

Minutes from the Montachusett Regional Vocational Technical School District

Special Education PAC Meeting

10/13/2022

Meeting Commenced: 6:00 p.m.

In Attendance: Victoria Zarozinski, Alyssa Sundstrom and Jason Sundstrom

The agenda set and purpose of the meeting was to welcome new members and establish an effective Special Education PAC.

The meeting began with introductions and welcome from Victoria Zarozinski

V. Zarozinski reviewed the current by and SPED PAC Role and Responsibilities.

The guiding document for this discussion included the sharing of the bylaws for the SPED PAC.

The PAC's official name is the M.R.V.T.S.D. PAC. The purpose is to (article II):

- Promote communication
- Advise the Director of Student Support Services
- Promote a network of parents of students with disabilities
- Participate in the planning, development and evaluation of special education programs.

Membership is open to all communities within the school district.

V. Zarozinski reviewed the current organizational structure: V. Zarozinski has generated and guided the meetings in the past. Today, V. Zarozinski opened the meeting requesting if parents would like to organize a council with a President and Vice-President as outlined within the PAC's bylaws. No volunteers were identified or nominations made. The parents in attendance requested that V. Zarozinski continue with her role and generate and guide the meetings. Therefore, it will continue, as it has in the past, with V. Zarozinski presiding. A google form was shared with the current members to document their wishes and extend a further invitation to any parent/guardian volunteer to consider taking on a leadership role. To date, no parent volunteers have stepped forward.

Next on the agenda was a review of the 2021-2022 Data Analysis. This included a data dive in the areas of Initial Evaluations/Comparison of Outcomes, Post IEP Meeting Timelines, IEP Signatures Pages Return, Testing comparison by evaluator, and STAY Classroom Tracking. The results and recommendations from each of these areas are attached to these minutes for School Committee review.

The SPED PAC also reviewed and approved a three year program evaluation schedule for Special Education in order to ensure all programmatic areas are reviewed, compliance is consistently monitored and the SPED PAC can make timely and data based recommendations to the district accordingly. The approved schedule is as follows:

School Year 2021-2022

- Data Analysis (IEP Timelines Tracking, Type/Numbers of Team Meetings, Evaluator Caseloads, Initial Evaluation Outcomes, & STAY Classroom Tracking)

- IEP Team Process Documentation/Discipline Process Focus
- Selected Special Education Procedures
 - Child Find
 - Parent Advisory Council
 - Assistive Technology
 - IEP Implementation
 - Discipline Procedures
 - Certification/Licensure of Staff
 - Educational Interpreters
 - Professional Development
 - Program Evaluation

School Year 2022-2023

- Counseling Services
- Speech and Language Services
- Assistive Technology Services

School Year 2023-2024

- Co-Teaching Support
- Learning Support Services

Following a discussion with PAC members about the current data, V. Zarozinski explained that this school year there will be a site visit from DESE as part of the Tiered Focused Monitoring (TFM) process. Currently, V. Zarozinski has submitted documentation for a desk audit of our special education programs. Civil Rights and discipline for students with disabilities are also areas that are being reviewed in this cycle. As part of this process, a survey will be distributed to PAC members, as well as a request to talk to some members. More information will be forthcoming as the district prepares for the March site visit. DESE will also be presenting at the next PAC meeting in February. A “save the date” has been sent.

SPED PAC Planning For Future Meetings

- a. February 8, 2023 (DESE- Tiered Focused Monitoring presentation)
- b. June 1, 2023 (Rights and Regulations Presentation)

In closing a Google Survey & Feedback form was sent to all members. Feedback and suggestions on how to improve and expand participation, solicit feedback and gain members willing to participate in a leadership capacity was sent, requesting all members to complete.

The meeting concluded at 8:17 pm

MONTACHUSETT REGIONAL VOCATIONAL TECHNICAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

DATA ANALYSIS/PROGRAM EVALUATION 2021-2022

FOCUS AREA: Initial Evaluations/Comparison of Outcomes

OVERVIEW:

The District has maintained data since SY 2014-2015 of the number of Initial Evaluations, the number eligible, the number not eligible, the number of requests withdrawn, the number of students that withdrew from the district during this process and the number of evaluations in process.

RESULTS:

- Highest number of initial referrals since 2014-2015
- 50% eligible; 32% ineligible to date
- 7% request withdrawn
- 4% student withdrew
- 7% in process

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. Determine referral origin, i.e. parent, SST? Thus, suggest adding this field to the data to determine if this factor makes a difference with eligibility results.
2. Continue to monitor Initial Evaluation Timelines
3. When printing out different data collection sheets during the school year, ensure that each sheet indicates "AS OF DATE" in order to clarify data.

