

Citizen Advisory Committee Meeting
September 27, 2021
6:00 p.m.

A. Roles and Responsibilities of a CAC Member

Karen Maxey provided CAC members with a brief summary of the roles and responsibilities of members of the committee. The CAC roles and responsibilities are listed in Policy Statement #1210, available at <https://resources.finalsite.net/images/v1631542430/calvertnetk12mdus/xucxlv82v93hb4gxgdb/1210.pdf>, and the Administrative Procedures to implement Policy #1210, available at <https://resources.finalsite.net/images/v1622053797/calvertnetk12mdus/s9k118dn2i4fp8sz7b2o/12101.pdf>.

B. Election of Chair, Vice Chair & Secretary

Four CAC members stated that they would like to be considered for the Chair position and explained why they wanted to be the Chair.

Tia Debrew: Tia has lived in Calvert for 1 year and has 3 children – 2 currently in school and 1 adult child, who is a working professional. Tia leads two teams at work that focus on diversity, inclusion, and equity. Education is Tia’s passion and calling, and she would like to support the work of Board by serving as chair or co-chair, believe in work that we’re doing. She would like to make a positive impact for children and families in Calvert County. She wants to help them succeed academically, but also provide social/emotional to support so all children can succeed.

Judy “JC” Hooker: JC has worked on the CAC for a long time and found it to be a positive experience, including the studies the CAC has done and the CAC’s work with staff, board, parents. The CAC does an excellent job being the middle person between staff, the school board, students, and parents. JC would like to get more parents involved. She

has seen from working on this committee that school staff is dedicated to children's needs. She understands that CAC members may not all agree, but says that we need to keep our children as the focus of our decisions and studies. The CAC must also take into account decisions and policies issued by the superintendent of schools in MD, and be advocates for state policies and procedures. JC also recognizes that there is diversity in the community but that diversity and inclusion are new topics for the CAC. It will be an exciting year, but a hard year. There is no right or wrong, and CAC members need to be able to talk and voice opinions in respectful way, and learn to compromise.

Andrea Grimes: Andrea is a former educator with over 17 years' experience. Her specialties are gifted and science education. She is new to Calvert county, with two children in 1st and 3rd grade. She would use her experience and expertise advocating for gifted education. Andrea stated that she is also well-versed in inclusion and diversity. She would like to learn, meet people, and share ideas among the CAC.

Wanda Hassler: Wanda has 30 years' experience substituting in Calvert schools. She has seen changes, some good, some not, and understands that the school system is for everyone. She has watched kids suffer during pandemic learning. Wanda gives CCPS credit for preparing for virtual education with tablets and computers before pandemic. She has watched the school system progress as one of the top systems in MD. She attributes that success to students working with teachers, staff working with students, and the school administration hearing from the CAC. That's what the CAC is about. We study and give feedback and the Board listens. We are a conduit to parents if they have a question and can get answers for them. Wanda is proud to have been a member of CAC since it started and would like to help work to see it into next chapter, to see how much better we can make it.

An additional CAC member requested consideration for the Vice Chair position and explained her interest in serving in that capacity.

Camille Miller: Camille has participated in the committee/listened in for a couple of years and has a seat on the CAC for the first time this year. She has been a member of the special education advisory committee for the last 5 years. The CAC moves differently than special education committee, and Camille would like to play roles in both. Her interest in the CAC is demonstrated by her following the meetings and running for a seat on the school board. Camille is a chief human resources officer for a firm in DC, a position in which she facilitates discussion and works on diversity and inclusion. Camille is also an educator at the university level.

After the statements by Chair and Vice Chair applicants, the CAC members voted and submitted their votes to Karen for tallying.

C. BOE Topics Activity

In attendance at the CAC meeting were:

- Dr. Susan Johnson: Asst. Superintendent of Instruction
- Jackie Jacobs: Director of System and Instructional Performance
- Tony Navarro: Executive Director of Administration

CAC members were provided with reading materials covering three topics:

- 1) Long term impacts and solutions to learning loss resulting from the Covid-19 pandemic.
- 2) Cultural responsiveness – “Equity and Excellence”
- 3) Gifted and talented services – Gifted Education Strategies

CAC members were split into groups so that each group could analyze and article and consider the following questions:

- a) How what they read connected to what they already know.
- b) How did the article expand their thinking?
- c) What challenges or puzzles are brought up?

After discussing the articles and questions posed as a group, each group reported their post-discussion feedback:

Gifted and talented:

We discussed needs of gifted children as not difficult to understand and summarized by the article we read. As a result, the task that board asked us to look at should perhaps be expanded or its focus shifted to look at how best to operationalize the gifted and talented program to address needs of gifted learners. The CAC should perhaps study and offer thoughts about that important issue.

What stood out to us: We feel that the Board has acknowledged that gifted learners need specialized instruction. We feel that the Board has made a commitment to curriculum for gifted and talented learners and that the Board has begun to discuss needed teacher training. The school district has a plan to develop a gifted and talented program, which is proposed in terms of stages, but it is difficult to attract funding for gifted programs. There is a need to have next chunk of funding to move forward with programming. We understand that 10% of the student population is targeted for identification as gifted and talented, which would be 1500 students.

The group also discussed homogeneity in grouping students to be a potential option that would be effective, especially in lower grades. Some students didn't lose learning during covid, so this is a difficult environment for them to come back to when there is a lot of re-learning and catching up going on.

COVID 19 unfinished learning:

Learning loss from covid is a large, complex problem. Mental health is also a priority. Students need to be assessed to determine appropriate interventions. Seeing the numbers made it much more graphic and distressing to the discussion group.

We need to know what CCPS is doing. For example, to address absenteeism – punitive or supportive? How big of a problem is chronic absenteeism for CCPS?

How does CCPS compare to statewide impacts of covid learning loss? How is CCPS addressing learning loss? How is the school board communicating with parents to calculate and address learning loss? How is CCPS fixing the immediate problem and is CCPS on track to accomplish goals to address learning loss?

The group talked about data needs and best practices, and the possibility of having separate committees to look at best practices and benchmarking across the country and internationally. Perhaps the CAC could use this year to collect data on what was lost.

Equity lens should be used for learning loss as well. Saturday and after school academies were also used, and perhaps these could continue to help. There is a need to collect data and to have counselors and social workers capture the social and emotional impact of being out of school.

Cultural responsiveness:

We know work needs to be done if we look at data on gaps between groups. We would like information on CCPS data specifics over last 4-5 years, because the article is about state trends. We would also like more information on teacher ratings/evaluation systems. When we look at teachers who are part of different groups, how are they rated?

Perhaps explore what the county has implemented in last 5 years, what has and hasn't worked. How does what the county is doing align with known best practices? Also, the document changes between equity and equality – they are not the same. It may be good to have further clarification on CCPS's language in their documents. Does CCPS use the terms interchangeably or separately in county documents?

Wrap up: This was a broad look at what the Board wanted the CAC to look at. The Board will consider where the CAC will go next with regard to these issues.

Votes were tallied for the Chair and Vice Chair positions:

Chair – Tia DeBrew

Vice Chair – Andrea Grimes

D. Future Presentation Suggestions –

None were offered at this time.

E. Conclusion/Meeting Adjourn –

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 7:30 pm. The next CAC meeting will be held on Monday, October 25.