



## **Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC)**

### **Minutes**

**January 5, 2023**

**Members Present:** Megan Burnham, Amy Hunter, Marilyn McCombe, and Ryan Perry

**Member Absent:** Amanda Hazlehurst, Heidi Van Voorhis, and Mandi Wooten

**Consulting Members:** Randy Corpening and Robin Verity

**School Board Member:** Clay Campbell

**Call to Order @ 6:00PM**

**I. Welcome and Introductions**

**II. Review and Approval of Minutes**

Minutes of the November 2022 meeting were approved following a motion by Leah Burnham, which was seconded by Ryan Perry.

**III. Public Comment**

There was no public comment.

**IV. Presentation:**

**“Behavior in Special Education: How Functional Behavior Assessments and Behavior Intervention Plans are Developed and Used to Support Students with Disabilities”**

**Matthew R. Ralph, Behavior Analyst, FCPS**

**Board Certified and State Licensed Behavior Analyst**

FBA and BIP Process:

ABC – Antecedent, Behavior, Consequence

1. Staff member identifies a behavior and consults with county staff
2. Parent Permission for observation
3. Begin collecting data, ABC data preferred, at least 2 weeks
4. Determine function of behavior

5. Informal staffing to determine need for FBA or possibility of making small classroom changes.
6. Indirect assessments and self-report where possible
7. Interviews
8. QABF – one of the most reliable for interview data collection
9. What is the function of the behavior? Physical Comfort, Attention, Get out of something, Tangibles/rewards
10. Setting events – may have the night before, the morning of, the bus ride, etc.

ABA – Really just structured consistent teaching

Priority for the past few years has been ensuring that the FBA/BIP and data collection processes are consistent throughout the county.

\*\*Mr. Ralph will provide a copy of his presentation slides for distribution.

## **V. Reports/Announcements:**

### **A. Chairman's Time**

- Thanks to Mr. Ralph for presenting and for the work he does for our students.
- Megan Burnham's membership was approved by the School Board at the November 14, 2022, meeting.
- Mrs. Hunter would like to use the February meeting for a preliminary discussion of the SEAC policy recommendations for our Annual Report. This would take the place of a presentation.
- All SEAC members are urged to take the PEATC training for SEACs at some point during the year. SEAC members need to understand the legal obligations and restrictions of the state's Freedom of Information Act, which governs SEAC meetings and member communications. There is a self-paced option, which allows participants to complete the course within a calendar month. There are also live online 1/2 day trainings.
- Mrs. Hunter asked Mr. Corpening to keep the SEAC updated regarding the State Review, as well as the inclusive practices review and ongoing planning process, including any initiatives/groups at individual schools.

### **B. Special Education Director's Time**

- Mr. Corpening reported that the county has submitted all of the required data for the State Review. They are now awaiting a response from the state.
- On the Inclusive Practices Review, the county has completed the following items, and will submit its report to the state by February 3:
  - Staff Survey
  - Caseload Review
  - Graduation Rates and Outcomes

- Each school did its own internal review and have had conversations with Mr. Corpening.

### **C. PRC Report**

Mr. Corpening reported that planning continues for the Disability and Transitions Fair, which will be held March 16 at Fauquier High School from 4:00-6:00.

### **VI. Old Business**

#### **2022-23 Meeting Dates and Presentation Topics**

- **February 2** meeting will be used for committee members to discuss issues to be addressed in the Annual Report.
- **March 2:** "Special Education Budget" (Randy Corpening, Director of Special Education)
- **May 4:** Discussion and Approval of Annual Report

### **VII. New Business**

- Members agreed that the SEAC should have a presence at the March 16 Fair. This will be added to the February SEAC agenda. Ms. Burnham and Mr. Perry offered to attend on behalf of the SEAC.

**Adjourned @ 7:05 pm**

Prepared by: Marilyn McCombe, Acting Secretary



## **Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC)**

### **Minutes**

**February 2, 2023**

**Members Present:** Megan Burnham, Amanda Hazlehurst, Amy Hunter, Marilyn McCombe, Ryan Perry, Mandi Wooten

**Member Absent:** Heidi Van Voorhis

**Consulting Member:** Randy Corpening

**Consulting Members Absent:** Janelle Sutliff, Robin Verity

**1. Call to Order at 6:40 pm**

**2. Welcome and Introductions**

**3. Approval of the Minutes:** Minutes of the January 5, 2023, meeting were approved following a motion by Marilyn McCombe that was seconded by Megan Burnham.

