

**Calvert County Public Schools  
Special Education Citizens' Advisory Committee**

**Meeting Minutes: September 13, 2022**

**Attendees:**

President, Joe Cormier  
Member at Large, LaShonda Scott  
Member at Large, Tina Hall  
Director, Special Education Department, Dr. Kendy Anderson  
Supervisor, Special Education Department Nicole Ayers  
Secretary, Special Education Department, Ashton Neslon  
Sue Rafalowski (Partners for Success)  
Shelly Miller (The Connection)  
Kathleen Porecki  
Nicole Maldonado  
David Chan  
Samantha Mathieson  
Guy Stephens  
Shelly Baden  
Joanne Koterwas  
Dr. Allysia James

**Welcome and Introductions**

Being the first meeting of the school year each attendee introduced themselves to the group. Of note, the Special Education Department has a new Director, Dr. Kendy Anderson and a new supervisor, Nicole Ayers, who were welcomed.

**Discuss Meeting Norms and Expectations**

Members will stay muted while attending meetings, will be respectful. It was suggested that SECAC is not a forum for airing grievances with the Department of Special Education. Issues should be emailed to the Director of Special Education. Joanne Koterwas and Tina Hall expressed frustration with the difficulty in getting the CCPS Special Education Department to respond to requests. Guy Stephens suggested a Parent Involvement Special Education subgroup.

Ashton Nelson noted that MSDE Resources under Parent Involvement on the MSDE website was updated last year and will continue to be updated. Parents should be aware that MSDE just did an update.

Joanne Koterwas suggested that meeting minutes from the previous meeting should be formally approved/adopted. General discussion ensued about process and procedure for ensuring appropriate members approve minutes. It was decided that the Minutes will be posted with the Agenda at least two weeks prior to the next meeting. Minutes will be reviewed and approved at the next general membership meeting.

**Directors Report**

Dr. Anderson began working for CCPS on August 1, 2022. She had a meeting with MSDE regarding the four-year audit, results will be available for the November SECAC meeting. Nicole Ayers came on board August 8<sup>th</sup>.

### **Treasury Report**

SECAC is granted \$2,500 each year for expenses incurred October 1-June 30<sup>th</sup> each school year. These are pass-through funds and cannot be used for food or branded items. The money can be used for speakers, books, education and workshops. It was noted that funds are not carried over to the next school year.

This year Pathfinders for Autism is presenting What To Do in a Traffic Stop, which will be held on October 30<sup>th</sup> from 10am – 2pm. The event will include a resource fair. CCPS SECAC has committed \$1000 of our budget towards the event. Partners for Success is paying for the remaining outstanding balance. The Fraternal Order of Police is paying for overtime for officers. Resource tables are free.

In past years SECAC has allocated \$250.00 towards paper. Members questioned what the actual year-end numbers were for paper in past years. Joseph Cormier stated that he will find the year-end budgets and share for review and are attached to these meeting minutes.

SECAC used to pay for childcare from the budget. With SECAC being virtual childcare has gone away. Joseph Cormier suggested better video equipment could be used to facilitate hybrid meetings. The committee noted that equipment is expensive, and no further discussion ensued regarding this line item. The committee noted that they like meeting in person to obtain resources, but it is difficult to get to meetings. Nicole Maldonado suggested a hybrid approach is better for participants. Joanne Koterwas raised concern about people knowing about meetings. Another participant noted that since going virtual SECAC has had more participation. Dr. James suggested more visuals in both print and digital format (signs or flyers) in addition to the brochure.

SECAC pays for teacher recognition awards each spring. The winners receive grant money from the SECAC budget. Winners must submit a plan to their Special Education Supervisor and the Director of Special Education for approval.

Last year SECAC spent money on PBIS for busses. The committee asked again for the year-end budget for review of expenditures.

Future ideas, Rev Mantu Joshi wrote “The Resilient parent” book. Joanne Koterwas attended his meeting through the ARC

### **Outreach Ideas and Gathering Community Input**

The committee decided to create a flyer that can be distributed announcing upcoming meetings. Joanne Koterwas was assigned as point person for flyer creation. Guy Stephens offered his professional Canva account as assistance. The flyer will be available for review at the next SECAC meeting.

Joseph Cormier noted that he tries to attend all BOE, County Commissioner meetings and promotes SECAC and the education opportunities put forth. Joanne Koterwas recognized the work that Mr. Cormier puts in, it is apparent. He encouraged SECAC members to come to meetings and talk about the need for more special education resources.

Tina Hall reminded SECAC that last year she asked for a one-page document outlining IEP “chain of command.” She specifically speaking about a visual with steps. For example, for Medicaid kids- case manager, assistant principal, supervisor, director with everyone’s contact information so you know who to go to when you have an issue. The committee requested a flow chart to give to parents as part of a standardized packet disseminated when a child is a candidate for an IEP.

Dr. Anderson discussed beginning to standardize and work on strength-based documentation. Committee members noted that IEP Chairs are all handing out their own

“standard” forms. Supervisors are not following procedures. Dr. Anderson noted that she is in the process of creating an internal handbook for all supervisors.

Dr. James inquired about state complaints. Specifically, according to MSDE, CCPS is required to have a third party review the complaint. In other school systems they have an outside party review. In the case of CIEP in CCPS- is the Special Education Supervisor the chair? Can you please provide a flow chart? Dr. Anderson asked that Joanne Koterwas and Dr. James contact her via phone in the morning to discuss specifics.

### **SECAC Awards Planning**

please see discussion in budget

### **Nominations for Open Positions (Secretary)**

Ashton Nelson nominated herself for the position, Joanne Koterwas was nominated by Tina Hall for the position. The position will be posted for 30 days before a vote.

### **Calendar Items and Final Thoughts**

- Pathfinders to Autism: What to do during a traffic stop. October 21, 2022, 10am-2pm. Flyer has been created and neighboring counties will be invited.
- Shelly Miller event- The Connection, Denim & Diamonds
- ARC of Maryland Partners in Policy is looking for special education advocates. Deadline for application is tomorrow.
- Attachment & Trauma from Compliance to Compassions. Maryland Developmental Disabilities is happening on October 14, 2022. Guy Stephens has 4 free tickets left. Email him if you are interested in attending.
- Calvert Marine Museum has special education nights in May & September.
- Pax River Appreciation Day is October 8<sup>th</sup>, the event is free.
- November 30<sup>th</sup> there will be a meeting about executive functioning at Calvert Country School at 5:30.
- October 5<sup>th</sup> is the reading festival at Prince Frederick Library, it was noted that they will have a reading event for families of little kids on 5 Tuesdays starting in October- 11, 25, November 15, 29 and December 13<sup>th</sup>

Committee members requested to share contacts. Joanne Koterwas offered to create a Google Document where people can opt-in to sharing contact information. Specifically, the committee requested, email, phone and name. The list will be created and shared before the next meeting. Tina Hall requested drivers' education for IEP students. She noted that we need to prepare our special education drivers. Mr. Cunningham is a teacher at HHS, the committee suggested she contact him to try to get this going.

Future meeting dates: October 11<sup>th</sup>, November 15<sup>th</sup>, January 10<sup>th</sup>, February 7<sup>th</sup>, March 7<sup>th</sup>, April 11<sup>th</sup> (snow date), April 20<sup>th</sup> (SECAC Awards), May 9<sup>th</sup>, June 13<sup>th</sup> (executive board meeting). All meetings are at 6:30pm.

Mr. Cormier suggested that anyone who needs assistance email him at joseph.somd.leader@gmail.com

**Meeting was adjourned.**