

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

Meeting Minutes: October 11, 2022

Attendees:

Joe Cormier, Chair
Lashonda Scott, Member at Large
Dr. Kendy Anderson, Director of Special Education CCPS
Camille Khaleesi, Parent
Ashton Nelson, Parent, Special Education Secretary CCPS
Joanne Koterwas, Parent
Vanessa Ridegway, Parent of Former CCPS Student
Shelley Baden, Parent
Janet Stephanson, Supervisor of Special Education CCPS
Samantha Matheson, Parent
Sue Rafalowski, Partners for Success Coordinator

Welcome and Introductions

Meeting began at 6:30pm. Joe Cormier opened, welcomed all, and introductions were held.

Discussion and Approval of September Meeting Minutes

Minutes were presented and reviewed for approval. Discussion held surrounding the addition of the budget into the minutes. Stated that according to the bylaws, the Director of Special Education is the treasurer as the funding is passthrough from the state to the Special Education Department. Budget sheets are put together by Lisa Casciero in the Department of Special Education office. Dr. Anderson clarified that she only wants her role to be considered flow-through and not final approvals/denials on expenditures. Joe would like suggestions from members as to how to allocate funds. Would like to present at next month's meeting. Request for clarity from Ms. Koterwas regarding EWEP (Extra work, Extra Pay) budget lines received and explained. Joe noted that so far this year, \$1000 has been utilized for Pathfinders for Autism and the traffic stop event to be held 10/21. Discussed that SECAC award covers, certificate paper, etc are included in the \$250.00 that was questioned from last meeting. Also noted that in prior years we have sent parents/community members to trainings and events such as COPA. With no further questions, Minutes were motioned to be adopted and received a second motion by Ms. Baden. No oppositions were made, and minutes were approved.

Election Procedures and Election for Secretary Position

At the 9/13/22 meeting, there were 2 nominations for the vacant secretary position, Joanne Koterwas and Ashton Nelson. Joe discussed election procedures to hold an election and explained the terms of SECAC positions. Since the meeting was virtual, an email was requested to be sent by members to vote. Once all were received within the timeline given, votes were counted, and Ashton Nelson was named Secretary and accepted the position.

Directors Report

Dr. Anderson addressed some of the action items brought up during the last meeting. Noted that the requested "Flow Chart" of contact information for the Special Education

Department is now posted in 2 places on CCPS webpage. Stated Procedural Safeguards have been communicated to IEP chairs to be included as part of all IEP meetings. Updated website now includes additional resources for Non-Public (MANCEF) and that the new Chief of communications is looking to streamline and expand communications and make sure web pages are user friendly. MSDE Audit is forthcoming and should be ready for presentation at the November meeting. Dr. Anderson would like to begin to highlight related service providers in future meetings and asked for suggestions of topics. The following were recommended:

- Interventions and programs surrounding dyslexia and other reading disabilities
- Blueprint presentation/clarification from Dr. Sampson
- How Teachers are trained for differentiation and inclusion
- MCAP clarifications for students with disabilities
- Reading comprehension topics.

Ms. Ridgeway (parent of a former CCPS student) presented basic information on the "Unstuck and On Target" program her child attended, available through the Center for Autism Spectrum Disorders and Children's National Medical Center. Stated that services are available at elementary age through transitional age. Dr. Anderson stated she would like to have more information sent to her to be able to have as a resource and possible presenter in the future. Dr. Anderson presented that she would begin to hold regional meetings next week involving the boundary articulation areas for all 4 high schools so that there is more cohesion from building to building when students are going to their next zoned school. Also stated she would like to have a monthly spotlight on the topic of reading since there was great requests for more information in that area.