**4. Public Comment:** There was no public comment.

**5. Presentation: “Presentation of the Inclusive Practices Plan”** by Randy Corpening, Director of Special Education (slides will be distributed with these meeting minutes).

- Mr. Corpening noted that it is difficult to describe what inclusive practices are. A lot is left to interpretation of the school board and school division.
- This is a 3-year process that is currently focused on a proposed “Initial Action Plan”
  - Develop a Division-wide Vision for Inclusive Practices
  - Developing training opportunities to give more formalized guidance for IEP teams to consider
  - Incorporating state-provided forms for inclusive instructional planning
    - Training opportunities will be offered to general education teachers on inclusive best practices as well
    - Trainings will be optional for now

- The special education office will monitor through periodic IEP reviews—looking for standards-based goals, meeting notices, and verification that documents were sent to parent/guardian two days prior
- Action Plan is required to be shared with the local SEAC and School Board. Mr. Corpening will present at the February 13 School Board Meeting.

**6. SEAC Policy Discussion:** In preparation for the 2022-23 annual report to the School Board, SEAC members began discussing its policy recommendations. Members reviewed the recommendations from the 2021-22 report, and discussed areas for proposed change. Mrs. Hunter will reach out to individual SEAC members to develop draft language for consideration by the committee at the March meeting. The following issue areas were discussed:

- **Inclusive Practices:**
  - Training for inclusive practices: what exactly does that look like?
  - Inclusive practice efforts need to span across sports, clubs, websites, teacher training, etc.
  - Not just a special education department issue
  - N2Y Curriculum:
    - This curriculum has been adopted for elementary and middle schools.
    - Mr. Corpening will be requesting 11 licenses for high school teachers to expand this curriculum to high school level next year.
    - Update 1.1-1.3 recommendations to align with the new inclusive practices
- **Multi-Sensory Literacy Training:** Possibly add recommendation for funding request to continue LMB after COVID funding has been exhausted.
- **Student and Staff Mental Health:** Add recommendation for support of expanding the positions for social workers, particularly having one in middle school.
- **American Sign Language:** Mrs. Hunter will reach out to Saralyn Aylor to get status update on addition of third year of ASL
- **NEW—Twice Exceptional Students:** Draft a recommendation regarding twice exceptional students (Megan Burnham is going to work on this)
- **NEW—Special Education Staffing/Compensation:** Mr. Corpening mentioned the difficulty in hiring/attracting highly qualified special education teachers. Is there a way to incentivize special education teachers to come to FCPS or encourage general education teachers to dual certify? Are there other options for developing new teachers from within FCPS?

## 7. Reports/Announcements

- **Chairman's Time:**
  - Thanks to Haley Schlechta for her work on the VAIEP portal training event for parents
  - Would like to offer a live stream of meetings next year, and asked Mr. Corpening to find out what that would entail
  - Requested an update on special education staffing (teachers and IAs)
- **Special Education Director's Time:**
  - FCPS has submitted the state review. On-site visit to FCPS Special Education Office will follow. FCPS will prepare a corrective action plan to address any issues raised by the state. The report from the state will be shared with the public.
- **Parent Resource Center Announcements:**
  - The Disability and Transitions Fair will be held at Fauquier High School on March 26, 4:00-6:00

## 8. Old Business

- **Remaining 2022-23 Meeting Dates and Presentation Topics:**
  - March 2: "Special Education Budget" (Randy Corpening, Director of Special Education)
  - NO MEETING IN APRIL
  - May 4: Discussion and Approval of Annual Report
- **2023 Disability Awareness Month Planning**
  - The SEAC is very pleased with the success and growth of Disability Awareness Month since its inception in 2019, and believes that it is one of FCPS's vital inclusive practices. SEAC members concluded that the SEAC is no longer able to be the primary lead on the October events. Since the SEAC is a volunteer school board advisory committee, the school division is better equipped to coordinate the events within the schools, including the poster contest and middle school awareness event, as well as development of new programming for high school students. The SEAC would like to encourage a shift in focus from "awareness" to "inclusion" in conjunction with the Inclusive Practices Action Plan, and would like to work with FCPS leadership and staff to plan future programming and resources for these October events. SEAC members also stressed the importance of these events being division-wide efforts—not just special education initiatives.
    - Mr. Corpening said that he will work with senior staff to determine how best to proceed.

