



August 24, 2016

Dear Parents,

At the second parent meeting related to special education last Wednesday, we came together with the hope of prioritizing goals for the special education parent collaborative group. The three priorities we identified together are:

- Inclusion
- Programming
- Professional Development for Staff

As we work in partnership toward our shared priorities, I am confident that we will have improved outcomes for your children. This is important work and it will directly influence and connect to our district-wide Long-Range Plan.

Action Steps

Our next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, September 22, 2016 at 6:30 pm at Hadley Junior High. An invitation will be extended to all Special Education parents for this evening. The meeting will focus on the following:

- Small group work with building administrators - Opportunity for parents to collaborate with staff on actionable items at each school and for everyone to learn from each other
- Update on current work related to inclusion, programming and professional development
- Next steps for future work will be identified

Future Large Group Meeting Dates:

December 1, 2016

February 23, 2017

May 18, 2017

In addition to these meeting dates, we also hope to incorporate smaller working group meetings to focus on identified areas.

Completed Work Update

As we mentioned at the meeting, there have been a number of items that staff have already been working on. For example, during Institute Days prior to the start of school, staff received training on the IEP process and the importance of including parents in the process, inclusionary practices, and the importance of collaboration between special education and general education staff. Also, there were a number of building enhancements completed over the summer, such as:

Benjamin Franklin School

- Added Poured In Place rubber surface to enlarge accessible area in the playground
- ADA swing on playground
- Ground play equipment on playground
- Remodeled two restrooms (ADA accessible)
- Rebuilt ADA wooden ramp to access back black top surface

Churchill School (per new playground project)

- Poured In Place rubber surface installed for the entire upper playground area
- ADA swing on playground
- Ground play equipment on playground
- Installed accessible route to playground area

Hadley Junior High School

- Installed therapeutic swing in the OT room
- Painted OT/PT room
- Locker upgrades, including specialized ADA locks installed for individual needs
- Special desks that adjust (height) to the individual needs, and ability to configure desks for grouping students for optimal learning

We truly believe in inclusion and continue to work on day-to-day improvements as well as long-term plans for the future. We also understand this about each individual child and his or her unique gifts. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me or Michelle Gallo directly.

Sincerely,

Dr. Paul Gordon