Parent involvement Update

Joe reported that flyers have been distributed to all schools regarding the resource fair and event. Dr. Anderson stated that the new Chief of Communications would like to utilize contact information and demographics (like how School Messenger is used) in eSchool to reach the Special Education community directly while maintaining privacy. When posed about strictly emailing information, Ms. Baden brought up items ending up in spam and that continuing hard copies of information is needed. Dr. Anderson agreed and stated that the intent is to explore all avenues of outreach. Ms. Koterwas discussed the importance of attending PTO meetings to share information on behalf of SECAC and is working with the executive board of SECAC to have an accessible, easy to read, informational flyer to distribute through the community. Final version forthcoming.

Resource Fair Update

October 21, 2022, there is no school and is a professional development day for CCPS staff. Joe noted that Partners for success now has 25 tables for various resources and organizations. Event is from 10-2 at the Harriet Elizabeth Brown Community Center and Dr. Townsel will be speaking. SECAC will have a table, request for volunteer support was noted. Event will include the Pathways for Autism – Traffic stop event, touch a truck, and car seat checks. Traffic stop event for kids and those of driving age with disabilities. Will receive a tip sheet. This will also be used to help officers train for these situations. Sherriff candidates Ricky Cox and Vaughn "Jay" Johnson each indicated to Joe that they are on board to continue this type of event and partnership in the future. This event will be rain or shine and CCSO Patches for Autism project will be for sale to benefit The ARC of Southern Maryland. Ms. Ridgeway noted a suggestion that driving testers at the MVA encourage license applicants to advocate and disclose diagnosis, if comfortable, so that they can be accommodating and understanding during testing.

Public Comment

- Joe Cormier received an email for public comment (and read it anonymously to protect the student's privacy) regarding a student with a disability who tried out through their local high school for field hockey but was cut from the roster. Parent believes that this was due to her disability and is concerned. Dr. Anderson stated that she has reached out to Kevin Hook regarding this and received information that for Junior Varsity and Varsity sports, all students have equal opportunity to try out. If someone does not make the final team due to the standard expectations of the sport, then it is legal. Discussed other ways students can participate in sports such as Unified Sports, team management, and various Parks and Recreation activities. She wants to ensure opportunities are given to all students and encouraged families with questions to reach out.
- Joe Cormier made aware of the upcoming Board of Education meeting on Thursday at 3:30pm. Discussed ways to offer public comment and how to discuss policy changes.
- Joe Cormier discussed back to school night at his home school and the raised the accessibility issues related to the sidewalk. Dr. Anderson noted this as an action item and will review this. Joe also noted the concerns with accessibility of all playgrounds in CCPS. Dr Anderson indicated that Janet Stephanson (Supervisor of Special Education) is working on this currently. Ms. Stephanson stated there is a committee to address this and some playgrounds are grandfathered in but working on the systemic issues. The new Beach Elementary school playground is to be accessible as it is new and will need to follow guidelines. Will update on this topic.
- Joe Cormier reiterated going to PTA/PTO meetings.
- Noted interest for transition information and to reach out to Paul Reilly, CCPS Transition Specialist, for possible dates and presentation.

Upcoming Events

- **10/25/2022** - Infants and Toddlers Program Trunk or Treat. Looking for Trunk volunteers, Contact Sue Rafalowski. parentconnections@calvertnet.k12.md.us
- **11/02/2022** (Virtual) **11/09/2022** (In person at the Board of Education – Toilet Training presentation. Contact Sue Rafalowski. parentconnections@calvertnet.k12.md.us
- **11/3/2022** - IEP Basics. Contact person, Lashonda Scott
- **11/30/2022** – The New IQ, Building Executive Function Skills Outside of the Classroom. 6:00-8:00 PM at Calvert County School. Contact Sue Rafalowski for registration. parentconnections@calvertnet.k12.md.us

Adjournment and Final Points

- Joe reminded all about the importance and impact of local elections coming up in November. SECAC does not endorse any candidate for any position, but all should do their part to be informed on candidates and note their positions surrounding education and students with disabilities.
- Next meeting is November 15th, 2022 at 6:30pm. Will be virtual unless a reason to be In-Person is presented. Agenda and draft minutes to be sent 2 weeks prior.
- Meeting adjourned at 7:40pm