- Chrissy Yonkey has asked for contact information to coordinate planning for the middle school event with a program by “A Place to Be”

- **March 16 Disability and Transition Fair at FHS**

- SEAC will host a table
- Meghan Burnham and Ryan Perry will represent the SEAC
- Amy Hunter will prepare a draft SEAC brochure prior to the March SEAC meeting

**9. New Business:** There was no new business.

**The meeting adjourned at 7:52 pm.**

**Prepared by: Amanda Hazlehurst, Secretary**



**Fauquier County Public Schools**  
**Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC)**  
**Minutes: March 2, 2023**

**Members Present:** Megan Burnham, Amanda Hazlehurst, Amy Hunter, Marilyn McCombe, Ryan Perry, Heidi Van Voorhis

**Member Absent:** Mandi Wooten

**Consulting Member:** Randy Corpening

**Consulting Member Absent:** Robin Verity

- I. Call to Order @ 6:03PM**
- II. Welcome and Introductions**
- III. Review and Approval of Minutes:** Minutes of the March 2023 meeting were approved following a motion by Marilyn McCombe, which was seconded by Megan Burnham.
- IV. Public Comment:** There was no public comment.
- V. Presentation: “Presentation of the Special Education Budget Report”**  
Randy Corpening, Director of Special Education
  - Mr. Corpening will share the presentation with SEAC after presenting to the School Board at the April meeting.
  - Local + State: \$28, 311, 865.17
  - Proposing \$64,000 increase from last year
  - Personnel and benefits take up the bulk of the budget
  - \$60,000 allocated to Speech-Language Pathologist to cover Individual Service Plans (ISP’s) for homeschool and private school students

## VI. Reports/Announcements:

### • Chairman's Time

- Mrs. Hunter recognized the role Robin Verity has played in SEAC for the last 8 years. She has stepped down from her current role as a consulting member. The SEAC thanks Mrs. Verity for her service and dedication and wishes her the best in her future endeavors.
- Mrs. Hunter shared the newly created brochure for Fauquier County Public Schools Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC). (Committee action is noted under Old Business below)
  - Brochures will be available at the Transition Fair on March 16
- SEAC Membership: It is time for the applications for the 2023-24 SY to be submitted. Applications should be submitted to Mrs. Hunter by May 31. She will compile them for submission to the School Board. Ms. Hunter will email the form to committee members. Anyone interested in becoming a new SEAC member should email Mrs. Hunter at [SEAC@FCPS1.org](mailto:SEAC@FCPS1.org) for more information.

### • Special Education Director's Time

- The Inclusive Plan was presented to the School Board in February and has been submitted to the state for review. The FCPS Office of Special Education will be sending out invitations soon to join a committee to develop a county-wide vision.
- VDOE will be here next week for the onsite visits. They will visit Kettle Run High School, Taylor Middle School, and Pearson Elementary School.
- Mr. Corpening has been in contact with the ITRT regarding the best way to offer meeting availability via live stream. ITRT will be on-site and will be paid to attend.
- Mrs. Van Voorhis motioned for the 2023-24 SY meetings to be livestreamed, Megan Burnham seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

### • PRC (Parent Resource Center) Announcements

- Disability and Transition Fair will be held on March 16 at Fauquier High School from 4:00-6:00pm

## VII. Old Business

### • SEAC Policy Discussion:

In preparation for the 2022-23 annual report to the School Board, SEAC members continued discussing policy recommendations. Mrs. Hunter presented a draft and members reviewed each recommendation. The following draft language was approved by the members. All policy recommendations and the full annual report will receive final consideration at the May meeting.

On a motion made by Mrs. Van Voorhis and seconded by Ms. Burnham, the SEAC agreed to instruct Mrs. Hunter to write a letter to the School Board supporting funding of a full-time social worker position (1.0 FTE) at each of the county's middle schools (see Recommendation #4 below). Funding for these positions is contained in Dr. Jeck's proposed budget.

### **DRAFT POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS:**

#### **1. Inclusive Practices Self-Assessment and Action Plan:**

FCPS staff have completed the initial step in the Inclusive Practices Self-Assessment process required by Virginia Code § 22.1-215, which included staff surveys and development of an initial plan. The following elements are included in that plan: (1) development of a division-wide vision for inclusive practices; (2) development of training opportunities to give more formalized guidance for IEP teams; (3) incorporating state-provided forms into inclusive instructional planning; (4) offering inclusive best practices training opportunities to general education teachers; and (5) monitoring by the special education office through periodic IEP reviews. The SEAC looks forward to participating in the development of the division-wide vision for inclusive practices, as well as the ongoing process for reviewing and improving inclusive practices in the county.

