

Concord Public Schools and
Concord-Carlisle Regional School District
Special Education Parent Advisory Council (SEPAC)
Thursday, January 23, 2020
12:30-2:30 pm
Minutes
Hunt Recreation Center Conference Room
[90 Stow Street, Concord, MA](https://www.google.com/maps/place/90+Stow+Street,+Concord,+MA)

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1. Open Meeting at 12:33 p.m.
2. Approval of minutes from 11/21/19 Board Meeting (Sarah), 2min Minutes are approved.
3. Public comments, 2min
4. Federation for Children with Special Needs - Visions of Community Conference, February 29, 2020. Board Member volunteer to attend, 3min- Becky R. will be attending.
5. Re-Schedule Next Board Meeting, 5min Feb. 12th 7-9 p.m. Sarah will schedule the room, unless Mr. Mastrullo offers a room in the CCHS building.
6. CMS Building discussion and SEPAC position letter (Becky) 20 min
 - Changes were suggested and applied
 - Becky offered to make revisions and share them with the board
 - This position paper will be sent as correspondence to Mother's Out Front, League of Women Voters, Justin Cameron (Principal of Concord Middle School), SMMA, Commission on Disability, Ruth Grube, Dr. Laurie Hunter, Cynthia Rainey & Eva Mostoufi as well as the School Committee & the Select Board.
 - The SEPAC voted to approve the position paper: Shaina moved to vote to accept the paper.
 - Tali, Carol, Shaina, Sarah, Helen and Becky (SEPAC board members) voted to approve the letter.
 - To be sent 1/23/20
7. Chairperson reports/updates
 - Co-Presidents: (Carol/Shaina), 15min
 - i. Review of meeting with Ruth Grube
 1. PTG Presidents Meeting
Carmen Reiss- Concord Town Moderator is trying to reach families of school age children to encourage attendance and involvement at Town meetings. She mentioned citizen volunteer opportunities and would like to come speak at PTG or board meetings. PTGs may coordinate a single event.
 2. CCHS is holding a screening for kids of the movie "If We Only Knew" via a grant and is hoping to extend this to parents with a panel. They are looking into a talk with MADD.

3. Before and after school programs at Willard are now being managed by Concord Recreation (as was done at Thoreau) and the Chorus program is now being run by the school.
 4. A pre-K to grade 12 Vaping committee is being established, but it is not determined by whom.
 5. The second in a series of 3 staff professional development days will be held on 2/25. SEPAC will be partnering with the 3 Concord elementary schools to show appreciation for teachers/staff. We may provide candy and will be making small note cards to be placed at the 13 sign-in tables. We propose either a board get together to do this or a gathering before/after the next board meeting.
 6. CMS Building Committee update: SMMA was selected as designer and they are starting to look at education visioning. 2/27 at 7 pm a second public forum will be held to provide a summary of the input collected during the January Forum, the direction they are taking and a request for feedback. Current best case timeline is that students will begin using the new building in Fall 2023. Current 4th graders would start 8th grade in the new building.
 7. SEPAC Co-Presidents/Ruth Grube Meeting
 8. We brought forth the suggestion of a post-IEP meeting parent/caregiver survey and are looking to provide examples of what is being done in other districts. Efforts are underway for alignment and consistency across the district with general education. We were given the go-ahead for a staff NL/communication to provide resources and support. We will focus on inclusion and will provide Ruth with several weeks to review and provide feedback. Best Buddies program is in place. Clear entrance and exit criteria are being established for sub-separate programs.
 - ii. Teacher appreciation for professional development
 - iii. Recap (Sarah) 1min
- Secretary- Tabled
 - i. Update (Sarah) 5min
 - Technology: (Becky), 10min- Tabled
 - i. Update
 - ii. Faculty Newsletter
 - iii. Recap (Sarah) 1min
 - Events: (Tali/Andrea), 10min-Tabled
 - i. Update on previous events
 - ii. Update on future events
 - iii. Recap (Sarah) 1min
 - Publicity: (Helen), 10min-Tabled
 - i. Update

- ii. Recap (Sarah) 1min
 - o Membership: (Carol), 2min-Tabled
 - i. Liaison update
- 8. Committee Reports: 15min- Tabled
 - o School Committee Meetings
 - o Sensory Friendly Show Sub-Committee
 - o Recap (Sarah) 3 min
- 9. SEPAC Board Annual Report to Joint School Committee - Carol & Shaina, 5min
- 10. SEPAC Awards Presentation- Helen, 5min will be May 19th
- 11. Public comments, 2 min
- 12. Guest: Jean Goldsberry, Chairperson (also CEO at Minuteman Arc), Concord Commission on Disabilities (2:00 arrival) (15)
 - o Commission on Disabilities coordinates with the Concord SEPAC
 - o Commission designation allows them to accrue money from the town.
 - o They are working to provide adaptive bikes for residence in Acton and Concord
 - o They will be providing lockboxes for people who are 65+ for first responders to have access to the house incase of emergencies
 - o They are asking the library corporation to have more accessible/welcoming parking
 - o They are looking around town for opportunities to create a more welcoming environment. Some groups ask the commission to support variances in their design. They want to work with groups during the design process, not afterward.
 - o Jennifer Brook, who is on the commission, is an expert in international design.
 - o The commission coordinated with the trail committee. A trail near CCHS has been assessed. A map was posted so that people can look at it and decide whether or not traverse the trail. They are collaborating with the trails committee on other projects.
 - o Parents can contact this commission when their children cannot access things in town.
 - o There were concerns about entrance access to Bank of America. Bank of America met the ADA requirements.
 - o The commission can help with individual concerns.
 - o Minuteman Arc and the Concord Commission on Disabilities might be able to help with the CCHS accessible performance.
 - o There are 9 people on the commission.
 - o Email address: disabilitycom@concordma.gov
 - o The SEPAC read the position paper to Jean Goldsberry to ask for her comments and suggestions.
- 13. Revisit any items placed in parking lot during meeting: (Shaina,Carol), 2min
- 14. Public comments, 1min
- 15. Close Meeting was closed at 2:50 p.m.

