



PSE Grassroots Minutes

October 4, 2023

- **Updates/Review Grassroots Meetings**

- ✚ These minutes are fluid and are accurate as of this moment in time.
- ✚ Sometimes things discussed can change.
- ✚ All minutes will be posted on the PSE Grassroots page on the PFT Website. (<https://pft400.com/grassroots/special-education-grassroots-pse/>)

Housekeeping

- *Please remember to change your name in all union Zoom meetings so that it reflects your legal name. It is important that we verify the attendees of the meetings are part of the union.*
- *The union's ERND classes are looking for teachers who are currently in community schools. This year's research focuses on community schools. The project is completed on one Saturday a month and is presented in May. There is a stipend available for this program. Please contact Brittany for more information.*
- **Coverages**
 - ✚ Many schools are extremely short-staffed with low/no subs. We have discussed before about PSE teachers being used for coverages in emergencies. What determines an emergency? *When no one else is available to cover the classroom.*
 - ✚ If teachers are being pulled and missing students on their caseload, when should parents be notified? *The best practice is to inform the principal and program officer if students are missing services when a special education teacher is asked to cover.*
 - ✚ Are there any guidelines for special education teacher coverages (can they be pulled for specials, classes that do contain students on our caseload, and classes that do not contain students on our caseload)? *Any teacher can cover any class on a day-to-day basis, in the event of an emergency.*
- **PERFORM**
 - ✚ IEP Guidelines have changed – now it appears if you have students 5 days a week, it counts as 100%. How similar do the goals need to be to count for the qualification? For example, if you have 7 students with a fluency goal, but they are on 4 different levels, does that count? *Business rules indicate "similar", so in the situation of fluency goals, those would count. Likewise, similar goals related to reading comprehension, math computation, problem-solving, etc. could also be used.* PERFORM and teacher evaluation fall under Dr. Alyssa Ford Heywood. Her department is offering numerous trainings and "office hours" for principals to help them understand the software change and the new requirements.
 - ✚ A new item this year is the LEA Selected Measures. How should learning support teachers decide on a goal and how many students on the caseload to pick? *There was extensive discussion regarding the LEA-selected measures. Some members stated that their principals did not have a lot of information on this topic. Consequently, staff are reporting conflicting responses to their questions. For example, there seems to be some confusion*

regarding the terms “caseload” and “classroom”. A member shared that she was told that the IEP measure would be in place for any teacher who has seven students with similar IEP goals if those students are seen five days a week. An email related to the new teacher evaluation system was sent out this afternoon. Teachers are encouraged to read that for more information.

- **Paraprofessionals**

- ✚ How are paraprofessionals evaluated and who do they report to? *Paraprofessionals report to the building principal and that is also who completes their evaluations.*
- ✚ If there are concerns with a paraprofessional and their responsibilities, and the principal says to document, what are the next steps? *There is no one pathway, teachers should consult with their principal about the kinds of documentation needed.*
- ✚ Can paraprofessionals be given relevant training for the classrooms they are supporting? *An Open Court session was held with K-5 LS paras at the start of the school year with a second session planned for November. On the ½ day of District PD sessions, LS paras will receive professional learning on the Science of Reading. Low Incidence paras attended the back-to-school PD with their teachers and will do so again on 11/7. EA-IVs participate in job-specific training with the BCBAs.*
- ✚ Are there any updates to hiring paraprofessionals – specifically for our regional classrooms? What can be done for classrooms that are missing one or more paras? *Teachers reported concerns related to student safety, equity of resources, and the legality of operating rooms without adequate staffing. This is particularly true in the K-2 AS classrooms that only have one para or no paras. Human Resources is processing the 19 paras that have contract offers. We are required to wait for clearances and those that do not have the required college credits must pass a competency test before they can be hired. We are prioritizing rooms with zero paras but will continue to interview and hire, expecting to fill all positions.*
- ✚ Can de-escalation training be provided to all staff? If not, can it be provided to all special education staff, even those in low-incidence classrooms sometime this year? *We are providing this training for Learning Support paras in November and hope to provide it to all special education teachers this year. If possible, we will try to offer it to all teachers. Safety Care does have de-escalation training as part of the two-day training, so many people already have this training.*

- **T2K**

- ✚ Can IEPs for Kindergarten students in regional rooms be written during the T2K process in the spring instead of the October 15th deadline we have now? *The transition to the K process was explained. In January, school-age LEAs begin meeting with EI teachers/teams to determine the next steps for students with IEPs on their caseload. The options considered are as follows:*
 - *The preschool team does not feel the student needs school-age service. Then, the student's special education services will be faded and monitored in EI and exited from special education services at the end of the school year.*
 - *If the student does not have a school-age disability, but the EI IEP team believes they will need services in Kindergarten, a PTR is issued for a reevaluation. EI staff complete #s 1-7 on the RR and the student is evaluated by a school-age psychologist. If the student is eligible a new school-age IEP is written.*

- *If the student already has a school-age disability and the IEP team feels the student will continue to need school-age services. The EI paperwork is accepted, and the EI IEP will be implemented in school-age programming until 10/15 when a new IEP must be written.*

✚ Can the October 15th deadline for writing new IEPs for kindergarten students be reconsidered? Is there any possibility this date could be pushed back for students whose EI IEPs are still current assuming the EI IEP has been revised and is reflective of their current services and supports? *No, it cannot.*



- **Parent Contact**

✚ Is it possible for PSE to let principals know daily emails, phone calls, etc. to parents are not reasonable expectations? Some reported they are being directed by their principals to respond to parents during instructional time which is interfering with their ability to support students. *This is not a PSE issue, and it is suggested that individuals speak to their principals directly if they have concerns. Some people have more time in their schedules than others, so it is difficult to determine what is and is not reasonable. It will vary based on your situation. Please work directly with your principal.*

- **Open Court**

✚ Can we create a hub for Open Court Resources? For example, a common SDI for students could be to take away one answer choice. If someone has done this, could it be saved and shared with others? *Yes, this can be done via Schoology. Submissions should be uploaded in One Drive using the link provided below. Once submissions are vetted, they will be added to Schoology.*

Link to share submissions: [Open Court share drive 23-24 \(for submission only\)](#)

Code to join the Schoology Group: [WVC7-PT3F-GG2ZH](#)

- **CCS**

✚ For itinerant staff who service multiple buildings, how do they submit forms for payment? Do multiple providers submit separately for students who are owed multiple services?

✚ Will information be coming out about the forms to complete for CCS? *There will be additional training coming out regarding CCS in the next month. Many of these questions will be addressed at that time and therefore were not addressed during this meeting. It was specifically discussed that principals will be given additional information at their October meeting and that transportation will be the same as it is now for students.*

✚ For schools with regional classrooms, are there suggestions for transportation? *When possible, utilize the same transportation provider used during the school day.*

- **Any Questions?**

✚ Please send to Brittany in advance, so Mindy, Patti, and Nina have time to review and come prepared with answers for us.

Looking ahead to November:

Next Meeting: Wednesday, November 1st at 4:30 PM.

Send any questions/comments/concerns to Brittany Shoup at brittanyfmccann@yahoo.com or 412-760-9644

2023-2024 School Year Meeting Calendar

November	11-1-2023
December	12-6-2023
January	1-3-2024
February	2-7-2024
March	3-6-2024
April	4-3-2024
May	5-1-2024