The SEAC is especially pleased that training will be offered for general education teachers since general education classrooms are at the heart of inclusion. In addition, we recognize the vital role that instructional assistants (IAs) play in inclusion. IAs provide the instructional, physical, and behavioral supports needed for many students with disabilities to succeed alongside their non-disabled peers.

**Recommendation 1.1:** Ensure that development of the Division-Wide Vision for Inclusive Practices is truly division-wide—not merely a special-education initiative. Participants should include stakeholders from throughout the division, representing all levels of administration, teachers, parents, and staff with various responsibilities throughout the county.

**Recommendation 1.2:** Develop a detailed training/reference manual for instructional assistants, including best practices for supporting inclusion and independence, information about the general characteristics and needs associated with various disability categories, examples of positive behavioral supports, and other best practices.

**Recommendation 1.3** Continue the school division's commitment to October Disability Awareness Month, including programming for students of all ages. Look for opportunities throughout the school year to build disability awareness, and to include students with disabilities, their families, and community members with disabilities in FCPS activities. **Adopt the new theme "Choose to Include" to replace the theme "More Alike than Different," which was used in previous years.**

#### **2. Inclusion in the Least Restrictive Environment:**

State and federal law require that students with disabilities be educated in the **Least Restrictive Environment (LRE)**, meaning that "to the maximum extent appropriate, children with disabilities, including children in public or private institutions or other care facilities, are educated with children who are not disabled, and that *special classes, separate schooling or other removal of children with disabilities from the regular educational environment occurs only when the nature or severity of the disability is such that education in regular classes with the use of supplementary aids and services cannot be achieved satisfactorily.*"

Over the past ten years, FCPS has made incredible progress on inclusion for most groups of students with disabilities, cutting the percentage of students who spend 40-60% of their days with

their non-disabled peers from 35% in 2012-13 to only 17.5% in 2021-22. At the same, the percentage of students with IEPs who were included more than 80% of the day increased by approximately the same number of students. The shift to more time in general education significantly improved SOL scores and other outcomes for these students. The value of educating students with disabilities alongside their non-disabled peers has been documented in countless studies over the past 40 years.

In 2017, the U.S. Supreme Court clarified that when grade-level advancement is not a reasonable prospect for a particular child, the IEP for that child “must be appropriately ambitious in light of his circumstances, just as advancement from grade to grade is appropriately ambitious for most children in the regular classroom. The goals may differ, but every child should have the chance to meet challenging objectives.” The Supreme Court also reiterated the requirement in IDEA that every IEP must “set[s] out ‘a statement of measurable annual goals ... designed to ... enable the child to be involved in and make progress in the general education curriculum,’ along with a description of specialized instruction and services that the child will receive..” [ellipses in original] *Andrew F. v. Douglas Cty. Sch. Dist. RE-1*, 137 S. Ct. 988, 1000 (2017)

The SEAC recognizes that while a continuum of placements is required to meet the unique needs of all students with disabilities, the first placement option that all IEP teams must consider is the general education classroom with supplemental aids and services. Placement can never be based solely on which statewide assessment a student will take (SOLs or VAAP). While formal state assessments do not begin until 3<sup>rd</sup> grade, students who do not receive exposure to the SOL curriculum in kindergarten through 2<sup>nd</sup> grade will likely be far behind their peers in general education.

According to VDOE, “Participation in the VAAP should only be considered after the SOL participation has been discussed and all possible accommodations have been fully examined. ... ***It is absolutely critical that parents understand that agreeing to modifications of a child’s curriculum means that their child will not be receiving the same instructional content as his peers. This means that the child will not be adequately prepared to take standardized assessments (such as SOL assessments) that lead to verified credits. Without these verified credits, the child will be unable to earn either a Standard or an Advanced Studies Diploma.*** ... An Applied Studies Diploma is not equivalent to a Standard Diploma, and it may not qualify a child for post-secondary opportunities for which a regular high school diploma is required, such as higher education, financial aid, and some employment opportunities.” [Emphasis in original.] (VDOE, *Critical Decision Points for Families of Children with Disabilities*)

**Recommendation 2.1:** Support the implementation and consistent use of a district-wide LRE decision-making tool, to guide IEP teams in ensuring that students are placed in the least restrictive environment with appropriate supplementary aids and services.

**Recommendation 2.2:** Ensure that general education teachers understand that the Virginia Essentialized Standards of Learning (VESOLs) are derived directly from the Standards of Learning (SOLs), while being reduced in depth, breadth, and complexity, and encourage schools at all levels to explore inclusive learning opportunities with differentiated instruction to allow students on both assessment tracks to collaborate with one another.

