

**Citizens Advisory Committee  
Calvert County Board of Education  
January 22nd, 2024 Meeting Minutes**

**Members Attended**

Will Miller  
Veronica Simmons  
Andrew Clark  
Barbara Downs  
Amanda Pullen-McGrath  
Felicia Sorrells  
James Arthur  
Kristina Nicely  
Greg Cooper  
Jesse Howe  
Maggie Silverman  
Alicia Abresch  
Sherbie Corazza  
Rama Latin  
Emma Nowak  
Claire Hill

**Board Members**

Dawn Balinski  
Lisa Grenis

**C.C.P.S. Staff**

Karen Maxey  
Susan Johnson  
Tony Navarro

**Presenters**

Cecilia Lewis (and team), Director of Student Services

**Documents for the Record**

- Each member was provided with an agenda sheet for the current meeting. Minutes from November's meeting were not provided due to secretarial error, but will be provided next meeting.

- Each member was provided with a packet that corresponded to the scheduled presentation regarding the Department of Student Services.

### **Call to Order**

Ms. Maxey called the meeting to order at 6:05, and introduced Ms. Lewis, the Director of Student Services, as the primary presenter.

### **Presentation**

- Ms. Lewis began the presentation by introducing the mental health, school health, and community safety support staff who play an integral part in the Student Services Department. The support of the “whole student” was emphasized as the primary function of the department, with the removal of any barriers to a student’s success academically as well as personally as the action plan of the continuum of services provided. Focus was placed on student supports, discipline, attendance, school health services and school safety measures. “People, partnerships, programs, and pathways” served as a mantra to detail the interest of helping students grow as overall people. Mental Health Coordinator Tiffany McFarland served as an example of a fortunate advantage in Calvert County. Priorities listed included a students’ sense of belonging, health education and prevention, and overall physical safety both within and outside of the confines of the school building.
- Multi-tiered student supports (MTSS) were described as a partnership of several departments, and served to address various levels of needs from the collective student body to the individual student. Emphasis was placed on support staff as the primary means of achieving the interest of transparency with parents, and as an integral part of IEPs.
- School health programs were explained as the primary means of addressing students’ medical needs, as well as the primary method through which support and teaching staff members are educated in this arena.
- Safety and security measures include layered security measures, partnership with local law enforcement, infrastructure such as cameras and emergency equipment, school resource officers (with current initiatives in place to acquire more personnel in this position), emergency training, and a confidential school-specific tip line in the event of impending issues.
- Other priorities include adherence to the Blueprint for Maryland’s Future: Pillar 4, which serves to mitigate discriminatory discipline practices, support low-income households, and the creation of behavioral health teams. Other functions of the department, such as support of homeless students, homeschool instruction review, and recognition of schools in attendance compliance were expounded upon. Additionally, the acquisition process of contracts and dedicated funding necessary for the hiring of school psychologists and counselors was explained to the committee in detail.

### **Questions with the Board**

The committee was given the opportunity to ask questions in a free-form style of the two board members present, Ms. Lisa Grenis and Ms. Dawn Balinski. An allotment of the designated meeting time was dedicated to this opportunity, and a collaborative conversation ensued. Topics included the ongoing initiatives in upper level schools to install “smart sensors” in bathrooms in an effort to combat vaping and violence issues. Mr. Titus, leader of School Security, added his expertise to the conversation and explained that current bids are paid for through ESR funding; no grants have yet been obtained for this purpose. Other topics of concern included grade/conduct incentives within the individual schools, of which Dr. Johnson assisted the conversation. The board members graciously engaged in conversation with the committee until such time that all present were prepared to conclude.

### **Conclusion/Meeting Adjourn**

Ms. Maxey concluded the meeting at approximately 7:35pm. Committee members were encouraged to forward any further questions or comments to Ms. Maxey or other speakers, and asked to complete the ongoing website survey in the area of the Department of Student Services before the next meeting.

*Minutes respectfully submitted by Secretary Kristina Nicely.*