

December 5, 2024

SPECIAL EDUCATION & STUDENT SUPPORTS SUBCOMMITTEE

Special Education and Student Supports Subcommittee
Thursday, December 5 at 5:00 p.m.
Broadcast from the Media Arts Studio
454 Broadway, Cambridge, MA 02138

Called for the purpose of providing an overview of the new IEP format and CPS implementation.

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

Also Present: Dr. Karyn Grace, Assistant Superintendent of the Office of Student Services; Desiree Phillips, Executive Director of Special Education; Zuleka Queen-Postell, Special Education Liaison, Parent Advisory Council (SEPAC),

Chair Harding started the meeting at 6:05 p.m. He welcomed the group and the Executive Secretary read the call of the meeting and did a roll call of subcommittee members present: Member Harding, PRESENT; Member Rojas, PRESENT; Member Hudson, PRESENT.

Chair Harding welcomed the registrant for public comment, Mei Lu, a member of SEPAC. He then turned the meeting over to Dr. Grace.

Dr. Grace gave introductory remarks and noted that the IEP format had not been updated in 21 years. The district was taking great care to ensure that administrators and faculty members were properly trained in the new IEP format. She turned the meeting over to Ms. Phillips who gave the following [presentation](#).

Highlights of the presentation include:

- IEP Project Goals: To improve outcomes for all students with disabilities by providing guidance, technical assistance, and tools on equitable processes to school and district professionals, families, and students so that all students with disabilities have meaningful access to the curriculum frameworks and life of the school.
- Areas of focus for improved IEP Form
 - Family and student voices
 - Accessibility of Language
 - Effective, Explicit Collaboration
 - Integrated Transition Planning
 - IEPS Driven by Data
 - Form Documents Process
- Enhancement to the new IEP Form
 - Ability to name all student disabilities equally
 - Inclusion of English Language Learner section
 - Autism specific questions
 - SEL specific questions
 - Inclusion of a student transition document at age 14

Following the presentation, Mei Lu gave her public comments. She shared her desire for more parents to become involved in advocating for special needs students. She advocated for CPSD and the City of Cambridge to become more committed to ensuring CPSD special education graduates to have jobs within the community.

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Following public comment, the group discussed the following topics:

- Transitioning information from older forms to the new IEP format
- The challenges of administrating the new IEP format and EdPlan, which serves as the data management system for the new IEP.
- Navigating technology hurdles with families.
- Communicating with caregivers regarding the implications of eliminating the MCAS graduation requirement
- The importance of smooth school transitions for special education students
- Billing and payment of special education providers and contracts
- Monitoring out-of-district placements
- Post graduate programming
- SCALE Program for students with autism
- Supporting students with highly complex needs

Chair Harding gave concluding remarks and thanked the presenters and caretakers for their contributions.

Following the conversation, the meeting concluded with a roll call of adjournment of subcommittee members: Member Harding, YEA; Member Rojas, YEA; Member Hudson, YEA. (6:25 p.m.)