### **3. Multi-Sensory Literacy Training:**

As the Virginia Literacy Act is scheduled to take effect in the 2024-2025 school year ([SB 616 Virginia Literacy Act; early student literacy, evidence-based literacy instruction, etc.](#)) Fauquier County continues to move forward in general education literacy instruction, and in providing targeted research-based interventions to students with reading-related disabilities. With more than two-thirds of Virginia’s 8<sup>th</sup> graders lacking reading proficiency, the SEAC urges FCPS to

provide evidence-based Multisensory Structured Language Teaching (MSLT) based on the Science of Reading throughout all FCPS schools, including high schools. A student's level of reading proficiency is a key factor in determining future academic and vocational success, as well as the ability to function independently as an adult. This is true for students with even the most severe disabilities. According to the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association, "[w]hen individuals with severe disabilities are provided with access to comprehensive instruction, they can develop conventional reading and writing skills." It is crucial that IEP teams consider including reading goals based on MSLT principles for all students. The reading progression of a student with significant disabilities will likely require specialized instruction in elementary-level reading skills, such as decoding, vocabulary, and fluency, in addition to the high-school grade level comprehension skills. Therefore, high school special education teachers who teach students with students with significant reading delays should receive training in MSLT, in order to provide comprehensive reading instruction at each student's reading level.

**Recommendation 3.1:** Continue to provide full administrative support and endorsement for investment in successful science-based literacy instruction using Multi-sensory Structured Language Teacher Training for all teachers in kindergarten through middle school, as well as for high school special education teachers who teach students with cognitive disabilities. Continue encouraging Administration and Literacy Leads to promote training opportunities for both General Education and Special Education staff until all appropriate teachers and administrators are fully trained. Ensure that new teachers are trained as soon as possible.

**Recommendation 3.2:** Develop and implement a process for providing middle and high school literacy assessment results for ALL students to their former elementary schools. Encourage elementary school administrators and their teams to use this data in evaluating the long-term effectiveness of their schools' literacy instruction. In addition, for students who received literacy interventions or special education, elementary schools should use this data to evaluate the effectiveness of that instruction.

#### **4. Mental Health and Social Emotional Learning:**

The SEAC continues to support the county's focus on student mental health and social emotional learning. We believe it is important to ensure that every Fauquier County school has sufficient mental health professionals readily available to meet the needs of every student experiencing mental health challenges as soon as they arise. This is especially vital for students receiving special education services who need ongoing mental health supports. The SEAC also supports initiatives aimed at improving staff mental health and resiliency.

**Recommendation 4:** Establish a 1.0 FTE Social Worker position for each county Middle School.

#### **5. American Sign Language (ASL):**

American Sign Language (ASL) is an excellent world language alternative for students with language-based learning challenges and/or disabilities. It is also important for increasing the number of people in our community who can communicate using ASL. In Virginia, ASL is mandated by law as acceptable in fulfillment of high school foreign language graduation requirements. ASL III is critically needed to allow students to fulfill the three-year world language requirement for an Advanced Diploma without having to take an additional two years of a second language. The SEAC strongly supports the current plan of FCPS administration to offer ASL III in the 2023-24 school year.

**Recommendation 5:** Follow through with plans to implement ASL III in 2023-24, and consider offering ASL IV in 2024-25 if there is sufficient student interest.

**2. May 4 is the final 2022-23 meeting date. The SEAC will review and approve the Annual Report.**

**3. 2023 Disability Awareness Month Planning**

- Poster Contest: School Ambassadors from each school will upload the entries from their school.
- Mr. Corpening suggested Mrs. Hunter and Mrs. Hazlehurst set up a meeting with Mrs. Helkowski and Mrs. Yonkey to discuss how the Family and Community Engagement department can support Disability Awareness Month. Mrs. Hazlehurst will contact Mrs. Yonkey to schedule.

**4. March 16 FCPS Disability and Transition Fair at FHS**

- SEAC will host a table at the event.
  - Ms. Burnham will represent. Mandi Wooten and Ryan Perry also expressed interest and availability in attending.
  - SEAC Brochures will be distributed. Mrs. Van Voorhis made a motion that the SEAC approve the draft brochure with minor edits noted at the meeting. Ms. Burnham seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

**VIII. New Business**

- Ms. McCombe made a motion to adopt the following meeting dates for the 2023-24 SY. The motion was seconded by Megan Burnham and passed.

