

# Calvert Special Education Citizens' Advisory Committee

## Meeting Minutes: April 16, 2019

### Attendees

Joseph Cormier, Sue Rafalowksi, Kara Muffley, LaShonda Scott, Christy Harris, Guy Stephens, Janet Stephanson, Camille Miller, Shelley Miller

### Inquiry about Recording our SECAC

Recently there was a request from a media production company to record the SECAC meeting. Under Opening Meeting laws, if the media requests the opportunity to record the meeting, they are allowed to record a SECAC meeting because it is a meeting open to the public. In the event this occurs, the media must notify the meeting attendees that the meeting is being recorded. Parameters for recording meetings can be established in the SECAC bylaws in the upcoming school year.

### Inquiry about the SECAC website

Because of a recent inquiry about SECAC meeting agendas and meeting minutes not being posted on the SECAC website, Christy is working with the CCPS administration and IT departments to move SECAC meeting information to the CCPS website for the upcoming school year. Shelley Miller, former SECAC president, was trained years ago to maintain the website but has not been able to upload documents to it successfully in a couple years.

Mr. Stephens asked if SECAC was paying a hosting or domain name fee. He explained that there are some sites, such as Word Press, that are up to date and fairly easy to use for fees as low as \$7/month. This could be a consideration if the website is not able to be moved to the CCPS website.

### Approve March 2019 meeting minutes

The March 2019 minutes were approved with no changes.

### SECAC Awards

The annual SECAC Staff Appreciation Awards ceremony was held on April 4, 2019 at Calvert High School. Joe recognized all of the students who sang the National Anthem as well as Scott Travers, representative of Senator Van Hollen's office; Thomas Hutchins, President, Board of County Commissioners (BOCC); Buddy Hance, Member, BOCC; Pamela L. Cousins, Calvert County Public Schools Board Member; Inez N. Claggett, Calvert County Public Schools Board Member; Dr. Daniel Curry, Calvert County Superintendent of Schools; Christina Harris, CCPS Director of Special Education, The Autism Support Group of Southern MD, Tamara Martini, secretary of the special education department and everyone who helped organize the event and those who scored the nominations received. Joe thanked Calvert High School for allowing us to use the Atrium and setting up tables and 160 chairs. He added how well attended the event was and how it has grown each year. Staff who were nominated appreciated receiving a copy of their nomination so they knew who nominated them. \$150 for MOI, Materials of Instruction, will be awarded to each of the 4 winners to spend on materials to be used in their school or classroom. It was a nice night of recognition for the good things that our staff are doing for students with disabilities in CCPS.

## Staffing Plan Presentation

Christy Harris, Director of Special Education, provided a copy of the proposed Special Education Staffing Plan for 2019-2020 and a chart with a Special Education Staffing Plan Comparison. This plan does not include infants and toddlers staff because the staffing formula used for students 3-21 cannot be appropriately applied to the Infants and Toddlers Program. The staffing plan begins with one special education teacher per 175 students and then regional programs and 1:1s are staffed separately. One special education teacher was added during the 2018-2019 school year. The chart does not include teacher specialists staffed at the board of education. Originally an additional physical therapist was requested but after reviewing the PT caseload, Christy is proposing to add an additional physical therapy assistant.

See chart below:

<b>Providers</b>	<b>2018-2019</b>	<b>Proposed 2019-2020</b>
Special Education Teachers	160.00	162.00
Instructional Assistants	158.00	158.00
Speech-Language Pathologists	25.00	27.50
Audiologists	2.00	2.00
Teacher of the Visually Impaired	1.60	1.80
Teachers of the Hearing Impaired	1.60	1.60
Adapted Physical Education Teacher	1.00	1.00
Physical Therapists	2.00	2.00
Physical Therapists Assistants	1.00	1.00
Occupational Therapists	7.00	7.40
Social Worker	1.00	1.00
Sign Language Interpreters	2.00	2.00

Christy also noted that some minor adjustments were made to the staffing of regional programs. Predominately to the functional skills programs with the addition of another assistant.

Joe asked when SECAC could provide public comment. Christy indicated that public comment could be provided following her presentation of the staffing plan at the Board meeting, which is likely May 9<sup>th</sup>. Joe proposed that SECAC send an email following the board meeting to encourage anyone who did not attend, view the presentation and submit feedback to be considered for SECAC public comment or submit their own individual comment.

Joe mentioned that he was aware of a program the county has where the school system helps pay for the college education of potential teachers in exchange for their work in CCPS upon graduation and asked if there was any kind of similar program for Speech/Language Pathologists. Christy said there is not because of the intensity of the program. She also shared that those teachers Joe referenced also need to be part of the TAM program while attending high school in CCPS. Christy said that we offer a signing bonus which is enticing. Joy mentioned some of the colleges in MD that offer SLP programs and Christy added that our HR department has some partnerships with some colleges and CCPS has had SLPs do their externships with us and we have hired some of them.

Camille asked if the CCPS website had been updated to only include regional programs that are current because Co-taught kindergarten was on the program list last year. Christy indicated that a request had been made to have that removed last summer once the regional program was no longer in existence.

Christy asked if anyone has any questions or suggestions about the staffing plan now and indicated that questions or comments can be emailed to Kara. Joe said he could also be emailed.

\$950,000 in Kirwan Commission funds have been awarded to CCPS for special education and one of the requests is to hire another behavior specialist. Questions were asked about how decisions will be made on how the Kirwan funding will be spent. Christy will work with the Director of Finance and Dr. Curry to determine how these funds will be spent. Christy explained that prior year Medicaid funds have been depleted and the positions previously funded from that funding source must be shifted. Fringe benefits, step increases/raises etc all impact budget decisions. Christy shared that Dr Curry wants to use some of the funding on training, especially training on behavior. Christy shared that she consults with principals at the buildings and the Special Education Department supervisors regarding staffing and other needs related to special education.

There are some recommendations with the Kirwan Commission funding, however, for the funds allotted to special education, there are few restrictions. It is available to support funding IDEA requirements which is an underfunded mandate since its inception. Private citizens can reach out to politicians to request that IDEA be adequately funded.

### **Treasury Report**

The current budget balance for 2019 is \$1,515.67 and it must be spent by September 30<sup>th</sup>. Speaker or conference requests can be sent to Kara Muffley at [muffleyk@calvertnet.k12.md.us](mailto:muffleyk@calvertnet.k12.md.us). Dr. Ross Green may be coming in June, hosted by the MCF, MD Coalition for Families. Joy will reach out to get more information. Camille asked about the documentation on the restrictions of SECAC funds. Joe and Christy shared that we can't buy food or anything advertising SECAC. Joe suggested that it might be something we add to our bylaws.

### **Upcoming Meetings and Events Announced**

April 23-Guardianship; Jesus the Divine Word Church, 6:30-8:30pm

April 25- Special Olympics Track and Field Event; Calvert High 10am-12:30pm

May 2-I Know My Community Resource Fair; Calvert High School, 6:00-8:00pm

May 22- Family Reading Night; CCPS BOE, 6:30-8:30pm

May 29- Puberty and Sexuality Workshop; CCPS BOE, 6:30-8:30pm

June 7 and 8- Family Leadership Retreat; hosted by MCF (MD Coalition of Families), Prince Frederick Spring Hill Suites by Marriott

### **Feedback & Comments**

Restraint and seclusion was removed from the original agenda because CCPS is in the process of establishing a committee to address this area.

Meeting adjourned at 8:01 pm.

The next SECAC meeting is the Executive Board Meeting which will be held Tuesday, May 21st from 6:30-8:00PM.