ACTION PLAN:

- Special Education Secretary will modify form to add the field of Referral Source to the data collected beginning with SY 2022-2023.

MONTACHUSETT REGIONAL VOCATIONAL TECHNICAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

DATA ANALYSIS/PROGRAM EVALUATION 2021-2022

FOCUS AREA: Post IEP Meeting Timelines

OVERVIEW: The Special Education TEAM Chairperson maintains data which lists the date and type of team meeting, student name, liaison, date when due to TEAM Chair, date received, date due to be mailed and date actually mailed. This data was collected from August 2021 through June 2022.

RESULTS:

- 100% compliance with date due to be mailed to parents and actual date mailed
- 55% compliance with liaison due date of proposed IEP to TEAM Chair. This however, did not lead to any delay in meeting the date the proposed IEP is sent to parent.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. Continue to monitor post team timelines in order to meet both federal and state special education requirements
2. Identify specific liaison staff that are having difficulty in meeting this requirement or a particular time of year that makes it more difficult and determine what additional guidance/support is needed to meet timelines

ACTION PLAN:

See above recommendations.

MONTACHUSETT REGIONAL VOCATIONAL TECHNICAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

DATA ANALYSIS/PROGRAM EVALUATION 2021-2022

FOCUS AREA: IEP Signatures Pages Return

OVERVIEW:

The Special Education Secretary monitors the IEP 30 day return rate once an IEP is sent out for parent/guardian signature. Information tracked is the student, liaison, meeting type, 30 day due back date, date received, method of sending and if necessary 2nd request date, due back date, etc.

RESULTS:

- 31 IEP signature pages had to be resent during the period of 7/7/2021 to 6/10/2022.
- Of the 31, only 3 remain unsigned

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. Continue to monitor IEP signature pages
2. If after second sending and parent has not returned, look at other modes of attempting to retrieve signatures, i.e., liaison /team chairperson outreach via phone call, sending home with parent, etc. Thus, you are attempting to receive signature pages via multiple attempts in a variety of ways.

ACTION PLAN:

Determine who will do what following second mailed attempt to parent resulting in no signature pages returned.

MONTACHUSETT REGIONAL VOCATIONAL TECHNICAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

DATA ANALYSIS/PROGRAM EVALUATION 2021-2022

FOCUS AREA: Testing Comparison by Evaluator

OVERVIEW: The District collects data in this area in order to ensure equity in testing loads, as well as the evaluator being able to meet testing deadlines for the IEP Team Meeting.

RESULTS:

- A full-time Communications Specialist providing direct service to students identified as needing this service on IEP's also conducted 38 evaluations this school year and attended IEP team meetings for these students. This was difficult to provide such a dual role with the numbers of students serviced as well as the number of students evaluated.
- One School Psychologist/Educational Diagnostician conducted 48 evaluations; the second conducted 60. This was a strategic move by the District to allow one staff to conduct social skills/ emotional 1/1 or I support groups with students. The other staff member changed her role from a consultant to a part-time employee to conduct testing and TEAM meeting attendance only.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. Continue to monitor Testing Caseloads throughout the school year and make adjustments as necessary.
2. When printing out different data collection sheets during the school year, ensure that each sheet indicates "AS OF DATE" in order to assist with data review..

ACTION PLAN:

- None needed

MONTACHUSETT REGIONAL VOCATIONAL TECHNICAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

DATA ANALYSIS/PROGRAM EVALUATION 2021-2022

FOCUS AREA: STAY Classroom Tracking

OVERVIEW: The STAY (Support Students At Risk) is a classroom designed to assist students with re-entry/transition back to school and provides continued support to achieve academic and vocational success at MT)

RESULTS:

- 44 Total Referrals
- 40 students participated; 4 did not participate
- Days students participated ranged from 2 to 51 days dependent on student need
- 31/40 students were promoted to the next grade level
- 4/40 students withdrew
- 2/40 attended summer school
- 2/40 still had a medical excusal as of last day
- 1/40 medically homebound; tutor hired

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. Continue to monitor STAY Classroom Student Data
2. When printing out different data collection sheets during the school year, ensure that each sheet indicates "AS OF DATE" in order to assist with data review

ACTION PLAN:

- None needed