SY 2023-24 SEAC Meeting Dates:

September 7, 2023

October 5, 2023

November 2, 2023

December 2023 – NO MEETING

January 4, 2024

February 1, 2024

March 14, 2024 (2<sup>nd</sup> Thursday)

April 2024 – NO MEETING

May 2, 2024

**Adjourned @ 7:52PM.**

Prepared by: Amanda Hazlehurst, Secretary



**Fauquier County Public Schools  
Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC)**

**May 4, 2023  
FCPS Central Office Complex, Bldg. A**

**MINUTES**

The meeting was called to order at 7:05 pm, with a round of introductions. Members in attendance were Megan Burnham, Amy Hunter, Marilyn McCombe, Ryan Perry, and Mandi Wooten. Amanda Hazlehurst and Heidi Van Voorhis were absent.

The March meeting minutes were approved unanimously on a motion by Ms. McCombe and seconded by Ms. Burnham.

There was no public comment.

During Chairman's Time, Mrs. Hunter thanked the SEAC members, Mr. Corpening, and the FCPS staff for their contributions this year. She also thanked Ms. Burnham and Mr. Perry for attending the FCPS Disability and Transitions Fair on behalf of the SEAC. Applications for next year's SEAC are due now. There are several open positions, and anyone interested in joining the SEAC should email [seac@fcps1.org](mailto:seac@fcps1.org) for more information. Membership applications will be submitted to the School Board along with the SEAC Annual Report. Mrs. Hunter will be reaching out over the summer for assistance in compiling information resources for October Disability Awareness Month.

Mr. Corpening shared that Dr. Haley Schlecta will be the new Parent Resource Center coordinator, in addition to her other responsibilities. Mr. Corpening also gave a rundown of the personnel cuts due to the budget situation, including 69 instructional positions (teachers and IAs). He assured the SEAC that all special education teacher caseloads are currently within the state-mandated limits.

In Old Business, the Committee reviewed the 2023-24 meeting schedule. These meetings will be livestreamed on the FCPS1.org website. Members are asked to arrive by 5:50 if possible, so that the livestreamed meetings can begin on-time. Meetings will be held September 7, October 5, November 2, January 4, February 1,

March 14 (2<sup>nd</sup> Thursday), and May 2. Meetings will not be held in December or April.

Ms. Hazlehurst is working with Ms. Yonkey, the Family Engagement Coordinator, on preparations for the 2023 October Disability Awareness Month. Preparations will continue over the summer.

The Committee discussed the draft Annual Report to the School Board. Ms. Burnham moved that the SEAC adopt the report with the amendment below as Recommendation #1 and that the other recommendations be renumbered accordingly. Ms. McCombe seconded the motion, which was approved unanimously by the members present. Following is the text of the adopted amendment:

1. "Special Education Staffing":

*In light of the recent cuts in the FCPS budget, the SEAC urges the School Board to remain cognizant of its unique legal and ethical obligation to students with disabilities. It is vital that FCPS always employ a sufficient number of special education teachers to remain at or below Virginia's mandated caseload limits. This is especially important for special education case managers working in the general education setting, where caseloads are not as obvious as they are in self-contained special education classrooms.*

*With the elimination of many instructional and support positions throughout the county, the SEAC urges the School Board to recognize the vital importance of funding special education instructional assistant (IA) positions in our county. As class sizes grow and schools continue to replace departing veterans with less experienced and often provisionally licensed general education teachers, IA's help ensure that students with disabilities receive the instruction, accommodations, and support that they require. Without this necessary support, students will be set up to fail academically, as well as in their interactions with their teachers and peers. Although IAs are only required to have a high school diploma, many of them have years of experience supporting students and are integral members of their school communities.*

*Recommendation 1.1: Closely monitor special education teacher caseloads to ensure compliance with Virginia's mandated caseload limits. Ensure that any open special education teaching positions are filled as quickly as possible, and consider options to ensure that outcome, including*

*establishment of a separate pay scale and/or employing other incentives to recruit and retain special education teachers.*

*Recommendation 1.2: Recognize the important role that instructional assistants play in our schools and prioritize those positions for future hiring.*

Under New Business, members discussed the possibility of adding a rewards program next year to recognize individuals in FCPS who are leaders in the inclusion of students with disabilities. Ms. Burnham shared her experience with Loudon County's awards program. The SEAC agreed to discuss the proposal further next Fall.

The meeting adjourned at 7:50.

