Citywide Council for Special Education Thursday, March 26, 2020

Zoom Conference

Working Meeting Minutes

Attendees(CCSE): Ellen McHugh, Gloria Corsino, Azalia Volpe, Artelia Flowers, Abi Fenelon, Margot Weinstock, Erika Newsome, Paullette Healy, Cynthia Arbul-Vacca

(SEO)Christina Foti, John Hammer, Jose Rois-Lua, Rebecca Daverin, Sandy Ferguson

(FACE)Shona Gibson, Claudette Agard

(ECC) Nequan McLean

Shona Gibson opens the meeting at 7:15pm

* Open meeting statures are suspended to allow virtual meetings to commence. CECs and Citywide Councils are still tasked to hold their mandatory monthly meetings.
* 449 Hubs are opened for food distribution/grab and go

Christina Foti gives Special Education overview

* Related services are up and running through tele-service platforms
* Anecdotal feedback from parents and staff has been uplifting and positive
* 4 more staff added to monitor and answer the Special Education inbox. Paullette reported parents are happy with the quick responses they have been receiving on their inquiries.
* Working with the DOH and the DOL to try to expedite RSAs for in-house services for students who need hands on instruction.
* John Hammer talked about pulling together family center resources. (AT devices and services, TCAC teams, etc.)
* Jose Rios-Lua is working with Get Ready to Learn(GRTL) to do mindfulness exercise and yoga with parents. GRTL has been used in some D75 programs with great success. Cynthia suggested also talking to existing staff to help develop mindfulness/stress relief activities (PTs, OTs, gym teachers, counselors, etc.)
* Jose also mentioned using the schools.nyc.gov website for additional DOE resources (calm down checklist, info on how to support remote learning, CSE contact info, learn from home materials, etc.)

Ellen opens the floor to CCSE about concerns

* Ellen thanks everyone for taking the time to come together and commends the great job the DOE has done providing remote learning in such a short amount of time. The Council has some concerns.
* Paullette speaks about how productive teletherapy has been with her son. The providers really know and understand how to connect with their students and has been a huge support and relief mentally and physically for the whole family. Paullette suggests dedicating one day out of the week for mental health support and relief instead of rigorous instruction. A welcomed break in the remote learning and an opportunity for everyone to check in on each other.
* Cynthia brought up concerns surrounding remote learning devices and the challenges ELL students have with remote learning. No consistent policy on how they are distributed, when will more be available, the form process is not user friendly
* Azalia spoke about firewall issues installed on the DOE remote learning devices preventing other equipment to connect (i.e. printers)making it difficult to support remote learning. John will get in touch with DOE IT department to provide support. Azalia also spoke of how Bridge Prep sent home a Counseling packet to help parents prepare for remote learning. She also raised concerns on 5th graders venturing into middle school(what supports for transition are available, how will admissions be affected, etc)
* Abi discussed the stress her HS daughter is facing with the isolation and impending future (no graduation, graduation requirements, no senior events, etc.) Abi fears college acceptances will be rescinded. SETTS also wasn’t provided until March 26th.
* Gloria talked about Turning 5 and CPSE. Parents have not been contacted on when services will resume. Those mid-evaluation has not been informed of what the next step will be. Parents are concerned how this delay will affect their children’s chances of getting an appropriate setting when kindergarten acceptance letters go out. HS D75 students are also losing skills every day. Remote learning model is not working for students with more severe developmental delays.
* Erika expressed concern about Enrichment Centers (how are parents being contacted, what related services are provided, what do these classrooms look like)
* Margot spoke about the fact that EI has mandated only teletherapy, no in-home therapies at this time.
* Gloria advised that Personal Care Aides (PCA) assistance is available and to contact their managed case coordinator for additional supports for medically fragile students.

Claudette Agard closes out the meeting and will reach out to schedule next week’s zoom conference. Conference ends at 8:20pm