

PARENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE
BERRIEN REGIONAL EDUCATION SERVICE AGENCY

Proposed Minutes of October 16, 2018

PRESENT: Mary Duschek (Berrien Springs), Sarah Douglass (Bridgman), Holly Pomranka (Brandywine), Mattie Book & Britney Martin (Buchanan), Charles DeGraaf (Countryside), Corie Siik & Jackie VanHorn (Lakeshore), Martina Ciccarelli (New Buffalo), Kevin Carter & Sarah True (Niles), Mindi Mach & Meghan Wooldridge (St. Joseph), Wendy Stainbrook & Leah Dibble (Watervliet), Autumn Poole (Berrien RESA)

EXCUSED ABSENCE: Nicole Birmingham-Moersch (Bridgman), Charity Hackett (Eau Claire), Donna Messinger (New Buffalo)

ABSENT: Kandice Agee (Berrien Springs), Melissa Blair (Coloma), Joyce Anderson & Michelle Stone (River), Tia Shaw (Countryside)

- I. Call to Order at 6:30 p.m. – Jackie Van Horn, President
- II. Presentation: Cindy Van Neste, Outreach Representative
Special Education Mediation Services (SEMS)
 - A. Cindy Van Neste provided a presentation and reading materials explaining what SEMS is:
 - i. A no cost program offered by the US Department of Education that offers mediation services and special education support
 - ii. Provides a neutral party to sit down with parents and educators
 - iii. Focuses on the child
 - iv. Keeps communication open to maintain relationships with educators

Cindy Van Neste also discussed the differences between using Mediation vs. Facilitation and when they are appropriate.

 - i. Mediation is generally used to assist negotiation and to resolve differences when there is already a conflict and communication is broken down.
 - ii. Facilitation is used to coordinate a discussion so that all individuals involved are encouraged to participate and is generally used when the situation is not contentious, but could use someone to sit in.

- III. Discussion: Trauma Informed Schools, Autumn Poole, PAC Liaison, Berrien RESA
 - A. Autumn defined Child Traumatic Stress/Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACES) and provided handouts to raise awareness, as this is a direction educators and schools are heading in to help students and families obtain resources and support.
 - i. Trauma in childhood will change the brain's executive functioning, having a direct effect on children's sensory processing, anxiety, behaviors, attention, aggression, hyper activity, hyper arousal, impulsivity, ability to learn, etc.
 - ii. Examples of trauma/adverse childhood experiences include: abuses, neglect, post-partum depression, exposure to drug use, loss of parent, domestic violence, parent mental illness, pain, prenatal stress, poverty, and health problems.
 - iii. Teachers may see behaviors in children that are driven by fear. Examples include defiance, mistrust, impulsivity, being easily distracted, heightened sensory and the need to control.
 - B. How schools are going forward with this information.
 - i. Awareness of the need for a mind-set shift to look at behaviors, not just "defiant" children.
 - ii. Changing minds on how we see and interpret children's behaviors.
 - iii. Will be able to help students in school in lieu of detentions and punishments for unwanted behaviors.
 - a. Provide education about the impact of trauma for teachers.
 - b. Offer strategies for teachers.
 - c. Provide access to resources for children such as counseling and occupational therapy.
- IV. Approval of Minutes from the September 18, 2018 meeting
 - A. Charles DeGraaf motioned for approval, seconded by Mary Duschek. Motion carried.
- V. Special Education Updates
 - A. Nothing new to report.
- VI. Old Business
 - A. Festival of Families
 - i. Jackie Van Horn, PAC President thanked Britney and Charles for all their help with the PAC booth this year. A suggestion was made about the placement of the booth this year, which was in front of the doors, creating a wind tunnel.
 - ii. Jackie discussed how the festival is a great opportunity to let folks know what PAC is.
 - iii. A PAC member reported that a representative from a domestic violence shelter visited the PAC booth and gladly took brochures with them to pass our information on to families.

VII. New Business

- A. Jackie Van Horn gave her new email address: JVanHorn71@gmail.com and informed members that her previous email address is no longer in service.
- B. Jackie informed of an upcoming learning opportunity: “Behavior is Communication”
 - i. Presented by Sally Hoyle Burton in Cass County during the month of March. More information to follow.

VIII. Adjournment

- A. Motion by Sarah Douglass. at 8:30 p.m. to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Wendy Stainbrook. Motion carried.

mc/cq