Prepared by:  
Marilyn McCombe  
Vice Chair (Acting Secretary)



**Fauquier County Public Schools  
Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC)**

**October 5, 2023  
FCPS Central Office Complex, Bldg. A**

**MINUTES**

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 pm by Chair Amy Hunter. Members in attendance were Amanda Hazlehurst, Amy Hunter, Megan Monnahan (formerly Burnham), and Ryan Perry. Marilyn McCombe and Mandi Wooten were absent due to a work conflict and family illness, respectively. Consulting member Randy Corpening was also present. This meeting was livestreamed via a link on the SEAC page of the FCPS1.org website.

The September meeting minutes were approved unanimously on a motion by Ms. Monnahan and seconded by Mr. Perry.

There was no public comment.

**Presentation:**

Ms. Guzman, Student Services Supervisor, gave a presentation entitled, "Virginia Tiered System of Supports (VTSS) and the Interface with Special Education." There were technical difficulties so the presentation was paused while the ITRT made adjustments. After a brief pause, Ms. Guzman continued with a brief recap of the slides that were presented prior to the SEAC realizing that the audio on the livestream was not working correctly.

**MTSS: Multi-Tiered System of Supports**

- Work with Special Education as a collaboration among all staff
- Based on best practices, high quality instruction for all students
- Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) for all learners
- Response to Intervention (RTI) and Tier 2 supports for student struggling to access general education

**RTI: Response to Intervention:**

- School tries increased Tier 2 interventions and monitors for 4-6 weeks
- If there is progress, then back to Tier 1 supports and monitoring

- If no progress, may move to child study or may continue with Tier 2 interventions at increased frequency or duration

Questions/Discussion:

- Do parents have access?
  - Yes, parents are invited to be part of the process and all data is shared with parents.
- What is the process if a parent requests a child study meeting?
  - Child Study Team often refers to RTI data to support and inform the team as they work through the child study process and decision-making.
- Who is involved in the RTI process? Are special education teachers involved?
  - This depends on the situation and areas of concern being addressed.
- How are students in program classrooms included in schoolwide PBIS efforts.
  - Some schools are better at execution, but all schools are working toward inclusive engagement.

**Chairman's Report:**

Mrs. Hunter thanked Ms. Guzman for her presentation. She followed this with a report on the State SEAC meeting, which was held September 28-29. SSEAC speakers included Brittany Everett with the state Council on Higher Education who spoke about barriers to higher education for students with disabilities. Andrew Greenwich, who oversees Virginia IEP, discussed his office's work to strengthen the features of that system. He noted that it is currently used by 116 school divisions. Colleges and universities in Virginia are now training students on the system. New upgrades include a dashboard with compliance information including teacher caseloads. State SEAC members' concerns centered around the parent interface. Mr. Greenwich explained that this is an "add-on", outside of his office's purview. SSEAC members pushed back, saying that anything connected to Virginia IEP should have some level of oversight for compliance and parent involvement by VDOE. SSEAC members also raised concerns about the process for providing partial parental consent via Virginia IEP; some school divisions are apparently giving parents misinformation about the impact of partial consent (saying that partial consent would void the rest of the IEP). Hank Millward, of VDOE's Family Engagement office gave the VDOE update for Samantha Hollins since she was with OSEP representatives in town for a review. The next SSEAC meeting is December 6-8.

**Special Education Director's Report**

In his report, Mr. Corpening explained that the ransomware attack on the county's computer systems has caused interruptions with the Virginia IEP system in the county. He assured the committee that student data is protected, however access to IEPs is currently unavailable. Staff are working with paper documents and will be reaching out to parents as needed until the system is fully operational again.

The county has recognized that transition is an area where more can be accomplished. Administration is currently discussing how to best begin the transition process at the elementary school level giving students the longest lead time to prepare for post-secondary success. Discussions at earlier grade levels will be more basic but will start the dialogue with parents much earlier.

### **Parent Resource Center Report**

Mrs. Hunter gave the PRC report in Dr. Schlechta's absence. Dr. Schlechta has made back-to-school night visits at CH Ritchie and HM Pearson where she spoke with 54 parents. She attended the Connect for Success symposium in September learned a great deal about how to support families whose students have IEPs and 504 plans. She met with representatives from different counties and learned about what would be beneficial for Fauquier County public schools. Much of the conversation at the conference was focused on resources on autism and intellectual disabilities for families. The September PRC online workshop had 36 attendees. Parents' primary interest was the applied studies diploma, which will be addressed more thoroughly at the Transitions and Disabilities Fair in March.