PENDING MEETINGS

| | | | |
|----------------|--------------|--|--|
| Jan 30, 2020 | 1:30-3:00 pm | SEPAC Special Board Meeting | Ripley, Conf Room 4 |
| Feb. 12, 2020 | 7-9 pm | SEPAC Board Meeting | Library Learning Commons, CCHS |
| Feb 11, 2020 | 7-9pm | Basic Rights WORKshop Part II: Understanding the IEP | Sudbury Senior Center, 40 Fairbanks Rd, Sudbury, |
| Feb 27, 2020 | 7pm | CMS Building Project Follow-up Community Forum | TBA |
| March 26, 2020 | 12:30-2:30 | SEPAC Board Meeting | Hunt Rec Conf Room |

Present:

Shaina Brito, co-president
 Tali Ditman, events
 Carol Yelle, co-president
 Helen McKinlay, publicity
 Rebecca Robichaud, technology
 Heather Lemartire, educator CPS
 Kathryn Camgami, parent
 Fatima Mezdad, parent representative for CMS
 Sarah Nichol, secretary
 Jean Goldsberry

Position Paper attached:

January 24th, 2020

SEPAC POSITION: AN EXPERT IN INCLUSIVE DESIGN MUST SERVE ON THE MIDDLE SCHOOL BUILDING COMMITTEE

The Concord and Concord-Carlisle Regional School District Special Education Parent Advisory Council (SEPAC) Board advise the CPS School Committee, Superintendent, and the Concord Middle School Building Committee to hire an expert in inclusive design to serve on the Concord Middle School Building

Committee and the Design Subcommittee.

The Inclusive Design firm/person hired to serve on the CMS Building Committee and Design Subcommittee should have *an expertise in* accessibility and inclusive design. Data from the Massachusetts Department of Education (DOE) shows that in the 2018-2019 school year 20% (147) of the 736 students at the Concord Middle School have a [diagnosed disability](#) * and are on an IEP or a 504 plan. Hiring an expert in [inclusive design](#) * ensures that the new CMS Building seamlessly delivers an accessible and inclusive experience for these students.

Inclusion is one of the five core goals of the Concord Public and the Concord-Carlisle Regional School Districts. One of the objectives under the inclusion goal is ***‘to create a collaborative and inclusive culture in the schools and community that values diversity and recognizes the contributions and uniqueness of each learner’***. The tenets of inclusion are access, membership, and participation. Specifically, inclusion involves the ability to *access* the full school environment (including outdoor space), become a valued *member* of the school community, and *participate* in school and class activities with peers. It is undeniable that building structure plays a critical role in inclusion. Thus, it is imperative to ensure the needs of all learners are considered in the design of the new middle school building structure, landscape, and educational environment.

Students with disabilities must be able to access the school environment to the same extent as students without disabilities. The following is a sampling of areas where current students are experiencing difficulties accessing the existing CPS and CCHS school buildings.

- Students arriving on special transportation are required to use a segregated drop-off area.
- Elevators are not easily accessible due to placement and quantity.
- Students need to navigate three steps in order to access designated accessible seating in the auditorium.
- Healthcare offices are not easily accessible to all.
- Restrooms and drinking fountains are not placed predictably, adding stress to transition times.
- Classroom numbering does not have a clear and predictable pattern, making buildings difficult to navigate.
- Students receive supplemental learning support in closet-like spaces between classrooms.
- Quieter alternatives to hand dryers and automatic toilets are not available in restrooms, contributing to student stress and sensory overload.
- Students are missing meaningful inclusion opportunities because they cannot access noisy cafeterias and loud auditorium assemblies.
- Students are unable to access hallways and common spaces due to sensory vulnerabilities.
- Outdoor spaces are not thoughtfully designed for students with physical or sensory disabilities.

Inclusive design benefits all students but is paramount for students with disabilities to learn. We, the Board of the Concord Public Schools and Concord-Carlisle Regional School District Special Education Parent Advisory Council are mandated by the DOE to serve as an advisory committee to the School Committees. As such, we advise that an

expert in inclusive design be immediately hired to serve on the CMS Building Committee and Design Subcommittee.

SEPAC Board: Carol Yelle, Shaina Brito, Rebecca Robichaud, Helen McKinlay, Tali Ditman, Andrea Smith, Sarah Nichol

* <http://www.doe.mass.edu/sped/definitions.html>

* <https://www.humancentereddesign.org/inclusive-design/principles>