

# MINUTES

SECAC

*November 14, 2024*

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## In Attendance

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Jeanne Erdley, Kara Stone, Suzanne Oshinsky, Colleen Sasdelli, Charmaine Thaner, Deana Arnas, Adeniyi Makanjuola, Aida Preston, Alisha Bethouille-Stephens, Amandeep Kaur, Angela Kaur, Angela Richards, Annette Harris-Davis, Antionette Waters, Carie Sadowski, Carol Bruce, Danielle Simpson, Deanna Gast, Elianne Lanza, Jamie Hyman, Kathy Pitrat, Katie Zankowitz, Kim Heeter, Komla Noukafou, Louisa Cameron, Megan Fitzgerald, Megan Crosby-Budinger, Nicole Jones-Watkins, Nisha Smithrick, Shannon Stracciari, Brandy Caprio, Shanika Campbell, Shilpa Narayan, Pauline Timmons

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## Welcome & Announcements

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1. Welcome from SECAC.
2. Introduction of SECAC Board Members
3. SECAC Board Elections – Nominations by May. Election in June. All Board positions are available.
4. Upcoming Meeting: December 5, 2024 – How to Best Support Challenges of Autistic Children – Molly Johnson, The Autism Consultant
5. Notices for Community Events are through Facebook group and/or Email list.
6. Please leave questions and comments in the chat. It is being monitored.

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## Colleen Sasdelli – Director of Special Education – Information Share

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Budget input sessions are ongoing.

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## Presentation – Communicate Effectively in IEP Meetings Without Feeling Overwhelmed – Charmaine Thaner

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- I. Share your input BEFORE the IEP draft is written.
- II. Common Problems
  - a. Your input isn't taken seriously, or your suggestions are ignored in the IEP draft.
  - b. Staff nods their head to your request during the meeting and your input is missing from the final IEP.
  - c. You don't ask enough specific questions.
  - d. Leaving the meeting unsure of what was discussed.
  - e. Conversations can turn into a debate.
- III. What will happen if you continue to believe input is not in IEP?
  - a. It's hard to trust in the IEP process and the system when your input isn't included.
  - b. It didn't happen if it isn't in writing.
- IV. How To Ask Questions
  - a. Asking good questions helps you understand better and encourages conversation. Without this, it is harder to address potential objections.
  - b. Ask a non-judgmental question.

- i. Ask then pause.
- ii. Check your tone and body language.
- iii. Write down questions ahead of time.
- c. Examples of good questions
  - i. Can you explain that in more detail?
  - ii. What does that look like for my child?
  - iii. Can you walk me through how this would work in the classroom?
  - iv. Who will be responsible for this support?
  - v. What's the timeline for implementing this change?
  - vi. Will we check in on this at the next meeting?
  - vii. How will we know if this plan is working?
  - viii. What happens if you need to make changes before the next meeting?
  - ix. What steps will we take at the next meeting to adjust for progress or changes?
  - x. What kind of training has the staff had to implement the IEP with co-teaching?
  - xi. What role do speech or OT have?
  - xii. How much collaboration time will staff working with my child have?
  - xiii. What has been working well?
  - xiv. How can we think outside the box to address this specific challenge?
  - xv. What could we do differently to better meet those needs?
  - xvi. What goals should we prioritize for middle school transition?
  - xvii. How does this year's IEP set the foundation for long term success?

V. What To Do

- a. Your input should be woven throughout the IEP, not just summarized in the parental input statement. If you wait until after the draft to provide input, you lose the opportunity to shape the conversation and influence the direction it takes.
- b. Clarify the decisions made before leaving the meeting.
- c. Summarize the agreements before leaving the meeting.
- d. Confirm the decisions in your own words.
- e. Ensure that input is included in the IEP decisions.
- f. Request a draft to revise.
- g. Send a follow-up email to summarize.

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Q & A

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- Q. How do you start the IEP process for a high school student?
- A. Request a meeting with the building's administrator in writing.
- Q. How do you get over being nervous in an IEP meeting?
- A. Give yourself grace and know it is okay.

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Giveaway Winners

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Danielle Simpson and Megan Crosby-Budinger

Minutes taken by Kara Stone, Secretary/Treasurer