

Holmdel Township Board of Education
Special Services Committee
Combined Meeting Notes for March 10, 2010 and April 7, 2010

Present: Board Members: Ana M. Vander Woude–Chair, Mary F. Hartnett, and Chiung-yin Liu
Administrators: Barbara Duncan and Meryl Gill

Absent: Mary F. Hartnett (04-07-10 meeting) and Barbara Duncan (03-10-10 meeting)

1. State of the District Presentation:

- a. 03-10-10: The committee reviewed the draft presentation prepared by Ana and discussed ways to improve it.
- b. 04-07-10: Meryl and Ana shared with the committee positive community feedback that they had received regarding the Special Services presentation.

2. Self-Assessment Update:

- a. The district is now at the second round of self-assessment. The state has requested supporting documentation from Holmdel to show that the district is in compliance. Fortunately, the collection of data could be obtained with relative ease using the IEP database.
- b. The state has strong guidelines as to the number of classified students in a class. However, the state is flexible if the number over is not significant. At Satz and Holmdel High School, there are up to 5 classes in which the student number goes over the recommended ratio by 1 student. In such circumstances, the district is required to notify in writing the parents of said students. This is not expected to be a cause for noncompliance by the state.
- c. A site visit is expected in mid-July.

3. ARRA Update: Professional Development:

- a. On March 5th, a study skills workshop was provided for all Child Study Team members district-wide by Richard Gallagher. It was conducted over 2 half-day sessions to minimize the need for substitutes. Satz principal, Art Howard, was so impressed with the workshop that he is arranging for an assembly by Mr. Marshall for all Satz students. That workshop will be funded by the PSG.
- b. To date, all special education staff has received professional development under ARRA funds.

4. Extended School Year Program (ESY) Update: The Special Services is now in the process of preparing for the Summer 2010 ESY program. It is scheduled for July 6th to August 12th and will be held 4 days per week, from 9a to 1p.

5. Indian Hill Autism Program:

- a. *Rationale:* Several students currently in the Village School Autism Program will enter the third grade next year and then be ready to transition to Indian Hill. Currently no autism program exists at Indian Hill.
- b. *Transition Committee:* A Transition Autism committee has been formed to begin preparing for the development of an autism program at Indian Hill of comparable quality as that already established at Village School. The focus will be primarily for those students who require special class placements (self-contained).
- c. *Committee Members:* To ensure the development of a program to meet the needs of all involved, the committee is comprised of all significant stakeholders: Brian Schillaci (Indian Hill principal), teachers, therapists and the parent of a child expected to transition to Indian Hill. Village School staff will also participate. Vivian Attanasio, a district behaviorist, will chair the committee.
- d. *Goals:* The committee is charged with developing all aspects of the new program, including training and classroom set-up.
- e. *Timeline:* The program is expected to be in place by the 2011-12 school year.

6. Items for the Good of the Order:

03-10-10: The committee briefly discussed the process by which a child is referred to the school district for possible need of special services and an IEP meeting is ultimately held. The procedure and timeline are regulated by federal and state laws. Recommendations on how to better provide parents with such information were proposed including updating the district's Special Services webpage.

7. Next Meeting: To be determined after the Reorganization of the Board on April 28, 2010.

Respectfully submitted,

Ana M. Vander Woude