

# Calvert Special Education Citizens' Advisory Committee

Meeting Minutes: May 19, 2020

## Attendees

Kathleen Porecki, Sue Rafalowksi, Kara Muffley, Joe Cormier, Shelley Baden, Nicole Maldonado, Christy Harris, Eleanor (Lea) Nerby, Catherine Jenifer, Lindsay Holland

## Welcome and Virtual Meeting Norms

Joe Cormier, SECAC Chairperson, welcomed attendees to the first virtual SECAC meeting and SECAC Staff Appreciation Awards recognition ceremony and reviewed virtual meeting norms.

## Recognition of SECAC Staff Appreciation Award Nominees and Winners

Joe Cormier, SECAC Chairperson, introduced speakers: Inez Claggett, CCPS Board of Education Vice President; Dr. Curry, CCPS Superintendent; and Christy Harris, CCPS Director of Special Education. After the speakers, Joe read nominees and announced winners for each category of the Calvert SECAC Staff Appreciation Awards. Congratulations to the following winners:

- Related Service Staff-Carin Fleshman, School Nurse, Northern Middle School
- Support Staff- Steve Gladhill, Transportation Department, Bus 140
- Child's Team- Erika Mellen, Julianne Vollans, Nancy Sorzano, Jennifer Lee, and Lisa Morgan, Windy Hill Elementary School IEP Team
- Individual Teacher or Aide- Donna Will, Special Education Teacher, Mutual Elementary School

All nominees will receive a certificate and winners will additionally receive a \$150 award to spend on materials of instruction.

## Approval of January minutes

The January 21st meeting minutes were approved as written.

### **Parental Input Survey Regarding COVID-19 School Closure and Planning Forward**

Christy Harris asked if any of the attendees wanted to share about their experience with distance learning. Parents shared that they were getting used to the virtual platform and overall the feedback was positive with regard to the special education distance learning that is occurring. A parent asked about the continuation of access to the online tools and programs throughout the summer and access to related services such as counseling with a social worker. Christy thought it may be possible for parents to continue to access some of the online applications but explained that direct related service provision is determined by eligibility for ESY (extended school year) services. She further explained that decisions about students attending ESY programs in the school building hadn't been made so ESY may be provided through distance learning. A parent indicated that she and her child are worried about being behind next school year and asked if there has been consideration of adjusting the standards since many students will not have mastered the standards expected at the end of each grade level.

Christy will be asking parents of students with disabilities to provide feedback about their experience with distance learning and planning forward in a survey that will be provided to all families. Please look for her survey questions related specifically to students with disabilities.

### **Special Education Staffing Plan**

Christy Harris, Director of Special Education, shared a copy of the proposed 2020-2021 Special Education Staffing Plan, specifically discussing the changes from last year's plan that was shared via email prior to the meeting. These changes include the additional statement of "Calvert County Public Schools has a dedicated Transition Specialist to

support Secondary Transition needs” because COMAR regulations now indicate school systems must have a dedicated Transition Specialist. Additional changes include an increase of 3.5 special education teachers, 5 instructional assistants, .5 speech/language pathologist and 5 behavior specialists and 5 behavior technicians were added to the staffing plan this year. Behavior specialists and technicians were not reflected on previous staffing plans but CCPS had 3 behavior specialists. For 2020-2021 Christy is asking for 5, one of them with BCBA or in progress of obtaining BCBA (Board Certified Behavior Analyst) credentials. The BCBA position has been contracted this year.

Another change with regional programs is a new regionalized elementary Behavior Development Program (BDP) with 3 classes at Mutual elementary with 11-month staffing.

Christy shared the current vacancies chart on the staffing plan, noting that although all services are being covered, there are some current vacancies of speech/language pathologists, special education teachers and special education assistants.

Joe asked if the staffing plan was created before the COVID-19 school closure and if it could look different depending on decisions made about reopening school buildings. Christy responded that this final draft was completed recently but with the anticipation of the staffing needs being the same as if students are in school buildings in the upcoming school year.

A parent asked about the 4 pilot schools that started the CPS (Collaborative and Proactive Solutions) model training in January. Christy said it has continued but not at the same rate it was when school buildings were open. Christy said it would continue to be piloted and possibly expanded in the upcoming school year. The parent asked about

regional program moves and Christy shared that parents have already been notified of program moves for the upcoming school year.

### **SECAC Treasury Report**

The current budget balance of \$1299.23 will be discussed at the executive team meeting.

### **COVID-19 Resources**

The SECAC email distribution list received the MSDE document *A Parents' Guide: Navigating Special Education during the COVID-19 Pandemic* and a flyer for Tele-town for parents with expert guests from John Hopkins being offered by AARP Maryland and the Maryland Retired School Personnel Association. Christy Harris also shared additional parent resources available on the Maryland Learning Links website, <https://marylandlearninglinks.org/>.

### **Upcoming Events/Meetings:**

The SECAC Executive board will meet Tuesday, June 9<sup>th</sup> at 4:30. This will be a virtual meeting and is open to the public. Meeting attendees were reminded about the vacancy of the SECAC Vice-Chairperson and were encouraged to attend if they are interested in taking on a more active role or a leadership role in the Calvert SECAC.

Calvert Marine Museum Virtual Camp:

<https://www.calvertmarinemuseum.com/131/Summer-Camps>