

Special Education Advisory Council Meeting- October 8, 2024

Goodwood Administrative Center

6550 Goodwood Blvd.

(SEAC) Minutes

Meeting was called to order at 5:33 pm by SEAC Chairperson, Natalie Tillman-London. SEAC Members introduced themselves. The agenda was shared and followed.

Members Present: Cynthia Chesterfield, Pamela White, Valentina Rideaux and Adrian Deschamps.

Minutes:

Agenda (see attached)

Mrs. Tillman-London introduced ESS Supervisors, Directors, Secretary and SEAC Members.

Review of previous minutes from April 24, 2024 were read by Secretary Carmen Overton.

Mrs. Tillman-London introduced our first presenters, ESS Parent Liaisons Dwana Webb, Shauna Johnson, Adam Melendez and Jamie Price (not in attendance). Each Parent Liaisons discussed their region of service, exceptions and contact information. Dwana Webb provided a handout as well. (see attached). Dr. Rodney Coates provided further explanation for Parent Liaisons. Adding this department is new to the ESS division. "Parent Liaisons serve as an extension for families and educators. For purposes of closing the gap between the two."

At this time parents attending the meeting shared success stories from working so closely with ESS Parent Liaisons. Those stories were shared by Odell Wilmer Jr and August Kelly-Anderson and

Dr. Robert Garcia was the second presenter. Dr. Garcia shared an 8:45 video on the [Successful Strategies for Inclusive Education \(youtube.com\)](#) . Here he continues on with conversation on the success of this department's growth and the recognition from a National partner, American Institutes for Research. Stating there has been a 20% increase in graduating ESS program High School Seniors. He also mentions how many different educational conferences EBR ESS Inclusion initiative program has been highlighted for growth in and out of state.

Dr. Coates then shared the ESS Departments overall growth targets. Out of 13 targets 11 were met. The overall percentage was 91.2%. Dr. Coats also explained the process and reasoning for pushing inclusion. "Which is for our students to have access to tier one curriculum."

Dr. Coates introduced Instruct Support Specialists. Valentina Rideaux (in attendance). He also explained Compliance Facilitators

At this time, many parents and educators' express concerns. Also asked questions.

FAQ:

Can ESS start times be later then general education start times?

What is the process to ensure what educators and paraprofessionals are learning during Professional Development is being translated in the classroom? How can that gap be closed?

How support to Sped teachers is being handled?

Are IEP being reviewed, studied and looked at by faculty as they should be?

What is the standard for who gives grades? Is it teacher or resource teacher?

Can there be more SEAC then what is on the books?

Answered FAQ:

Are teachers allowed to give a student more challenging curriculum if the student shows growth in that current curriculum? Dr. Coates answered that is addressing that students' individual needs. Mrs. Pamela White also added, that student may fall under the gifted, which is also falls under the ESS umbrella.

How can I have my child's IEP restructured to included social skills? Mrs. Tillman-London advised the parent to first contact the students' school to schedule an IEP meeting. This should include the Teachers of IEP Authority for that meeting. Inform them of the social skills you want added to the IEP. Mrs. Tillman-London explained that a Behavior Strategists will work with them on structing the IEP to included social communication skills.

How is the gap being bridged from PDs to the classroom Especially for educators in general education with inclusion students? Dr. Coates respond stating there is specialized professional development to community-based teachers, ED teachers, autism teachers and paraprofessionals. But the transfer from the PDs in the classroom is different. It's supported by ISS. Which provided coaching opportunities to teachers. Mrs. Pamela White stated that PDs are performed several times during the school year.

Is ESS checking to see if the information provided during PDs being retained or is it address once standardized testing is completed? Dr. Coates responded that ESS is a support service to those student, educators and families. However, each school's administration should be following up on the tools given to them during PDs. Dr. Garcia stated that principals are given and stressed this same information.

Testimony

Odell Wilmer Jr gave a testimony for Dr. Garcia and Dr. Coates helping him with challenges regarding getting his daughter the assistances she needed.

Mrs. Tillman-London stated the ultimate goal is both the general ed and special ed teachers need to collaborate. For grading, assessments, providing accommodations, and classroom work.

All meetings were advertised to the public via, the East Baton Rouge Parish School System's website, flyers, and SMS.

She then provided the meeting dates for the next planned SEAC meeting. She welcomed everyone to please attend.

There being no further discussion, the Chairperson adjourned the meeting at 7:33 P.M.

Carmen W. Overton, Secretary to the Council