BOARD OF EDUCATION, NEW FAIRFIELD, CT
Special Education Ad Hoc Subcommittee Meeting

Name of Subcommittee: Special Education Ad Hoc Meeting type: Regular
Date of Meeting: 10.1.26 Place of Meeting: Zoom
Members present: Kim LaTourette, Samantha Mannion, Joanne Toelles, Ed Sbordone
Other attendees: Dr. Kenneth Craw, Monica Krepsztul, Michelle Demeyer, Alexandra Lambert
Minutes submitted by: Committee Staff / Recording Secretary
Meeting Access:
Special Education Ad Hoc Subcommittee Meeting (10/1/26 at 6:00 p.m.)
Web: https://zoom.us/j/99047361864
Dial In: (929) 205-6099 Meeting ID: 990 4736 1864

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m.

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A. June 4, 2026- Regular

Motion: To approve the minutes of June 4, 2026 were considered. Hearing no objections or corrections, the minutes were approved by consensus.

III. INFORMATION/ REPORTS

A. Special Education District Priorities

1. **IEP Quality and Implementation (Accommodations and modifications** Monika Krepsztul presented the district's priority to improve the quality and practical implementation of Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) for the current school year, focusing specifically on classroom accommodation and modifications.

   Key Points Discussed: District focus shifting from standards alignment to ensuring classroom teachers understand, manage, and implement required accommodations/modifications. Baseline data showed accommodations were occasionally missed due to lack of teacher awareness, clarity of responsibility, or unclear wording. Professional development was conducted at the start of the school year for all staff, alongside targeted training for special education staff detailing legal responsibilities and processes for clarification/amendments.

   Monitoring & Verification Systems: *Secondary Level (Middle/High School):* Michelle Demeyer detailed a new Google Form verification system where secondary teachers verify the number of plan-supported students per period against district database totals. *Elementary Level:* Alexandra Lambert noted case managers physically print and hand-deliver updated IEP copies to general education, specials, and related service staff, collecting individual signoffs. *Annual Reviews:* Re-acknowledgment forms will be distributed to teachers immediately following each PPT meeting.

2. **Social, Emotional, and Behavioral Programming & Meaningful Inclusion** Monika Krepsztul presented an overview of adjustments to the Best and Bridge programs to meet changing student demographics and needs.
   Key Points Discussed: Emphasized that special education programs represent a service framework based on PPT determinations, not a fixed physical destination.

Meaningful inclusion is individualized; time in general education versus specialized spaces depends on each student's sensory and self-regulation needs. **Elementary Restructuring:** Introduced a structured self-contained classroom model staffed by a Special Education Teacher, BCBA, and School Psychologist. The structure hosts two daily social-emotional groups while facilitating specialized academic instruction as outlined in student IEPs. **Bridge Program Updates:** Administration reviewed past progress data and scheduled ongoing evaluations throughout the year. Comprehensive data and structure updates will be presented at the December committee meeting.

3. **STRIDES Transition Program** Monika Krepsztul and Michelle Demeyer reported on the district's STRIDES Transition Program for post-secondary prep.
   Key Points Discussed: Transition Night: Scheduled for **February 17, 2027**, featuring state agency representatives including the Bureau of Rehabilitation Services (BRS) and the Department of Developmental Services (DDS). **Community & Agency Integration:** Monthly meetings with local BRS representatives; active partnerships with the Goodwill Career Center (Danbury) for interview/resume workshops and the Center for Empowerment and Education for long-term adult advocacy. **Family Support & Enrollment:** In response to committee inquiries regarding complex paperwork (SSI, DDS, Husky), staff confirmed case managers track timelines starting at age 17.5 to assist families with legal guardianship and state applications. **Enrollment & Facility Projections:** Current enrollment consists of 8 New Fairfield students. The facility currently shares building space with Newtown's program (~20 students). Due to lease expiration and projected growth in New Fairfield's population over the next several years, the district is evaluating future space options with Newtown.

4. **Parent Communication and Engagement (Year 2)** Monika Krepsztul presented the Year 2 plan for parent coffee hours, and informational sessions aimed at increasing outreach and community connection.
   Key Events Scheduled: *Early Learning Center (ELC) Parent Night:* November 17, 2026. *Transition Night:* February 17, 2027. *Parent Coffee – Reading & Structured Literacy:* October 29, 2026. *Parent Coffee – Understanding IEPs & Paraeducator Support:* January 14, 2027. *Parent Coffee – Executive Functioning:* May 13, 2027.**Outreach Strategy:** To boost attendance across grade levels, outreach will combine direct case manager contacts, PTO promotion, district newsletter announcements, and digital flyers.

B. Action Items - None

IV. ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn: Made by: Kimberly LaTourette **Seconded by:** Samantha Mannion
Recording of vote: All in favor **Meeting adjourned at:** 6:35p.m.