

Parent Advisory & Family Support Committee 2017-2018 Activity Report

Chair: Dena Hagen

Secretary: Allison Dillon

Approximately 10 active members

Summary

The Parent Advisory & Family Support Committee continued to work toward creating resources and positive support networks for parents of students with disabilities. In previous years, the parent committee created a network of volunteer Parent Coaches, which unfortunately never came to fruition. During the 17-18 year, ARC Northland expressed interested in collaborating with the group of parent coaches to increase their ability to advocate for parents. Work on this project in the form of meetings and possible trainings provided by ARC to parent volunteers will continue during the 18-19 year.

Other activities included:

- Director of Special Education educated parents on a variety of topics throughout the year such as Special Education Funding, the role of a Special Education Paraprofessional
- Fliers and Posters were printed, advertising the Parent Advisory & Support Committee, to be distributed to co-op schools. These posters and accompanying fliers would be posted in conference rooms or other common areas for IEP or other parent meetings, with contact information for interested parents.
- Two members of the Parent Advisory & Family Support Committee facilitated the parent strand at the annual Mentoring Day-a chance for parents of transition-age students with disabilities to learn about a variety of topics. A record 36 parents attended to listen to speakers and visit exhibitors.
- Former MN Senator Becky Laury attended one meeting, invited by parent on the committee, to listen to the group and its activities. Group members were introduced to Partners in Policymaking Minnesota, a network of trained advocates and leaders, working in partnership with their elected officials to positively change the way people with disabilities live, work, and are educated; and enjoy the benefits of being actively involved in their communities