#)
- [Reading handout 4-laws 20 U.S.C. § 6368\(3\)\(4\)\(5\)\(6\)\(7\)](#)
- [OSEP Guidance on Dyslexia 10/23/2015](#)
- [Kilpatrick essentials- book on dyslexia](#)
- [Massachusetts ELA standards 2017 Grades Pre-Kindergarten to 12](#)
- [Tufts Naming Speed -center for reading and language research](#)

[School Committee Restraint Policy -Draft -see SC meeting minutes November 23, 2020](#)

[SEPAC letter to School committee](#)

[Weston District Child Find procedure 2011 and data](#)