

**Win-PAC Board Meeting Minutes**  
**March 7, 2018**  
**10 – 11 am**

**Summary** Irizarry Education-Parent Advisory Council (Win-PAC) met on March 7, 2018 to discuss several issues including Win-PAC activities related to the town's decision to pursue hiring an Out of District Coordinator; processes pertaining to communications received through the Win-PAC website; and planning of the Special Education staff appreciation event. The meeting began at 10:00 am and was held at the WPS Administrative Building (Parkhurst School).

**Win-PAC Attendees:** Stacey Irizarry, Chair; Kathy Matrondola, Treasurer and Web Master; Zeina Marchant, Events Chair; and Colette Desmarais, Secretary.

**Other Attendees:** Pam Girouard, WPS Special Education Administrator; Michelle Dubs Bergstrom, Winchester School Committee Member and Win-PAC Liaison to the School Committee

**Discussion Topics**

**Out of District Coordinator:** Stacey reported that she reached out to Sam Allison and Aaron Kutyllo, who serve on Winchester's Finance Committee, to express Win-PAC's support for funding the out of district coordination position. Stacey mentioned that both Aaron and Sam were supportive and that Aaron requested a follow-up conversation.

**Communications Received through Win-PAC Website:** The Win-PAC Board discussed a recent situation in which a parent/guardian sent an email requesting Win-PAC assistance to intervene on a decision regarding the delivery of services to a student. The parent/guardian and their advocate felt that Win-PAC ignored the request.

The delay in response was not intentional and prompted a discussion about the process for ensuring that correspondence received through the website is addressed in a timely and appropriate manner. Kathy said that as the Webmaster, all emails go to her. On a regular basis – generally weekly – she reviews and sorts them and often has to delete a lot of spam emails. Kathy then alerts other Win-PAC Board members regarding communications and inquiries that require a response. The Win-PAC Board discussed some possible alternatives to this process, each of which had limitations. The Win-PAC Board agreed, for the time being, to maintain the current approach with the addition of language on the website to inform individuals that it could take a week to receive a response and that other avenues of communicating with the Win-PAC Board are available. This response timeframe seems reasonable to allow for the sorting and distribution and for Win-PAC Board Members, who serve in a volunteer capacity, to respond. The Win-PAC Board also discussed the need to make sure it provides the “right level of support.” For example, although Win-PAC can offer resource lists and other information to parents/guardians, it is not its role to intervene in specific cases. Rather, one goal is to help identify trends in parent/guardian concerns to support development and implementation of effective responses to address those concerns.

**Special Education Staff Appreciation Event:** Stacey reported that the email regarding planning for a Special Education Staff Appreciation Event received a tremendous and positive response. More than twenty people offered to assist in organizing and executing the event. A meeting will be scheduled to bring those volunteers together to begin the planning process for the event, which will

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take place on May 18 from 2:30 – 4:30 pm at Winchester High School.

**Autism Awareness Event:** Zeina provided an update on the Autism Awareness event scheduled for 7 pm on April 2, 2018 at Lynch Elementary School. The event will include an Autism Awareness Puzzle Art Installation Project and will feature John Miller, a senior at the Greater Lawrence Technical School, who will speak about his book the “Adventures of Handom,” which he wrote and illustrated. In addition, John Williams, who has Asperger’s Syndrome, will be returning to display is collage art. The Win-PAC Board discussed and agreed to join Brio Integrated Theatre and the Winchester Multicultural Network in helping fund the event, which is sponsored by Winchester’s Disability Access Commission. Pam agreed to help inform parents/guardians about the event.

**Other Topics:** The recent school shooting in Parkland, Florida prompted a conversation about preparing students with special needs on steps to take in the event of an emergency/lockdown. Michelle said that she would reach out to Winchester Public School’s Incident Management Team to initiate a conversation on the topic. It was noted that Medford’s PAC is advocating for ALICE training and a study of various protocols to ensure that they meet the needs of special needs students. In addition to reaching out to the Incident Management Team, Pam suggested that it might be good to discuss this issue with the School Committee as well.

Pam reported that she reached out the Federation for Children with Special Needs to request that last year’s speaker conduct the Basic Rights Workshop.

Kathy reported that she will send a letter to the PTOs to request that they provide a contribution to help fund Win-PAC activities (e.g., speaker fees, refreshments, etc.)

**The meeting adjourned at approximately 11:00 am.**