

MEETING MINUTES

Blue Valley Special Education Advisory Council

<https://www.bluevalleyk12.org/Page/34415>

BUILDING CONNECTIONS TO FOSTER BELONGING & LEARNING FOR ALL

January 30, 2024

11:30 am – 1:00 pm

District Office – High Plains Room

Welcome

Amie Bybee introduced herself and welcomed everyone. She then introduced new reps – Joanna Copeland and Jennifer Nowak.

Legislative Update – District/State

Dr. Schmidt reported that the state legislature is working on adjustments to the open enrollment law. Gina Knapp said one of the concerns is that funding is currently based on prior year enrollment. With open enrollment, we won't get paid for those students until the subsequent year. The legislature will likely change this policy to current year funding.

Support Your Local Special Education Teacher - Teacher and Related Service Provider Panel

Moderators: Jennie Perdieu and Dr. Mark Schmidt

Teacher and Related Service Provider Panel

- Jean James – IVE LIFT
- Anna Ohmes – LKM LIFT
- Leann Voor Vart – BVSU IRR
- Mallory Hickey – BRE OT
- Gina Thoendel – HRT SLP

Q: How can parents support their child's team?

Panel response:

- Parents need to know that the teachers have their student's best interests in mind.
- Education is a partnership between parents and student's team.
- Assume that we have positive intent with your student.

Q: What communication/information do teachers want parents to share?

Panel response:

- We see your child at school, but we don't know what their life like is at home. Please share things you feel would help us in teaching your student.

Q: Tell us about a time that a parent worked with you, and you left the interaction feeling very supported.

Panel response:

- It helps us when parents and teachers are proactive about upcoming meetings/topics concerning the student.

Q: How, as a parent, can we help our child's team get everything they need?

Panel response:

- Collaborative parent efforts, such as fundraising and referring friends and family to open SPED staffing positions.

Q: Any thoughts on continuing education opportunities available to you to help meet student needs?

Panel response:

- We need more individualized PG opportunities (by position/department) instead of doing everything as a large group.
- We need to collaborate with people that do the same job in other buildings.

Q: Some building administrators are awesome SPED advocates, and some are not. As a parent, what can we do in cases where administrators are not good advocates?

Panel response:

- We can go to the district office administrators if we need help.
- Dr. Schmidt said it is the SPED district administrators' responsibility to work with building administrators, not the SPED teachers. They give a regular overview of SPED principals and situations to help administrators make building-based decisions.

Q: How can parents help teachers stay in Blue Valley?

Panel response:

- Notes of thanks, provide a lunch for the SPED staff at a building, treat paras as an integral part of their student's team.

Q: Parent Question: How can you build a support system with other parents if we don't know who the other parents are?

Panel response:

- Tell a teacher you are interested in collaborating with other parents. Dr. Schmidt said they are looking for more opportunities to allow parents to network.

Q: Parent Question: My child looks neuro typical. There is a whole group of SPED parents that don't fit the mold. This causes a struggle interacting with other parents. We need to make people aware that SPED isn't what everyone thinks it is.

- Dr. Schmidt responded by saying that 72.5% of students with IEPs spend 80% of their day in gen ed. SPED kids have all sorts of needs on a sliding scale.

SEAC Committee Updates

- Volunteers needed for day and night shift at the 2/8/24 SEAC Resource Fair.
- Spread the Word Campaign for Special Olympics – March 6th.
- Who do I call in Special Education sheets were left on tables for members to take with them.

BOE Members: Gina Knapp and Jim McMullen

Next Meeting March 19, 2024, 11:30 am
High Plains Conference Room at DO