

ASHPAC Meeting Minutes  
February 5, 2020

Attendees: Kathy Silva, Jill Fulhan, Anna Bukina, Leah Suarez, Diana Davis

Welcome/sign in: Done

Topics with Kathy Silva from Office of Students Services (Kathy Bates/School Committee – absent):

OSS January meeting included the next three agenda items:

OSS staff changes – KS shared that Jodi Anderson is transitioning from her role in OSS to the Business Office across the hall to take on the position of Grants Coordinator. KS will be sending out an email on Friday to let staff and families know. She also shared that Linda Lee was hired to fill the role. Ms. Lee previously held a similar position in the Blackstone Millville Regional District and has started this week, working with Jodi to learn her new responsibilities. ASHPAC thanks Jodi for her many years of support of our group and our children.

5-Town Special Olympics update – April 3, 2020, football theme, held at AHS, planning on 80-100 athletes, age 8+ years. KS reported that: the 5-Town program started because the towns included are too small to have their own Special Olympics programs; it was mutually agreed by the sponsoring school districts that participation would be offered to students in Specialized Programming (vs. any student with an IEP, as SOMA guidelines permit) given the numbers of students and intent of the event); in addition, due to the nature of the support necessary to host students in out-of-district placements, the five participating school districts have limited participation to students in district. Athletes will be accompanied by peer partners and staff from each town. A local trophy store in Ashland has agreed to donate trophies for each town.

MetroWest College Fair – KK absent but sent report ahead of the meeting that she is continuing to seek representation from local colleges' disabilities programs to attend and provide information to students at the fair.

FCSN Conference 2/29/20 – Info reviewed, ASHPAC able to send one person free as part of MASSPAC subscription.

OWL/Student Services Question - Due to KS before February vacation. DD reports there is a question pending about ESY and how families find out whether their child qualifies for the program. Will get this and calendar info to KS by end of next week.

New topics/concerns –

ESY: LS asked KS about when parents would be notified of eligibility for summer services. KS explained that this discussion is part of the IEP Team process and usually should be covered during a student's annual IEP review. For annual reviews that happen early in the school year, this discussion may be deferred until closer to the end of the year. For annual reviews that happen very late in the school year, KS suggested reaching out to the Team coordinator for input to help families plan for the summer months given that private camp options are open for enrollment and possibly filled in early March/April.

ASHPAC Advisory Role: DD expressed concern that ASHPAC was not formally asked for an opinion on the current discussion of what grade configuration to pursue during the Mindess School Building process. DD expressed frustration that this is the third decision with broad programming impact in recent months of which ASHPAC has not formally been asked for an opinion by the Ashland School Committee (Preschool Programming Changes adopted Spring 2019, Programmatic Changes at the Mindess School/Future of the Neighborhood or Multi-age program discussed Fall 2019, and currently, Grade Configuration impacting Preschool, Warren Elementary, and Mindess Elementary). Ongoing attempts to solicit ASHPAC input have been appreciated, especially by Kathy Silva, Director of Student Services, and Kathy Bates, School Committee Member, who attend ASHPAC monthly meetings. DD

acknowledged that ASHPAC was offered and participated in the educational programming workshops held during fall 2019 as part of the Mindess School Building Process, however, during these workshops the grade configuration was not discussed. Discussion then turned to the Grade Configuration: KS asked if ASHPAC had been able to discuss the issue, DD responded that due to Open Meeting Laws, ASHPAC had not yet been able to have the discussion. KS took questions about the changes and how different grade configurations would impact students with unique needs, especially in regards to reading/literacy acquisition, initial evaluation/eligibility determinations, continuity of programming, and impacts on Specialized Programming age groupings. KS stayed until all ASHPAC questions were asked and answered.

### ASHPAC

Vote to approve Jan 2020 minutes – deferred

FCSN conference – Two board members have not attended yet. Sending them first discussed. Vote initiated by DD, seconded by JF to send AB or KK first, and if they cannot go they appoint someone else. Vote in favor of this plan was unanimous.

Preschool Open House Recap - No one able to attend, no recap available.

FCSN additional workshop planning – Deferred

Scholarship letter and application – Due to AHS guidance dept by March, AHS graduation is June 7<sup>th</sup>. KK and JF to facilitate.

ASHPAC Website – work is ongoing with overall design and pages discussed. Plan to have website up and running for start of school year 2020-2021.

ASHPAC gmail account – discovered by DD, likely created when new website was created, board did not realize it existed. DD will respond to and check for emails.

Treasurer report – AB to deposit WAITT donation checks. DD clarifying who gave donations so they may be recognized. AB also asked about ASHPAC donation to SOMA for 5-Town Special Olympics. ASHPAC discussed donation and amount. JF initiated vote, DD seconded it, unanimous vote positive for donating \$100 again this year to SOMA. AB to pick up forms from OSS and request check be sent.

ASHPAC Board role, bylaws, mission statement review/update – DD and JF to meet as subcommittee to review and present ideas at upcoming meeting.

New topics/concerns: Mindess School Building Project/Grade Configuration Options: Group discussed concerns regarding both keeping the current configuration and changing to a 2-5 grade Mindess. Group decided that rather than make a formal recommendation, we would attempt to get a list of questions, concerns, and advantages to school administrators and school committee members before the school committee vote.

Meeting adjourned: 9:30pm

Next meeting: Wednesday, March 4, 2020 at 7pm.