

Grafton SEPAC meeting minutes for December 11, 2018

It was requested that the SEPAC be provided a more detailed breakdown of the special education budget. Mr. Lundwall said that he was "not able to provide new info." And that it was "not in his bucket to provide staffing." (Meaning that staff are in the general education Grafton school budget and not in the Grafton special education budget.)

Mr. Lundwall said that he "doesn't dive into staffing trends."

Upcoming staffing requests were 1 SPED teacher and 1/2 SLP (2 1/2 days a week)

Mr. Lundwall said that he met with the speech language department last week. That it was "hard to define what we need."

Mr. Lundwall then spoke about a behavior analyst. That there was no certification requirement to be a behavior analyst (BLA) in Grafton. And that for one particular BLA in the district there was no requirement in her contract requiring certification. He was waiting to hear back on one of the BSCs to see if she passed her test. Mr. Lundwall said that maybe then, he would make it a requirement for employment in the future.

Mr. Lundwall said: "Letters behind a name do not always make quality."

Mr. Lundwall also said: "Do I make a change in a job description- no."

Then there was discussion about parents knowing that the IEP can specify that students the number of students that work with the BSC or other staff.

Then there was discussion about: does more qualified people result in better services for the student? There was discussion that every general educator has different skills. There was mention of UDL (universally designed learning). Several parents asked if the district could have an OT (occupational therapist) or SLP (speech language therapist) go into the general education classrooms to see if they see any concerns that might identify possible issues for students in the classroom. It was suggested that if there is a more pro-active approach to identifying issues it would be beneficial for classroom outcomes.

Mr. Lundwall mentioned that co-teachers are filling in gaps where it's needed. He said that: "The IEP is the trump card."

It was then requested by the SEPAC that Superintendent Jay Cummings come to a future meeting for 1 hour to discuss budget questions.

Dan Gale, Grafton Public Schools Finance Director was in attendance for this meeting on 12/11/18. There was a question about the cost of legal fees. Mr. Gale said \$57,000 was spent across two different legal firms. He said both firms both deal in OCR (Office of Civil Rights) complaints. Both Myric and OConnell and Murphy, Toomey, Hesse deal in both regular education and special education legal issues.

FY17 general council was \$54,747

FY18 general council was \$35,000

FY 16 general council was about \$63,000

There was a question about where do funds for unanticipated costs come from? Mr. Gale said that "they pad the account" and that the SEPAC could clarify that with Superintendent Cummings.

There was discussion about the SEPAC info needing to be easily found on the school districts website.

It was then requested that #3 of the agenda: regarding federal?state programs and funding be moved to the next SEPAC meeting.

631,000 have to apply for it

Typically done for SPED

PL94-14 is only adjust count. And behavioral support- only these two

Fund Code 240 coming out of a 1 year grant

*9/10/18*

It was asked if Mr. Gale knew what it's based on. He said: " No clue."

Proportionate share 12,300

Needs to be spent on kids who attend private schools

262 fund 23,465 goes towards para professionals salaries

Program improvement grant allocated 20-25,000 for professional development- Mr. Gale said that:" evaporated 2 years ago."

It was questioned: who writes grants for the district?

Mr. Lundwall said that he writes grants. He also said that Tracy Calo (Assistant Superintendent) and Dan Gale also write grants. There is no one person in charge of obtaining grants.there was a MCAS tutoring grant a few years ago.

It was asked by M. Lackey if we are accessing all the grants that we are eligible for?

There is Title 1, Title 2, Title 4- general ed.

Mr. Gale said that for Title 1: \$113,000 reduced from \$211,000 the year before

Title 2: \$45,000

Title 4: \$15,000

It was questioned: "Are there any studies that show UDL impacts special education (budget)?"

Mr. Lundwall said that: " we are not that far off the state average. There is a link on the DESE website for subgroup results. Tried to look at cut off for "Meeting Expectations" for MCAS results. ELA grade 3 10% of students w/disabilities did not pass, 24% statewide did not pass 22% SWD met expectations and statewide it was 6%

There was mention of grade 6 ELA only 14% met expectations and only 12% statewide

He said grade 6 and grade 8 looked pretty bad.

There was mention of the new dyslexia screening bill. Mr. Lundwall told the SEPAC that he met with elementary teachers and reading specialists to form a Reading Intervention committee and the 1st one was last week. Mr. Lundwall said: "If you can not read you can't do math." He said that the next reading intervention committee meeting was going to be on Jan. 25th.

It was asked how student growth in reading is measured. Mr. Lundwall said that it is done through general education using Reading A-Z and DIBELS.

Mr. Lundwall said that for the reading intervention committee he wanted to know what was being done for interventions across the district? He wanted to know are they evidence based? He wanted to know how long do students receive intervention? What has teachers experience been? What interventions have not worked? Mr. Lundwall said that there was currently no decision tree. He wanted to know the teachers and literacy specialists qualifications and what they were trained and certified in. Mr. Lundwall mentioned Linda Mood Bell and Wilson. He also said that Tracy Calo was doing work around Project Read. Mr. Lundwall said that the district was looking at student growth over the year. Mr. Lundwall said that it would be a 2 year process to find out what they have in district and to come up with a plan to address literacy in the district.

Grafton SEPAC members asked what was the plan? Who would be held accountable? How can the SEPAC help? Mr. Lundwall said that it was a small group of educators and that he was trying to expand it. He said it would be 1-2 years down the road to be in others.

Mr. Lundwall said "I just need the time to work with my staff."

He said there was the Seeing stars program in the district.

A SEPAC member asked if overall there was a systematic and proactive model for identifying kids with literacy issues. Mr. Lundwall said no. Mr. Lundwall said that they were pouring funds into professional development. One thing mentioned was that some teachers were getting level 1 certified in WILSON reading instruction.

Agenda for next time- who is on the reading intervention committee? The SEPAC would like to receive and review a monthly update from the Reading Intervention committee.

Mr. Lundwall said that it was a long term plan and that it was not just reading instruction. Educators would feel better when all literacy was addressed and that they need to do the same for writing and math instruction.

There was mention of the state website mentioning Lexia Rapid a screener.

A SEPAC member requested that Mr. Lundwall consider doing an outside evaluation of reading instruction in the district. That could we find some way for outside input (meaning SEPAC members and parents) to be part of the Reading Intervention Committee? It was asked could there be a map for literacy intervention? What are the interventions and outcomes?