

Calvert Special Education Citizens' Advisory Committee

Meeting Minutes: September 17, 2019

Attendees

Joseph Cormier, Sue Rafalowksi, Kara Muffley, Alicia Chubb, Christy Harris, Guy Stephens, Brooke Anthony, Morgan Zorn, Jen Kuhle Parker, Dawn Balinski, Shelley Miller, Judy Wickens

Welcome and Introductions

Joseph Cormier, SECAC Chairperson, welcomed attendees and started with introductions.

Open Meetings Violation Reading

Joseph Cormier, SECAC Chairperson, explained that in June 2019 the Calvert SECAC was found in violation of the Open Meetings Act because the Calvert SECAC was unable to post minutes online to the existing Calvert SECAC website and should have worked with the school board earlier to address the issue and begin posting on it's website. As a result, SECAC was required to read aloud the violation and have the majority of the members sign. This was completed as directed.

Christy Harris explained that moving forward, the Calvert SECAC agendas and minutes will now be posted to the Calvert County Public Schools website, www.calvertnet.k12.md.us/secac.

Overview of SECAC

Joe reviewed the MSDE guidance on the purpose of SECAC and explained who can and should serve on the SECAC. The current SECAC bylaws are posted on the CCPS website and some copies were also available at the meeting. This year a subcommittee will review the bylaws and suggest changes that will be voted on by the SECAC. He explained the standing Subcommittees listed in the bylaws:

- Budget and Scholarship Subcommittee (assist with proposal of an annual budget, review expenditures and scholarship requests) Joe informed members that annually a \$2500 budget is provided to CCPS for the Calvert SECAC through passthrough funds and that all federal requirements for spending these funds must be followed. He explained these funds can be used for materials of instruction for classrooms, books for parents, presenters for SECAC meetings or events, conference fees for parents, etc.
- Communications Subcommittee (support Calvert SECAC community outreach and messaging, including SECAC web page and use of social media tools)
- Bylaws and Awards Subcommittee (maintain knowledge of Bylaws, review and propose changes; support annual CCPS SECAC Special Educator of the Year Award process)

A question was asked if SECAC can raise funds. Joe responded that we cannot raise money, but we can partner with other agencies, like the Autism Support Group, if we have a need to collect money.

October 5th Presentation

On Saturday October 5th, Frank Kros, Executive Vice President of TranZed, will be presenting Trauma and the Brain. All attendees will receive a copy of the book, The Explosive Child: A New Approach for Understanding and Parenting Easily Frustrated, Chronically Inflexible Children, by Dr. Ross Greene.

Some of last year's feedback included hosting workshops on Saturday so this was considered when selecting the date. This presentation will be held in the Multi-purpose room at the BOE so capacity will be 75 attendees. The flyer was sent to schools with all IEP Chairpersons and school social workers and school psychologists are also being asked to distribute it to individual families they feel may benefit.

SECAC Treasury Report

The budget from 2019 was provided to show how funds were spent. The 2020 budget showed that none of the \$2500 budget had been spent yet. A portion of the 2020 budget will be used to support the Oct 5th presenter. Christy explained the budget categories. Parents can request conference fees for conference attendance in the local area.

Upcoming Meetings and Events Announced

Saturday, Oct 5th 8:30am-3:30pm-CCPS BOE-TranZed: Trauma and the Brain

Tuesday, Oct 22nd 9am-2:30pm-Dr. Jim Ball: You Can't Make Me: Pro-Active Strategies for Positive Behavior Change in Children. All attendees will receive a copy of his new book You Can't Make Me.

Tuesday, Oct 15th 6:30pm-8pm-next Calvert SECAC meeting

Feedback & Comments

Joe and Christy explained that last year when a request was made to record a SECAC meeting, the Calvert SECAC executive board looked into how other SECACs handled the recording of meetings and parent or attendee comments at the meeting. Although open meetings may be recorded, this will be announced if it is the case and the media will be asked not to record feedback or comments made by attendees at the end when open sharing occurs. Joe brought up how a statement is read at Calvert County Board Meetings prior to open feedback and Ms. Balinski, Board member in attendance, explained the statement and that process. At this time, the SECAC does not believe the feedback and comment time at meetings needs to be that formal.

Christy reminded attendees that if they have a specific concern about their child or school staff or situation, they can contact the Special Education Office or Sue Rafawoloski, Parent Connections partner, who can assist with connecting parents to resources in the county.

Joe thanked everyone in attendance, especially new attendees and Dawn Balinski. Ms. Balinski informed the SECAC that Tracey McGuire's term on the Board of Education will be up this year and that involved SECAC members may want to consider that vacancy.

The official meeting adjourned at 7:08 pm and a meet and greet took place.