



MEETING MINUTES

March 12, 2019
Lewes School Library

Attendance:

Vivian Bush
Elizabeth Gerritt
Susan Berry
Pete Hayes

Nadia Nuebling
Tara Pickett
Arleen McClung
Chris Nuebling

Joy Smith
Tia Dimopoulos
Barbara Powell

Chuyen Kochenily
Tom Stolle
Kay Vincent

Principal's Update: given by Dr. Vivian Bush

- Vivian updated the group on last month's discussion around the announcement that the Office of the Statewide Director will transfer from Christina school district to DOE. The latest information received is that nothing changed at this time and that DAP will remain unchanged.
- Vivian Bush and Barbara Powell indicated that neither had received a copy of the Special Ed. Strategic Plan requested from Vince Wintering and Autism Delaware.

• **Action items:**

- Vivian to follow-up with Vince Winterling and Barbara Powell to follow-up with Dafne Carnright at DAP for an update on the Special Ed. Strategic Planning Advisory Committee.

Guest Speaker: Susan Berry (Asst Principal) and Elizabeth Gerritt (School Psychologist) from the Sussex Consortium talking about Parent Support Group and SibShop

- Susan Berry explained that the Parent Support group is a parent-led group that meets on the third Tuesday of each month in the Lewes school library. While Susan may come with proposed ideas, parents are encouraged to bring their own ideas for discussion. Parents help each other with ideas and resources. Grandparents and friends also welcome to attend.
- Elizabeth Gerritt explained that SibShop is a national program that provides a forum for siblings of children with disabilities. Age group typically 6 – 16. Games, crafts or other activities are planned for each session, while an informal discussion can take place. These sessions are facilitated by Elizabeth, who has had SibShop training. She requests that parents let her know if their children plan to attend.
- The group requested that more information be sent to parents/guardians about what SibShop is and that support group topics and meeting reminders be sent through the auto call system and bookbag flyers.
- Parents were reminded that respite is provided during the support group and SibShop.

Parent Input and Resources

- Results of the parent survey conducted in January were shared. There were 26 responses.
- Communication through book bag flyers and auto call popular with parents. Interest expressed in remote participation.
- There is a new app, where the Consortium will be able to blast text communications to parents/guardians.
- Input was given on a draft flyer/input form to start a parent directory.

Action Items:

- Board to consider first Monday of the month for meetings next school year based on survey response and subsequent research on other school district PTA meetings. District calendar for next school year set in May.
- Board to consider using Facebook Live as a way for parents/guardians to take part in meetings remotely.
- Barbara Powell to finalize parent directory input form.
- Arleen McClung to compile parent directory. Vivian Bush provided a name of parent who developed directory in the past who is willing to help.

Fundraising and Treasurer's Report

- SusPAC currently has a balance of \$2,518.17 in their account held by the Sussex Consortium.
- SusPAC's primary annual fundraising has consisted of Box Top collection, Coke top collection, holiday wreath sale and Giant grocery program. Last year there was also a Grotto fundraiser.
- SusPAC funding traditionally has supported a first day lunch for Consortium staff and a meal during Teacher Appreciation Week.
- There is the ability for parents or other individuals to make donations to the Consortium, but they cannot donate to SusPAC because SusPAC is not set up as a separate entity.
- There was discussion about the pros and cons of setting up SusPAC as a separate non-profit organization (501c3).
- A question was raised as to what other Delaware PACs do regarding fundraising and organizational structure.

Action Items:

- Tia Dimopoulos volunteered to take over the collection and administration of Box Top fundraiser. Arleen McClung to pass along information to Tia.
- Some Board members to attend other county PAC meetings if possible.

Teacher Appreciation Week

- TAW is the first week in May.
- There was a discussion about what has been done in past years.
- Several attendees volunteered to help with generating ideas and coordinating activities.

- It was suggested that parents be given the option to make a financial donation to the Teacher Appreciation Week activities. Checks would need to be made out to the Sussex Consortium and designated to the SusPAC Teacher Appreciation Week activities.

Action Items:

- Arleen McClung to touch base with teacher liaison for this activity at the Consortium.
- Arleen McClung to reach out to parent volunteers to meet and coordinate TAW activities.

Autism Advocacy

- It was mentioned that Bill 48 is in review, which requests statewide funding for students in K - 3rd grade with Autism diagnosis. Currently funding is only for 4th grade through 12th grade.
- Vivian Bush has met with Senator Ernie Lopez to discuss Bill 48 and will let SusPAC and parents know if/when there is a need to advocate.
- A reminder that Smart Cookie Day (SCD) is on April 19, 2019 from 12:00-4:00pm at Legislative Hall, 411 Legislative Ave, Dover, DE.
- SCD is a day for parents, staff and self-advocates to meet with legislators to share their stories with state leaders about issues of importance and to advocate for legislation that benefits individuals on the spectrum. Individuals can go on your own, or join Autism Delaware by registering on [eventbrite.com](https://www.eventbrite.com) or calling Annalisa Ekblad on 302-224-6020.

Next Meeting

April 9, 2019, Lewes School Library, 6 – 8 pm

Speakers: Morgan Reilly, Speech Therapist and Sarah Rosswog, Psychologist from the Sussex Consortium
