



LOWELL SCHOOL COMMITTEE
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Special Education
Subcommittee Meeting
Thursday, January 16, 2025
TV Studio - 5th Floor
7:00 p.m.

Fred Bahou
David Conway
Eileen Delrossi
Jackie Doherty
Connie A. Martin

Subcommittee Members Present: Chairperson Delrossi, Ms. Doherty and Ms. Martin

School Department Personnel Present: Ms. Brown-LeGrand, Assistant Superintendent
Ms. Bousios, Director, Special Education

Chairperson Delrossi called the meeting to order at 7:07 p.m. The following agenda item was discussed:

1. 8.11. Response To Motion (By Jackie Doherty, 06/14/24) Regarding Special Education Improvement Plan

Ms. Brown-LeGrand explained that one of the topics in the improvement plan involves programming at Bartlett School. She noted that Bartlett has traditionally served as a hub for students with mobility challenges, but the facility itself presents significant obstacles. She shared that the district is exploring alternative options, though these efforts have been paused for the current school year. She stated that a committee is being formed to address the issue, and that herself and a member of the facilities department are conducting tours as part of the evaluation process. Ms. Brown-LeGrand emphasized the importance of avoiding similar challenges as they move forward.

Ms. Delrossi asked what schools currently have the LEAP program.

Ms. Brown-LeGrand stated that Daley and Bartlett. No elementary school outside of the Bartlett have it.

Ms. Doherty stated that the LEAP program isn't just mobility issues and that students with mobility issues can attend other schools. She stated that parents need to be involved and that the Committee needs to be kept informed.

Ms. Brown-LeGrand noted that while adjustment classes are available, they often lead to challenges such as staff turnover. She emphasized the difficulty of recruiting specialized staff to support many of these students. However, she highlighted the importance of having a cohort of teachers who can collaborate and support one another, as this greatly benefits both the staff and the students.

Ms. Doherty inquired whether the Committee could receive a list of the members who will serve on the committee, as well as details about the facilities being considered. She also asked for clarification on which positions are the most challenging to fill.

Ms. Brown-LeGrand identified the "big three" challenging positions to fill as Occupational Therapists (OTs), Speech-Language Pathologists (SLPs), and Psychologists. She noted that this staffing issue is a widespread problem across the entire Northeast.

Ms. Doherty asked what the plan is.

Ms. Brown-LeGrand explained that they are utilizing an agency but must remain mindful of costs. She added that they will also be reviewing the caseloads of the SLPs (Speech-Language Pathologists) and OTs (Occupational Therapists). She stated that currently, we have a school psychologist, an Occupational Therapists (OTs), and a Speech-Language Pathologists (SLPs) vacant. She stated that they will be attending specialized college career fairs to try and recruit interested candidates.

Ms. Doherty shared her thoughts on what might attract professionals, suggesting that knowing they have strong support systems, and a positive workplace culture could make a difference.

Ms. Bousios responded, explaining that they are actively working toward this goal by holding meetings and fostering two-way communication.

Ms. Brown-LeGrand added that they are reviewing the CSA programming and the entire strand, as well as evaluating the assessment program and how the district is providing support for these areas.

Ms. Doherty asked what the Committee can do to help.

Ms. Brown-LeGrand stated by checking in and sharing concerns with the administration.

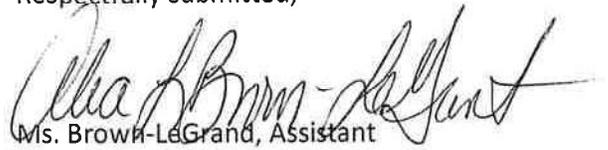
Ms. Doherty emphasized the importance of considering the upcoming budget process when looking at possible changes that need to be made.

Ms. Brown-LeGrand responded by noting that they are in the process of developing a data collection system. She explained that once it is fully operational, it will serve as a valuable resource for identifying and addressing needs.

Ms. Martin requested that the Committee be provided with updates, including executive summaries of the audit that feature clear and concrete metrics.

Ms. Doherty made a motion to adjourn at 7:49 p.m.; seconded by Ms. Martin. The motion passed with 3 yeas.

Respectfully submitted,



Ms. Brown-LeGrand, Assistant
Superintendent of Student Support
Services for Superintendent Skinner,
Secretary to Lowell School Committee

ABL/mes