

July 9, 2024

SPECIAL EDUCATION & STUDENT SUPPORTS SUBCOMMITTEE

Special Education and Student Supports Subcommittee
Tuesday, July 9 at 5:00 – 6:00 p.m.
Broadcast from the Media Arts Studio
454 Broadway, Cambridge, MA 02138

Called or the purpose of providing an overview of the summer programming of the Multi-Tiered Systems of Supports and Interventions (MTSS) division and to discuss other special education priorities. This meeting is expected to end on or before 6:30 p.m.

Subcommittee Members: Richard Harding, Jr. (Chair); Elizabeth Hudson

Other School Committee Members Present: Vice Chair Caroline Hunter

Also Present: Dr. Frank Alves, Interim Executive Director of Special Education; Dr. Heather Francis, Director of MTSS; Dr. Karyn Grace, Assistant Superintendent of the Office of Student Services; David Murphy, Interim Superintendent, Desiree Phillips, Coordinator for Upper Schools and High School, Siobhan Reardon, Coordinator of Inclusive Education, Curriculum and Instruction; Shelagh Walker, Coordinator for Special Start, Related Services and School Entry, Karen Dobak, SEPAC

Chair Harding started the meeting at 6:02 p.m. He welcomed the group and the Confidential Secretary read the call of the meeting. Chair Harding turned the meeting over to Dr. Grace.

Dr. Grace gave introductory remarks and noted the importance of measuring the impact their work. She is shared her hope that the subcommittee would be able to map a cadence of topics following the discussion.

She turned the meeting the meeting over to the following OSS colleagues, Dr. Francis, Ms. Walker and Ms. Phillips who shared the following presentation which can be found on this [website](#).

Highlights of the presentation include:

- MultiLingual Education Summer Program
- Overview of MTSS
- CPS SOARS! Summer Program
- CPS Summer Scholars Program
- SOARS! Summer Scholars Evaluation Plan
- Special Education Summer Learning Opportunities
- ESY Services Evaluation Plan

Following the presentation, Chair Harding inquired about Cambridge-run programming and its relation to CPSD summer program. Dr. Grace cited Rise Up as a summer program at was not part of OSS. She shared that CPS colleague Maggie Rabidou would be the best source of information for summer programming outside of OSS.

Chair Harding turned the conversation turned to survey data. Dr. Grace shared that for the first time OSS was intentional triangulated approach to the survey with feedback from caregivers, staff and students. Changes that have resulted from past surveys include aligning programming and coordinating program space/buildings. Dr. Grace agreed that surveys are important to envisioning future programming. **Member Hudson** inquired about specific changes because of survey data. Dr. Grace noted that the MCAS, iReady, and student data is fresh specific changes have not yet been implemented because of the data. She shared that historically transportation issues have been highlighted in survey data and was noted by the OSS team. The transportation issue as seen an overall improvement. As a result of the data, Dr. Francis noted OSS is tracking the number of days that

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students are attending and including incentives for attendance. OSS has decreased the number of program sites and adjusted to a shorter day for older students. Dr. Alves shared that the data has helped inform field trips and that his team is starting to focus more on the ESY regression data.

Vice Chair Hunter inquired about gathering parents over the summer. Dr. Grace shared that social gatherings were not organized, but that parents were convened to celebrate student work and program. Dr. Francis noted Summer Scholars as an example. Chair Harding agreed that future parent supports should be considered.

Member Hudson inquired why some program fall under MTSS. Dr. Grace shared that some programs are directed by Family Engagement, but that actual interventions fall under Dr. Francis.

Karen Dobak, SEPAC member, shared that transportation is a barrier to services and that parents have trouble getting their children to locations. She noted that some students need 12-month programming, not 11 months and that students with IEPs are falling further behind. Dr. Grace recognized that transportation was a barrier for some parents. She highlighted that the OSS tries to partner with city program so that the tutoring experience can be more seamless. Regarding IEPs, the OSS has a district-wise screener so that issues can be identified sooner, and interventions can be implemented. Dr. Alves shared that the other districts do not have summer programming on Fridays and make up for these days with 12-month programming.

Caregiver Mei Lu shared that her child is on an IEP and she would like to see the data related to the special education community. Dr. Grace shared that the data was reviewed as a department and that a presentation was prepared. **Chair Harding** thought it was important that the entire School Committee understand the data. **Member Hudson** encouraged Dr. Grace to release the presentation. **Vice Chair Hunter** would like to see the data before it is released to the public.

In the closing minutes, Chair Harding asked Interim Superintendent David Murphy to say a few words. Mr. Murphy highlighted the impactful work of the OSS team. He noted that the goal of summer programming was to prevent regression and ensure that students are ready for the upcoming school year, while also prioritizing having fun.

Chair Harding thanked the presenters and the OSS team. The meeting concluded at 6:00 p.m.