The October PRC workshop, entitled "Understanding Special Education," will be led by Love Kingsbury from PEATC on October 11. Dr. Schlechta will visit school fall festivals and is currently planning for the March 9 fair, which will be held at FHS in the multi-purpose room and cafeteria area. She is finalizing the list of organizations and presenters to be invited, and invitations will go out in October.

### **Old Business**

Ms. Hunter expressed concern about having SEAC representation from all areas of the county. SEAC members identified counties they are affiliated with (residence or school), and it appears that Lee District schools may not have representation. There are still vacant seats on the SEAC and anyone interested should email [SEAC@FCPS1.org](mailto:SEAC@FCPS1.org) for more information. Members also discussed tentative topics for presentations at upcoming SEAC meetings:

November "I'm Determined"  
January N2Y and Technology in Special Ed Classrooms  
February Update on ELA and Virginia Literacy Act Implementation  
March First-person experiences of individuals with disabilities

Additional issues to be addressed throughout the year include Special Education Budget (March), Restraint and Seclusion Report, FCPS Inclusive Practices Plan Development, and March 2024 Disability Awareness Month.

**New Business**

SEAC members discussed issues and activities of interest. Ms. Hazlehurst reported on the Auburn special education teachers' plans to attend the Aspire Educators Symposium being put on by "I'm Determined" November 6-7 in Virginia Beach. Ms. Monnahan raised the issue of establishing SEAC excellence awards. She volunteered to lead to initiative and will report back to the committee with recommended next steps. Mr. Corpening suggested reaching out to the School Board representative to the SEAC but was uncertain who that individual is at this time. Mrs. Hunter will follow up with the School Board.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:03 pm following approval of a motion by Megan Monnahan that was seconded by Ryan Perry.

Prepared by:  
Amanda Hazlehurst  
Acting Secretary

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**Fauquier County Public Schools  
Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC)**

**September 7, 2023  
FCPS Central Office Complex, Bldg. A**

**MINUTES**

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 pm by Chair Amy Hunter. Members in attendance were Megan Burnham, Amanda Hazlehurst, Amy Hunter, Marilyn McCombe, Ryan Perry, and Mandi Wooten. Consulting members Randy Corpening and Hailey Schlechta were also present. This meeting was livestreamed via a link on the SEAC page of the FCPS1.org website.

The March meeting minutes were approved unanimously on a motion by Ms. McCombe and seconded by Ms. Wooten.

Ms. Hunter shared the following list of members who had expressed an interest in serving as officers: Amy Hunter—Chair; Megan Burnham—Vice Chair; Marilyn McCombe—Secretary. Ms. Hazlehurst moved that this slate of officers be elected. Ms. McCombe seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

There was no public comment.

Mr. Corpening gave a presentation entitled, "Overview of Special Education Services and Staff in Fauquier County Schools." He cited the state regulations that govern special education and recommended that parents refer to the resources on VDOE's website for additional information: <https://www.doe.virginia.gov/programs-services/special-education/information-for-families>. He gave an overview of the evaluation and IEP processes. Of the 10,839 students enrolled in the county as of 8/30/23, 1775 (16.3%) have IEPs. This is an increase of about 100 students with IEPs over last Spring. These students are identified in the following categories for their primary disabilities: Autism—211; Developmental Delay—140; Emotional Disturbance—68; Hearing Impairment—18; Intellectual Disability—84; and Other Health Impairment—461.

In her Chairman's report, Ms. Hunter thanked Mr. Corpening and his staff for setting up the new livestream. She announced that anyone who would like to receive SEAC updates, including meeting agendas and minutes, should email her at [seac@fcps1.org](mailto:seac@fcps1.org). Other SEAC-related questions or concerns can also be sent to that email address. She mentioned that Public Comment at SEAC meetings is encouraged. Public comment may be made in-person or in writing and must identify the individual at magisterial district (if you are unsure of your magisterial district, she can send you a map or you can list your street address and she will replace it with the correct district name). General parent input is always welcome via the SEAC email but will not be read at a meeting or treated as public comment if the individual does not wish to be identified. Ms. Hunter informed the SEAC that she presented the 2022-23 Annual Report to the School Board on August 28 and that the Board is expected to vote on the 2023-24 SEAC membership at its September meeting. Finally, Ms. Hunter gave an update on the Virginia State SEAC's activities where she is the Region 4 (Northern Virginia) Parent Representative and a member of the Executive Committee. At the July meeting, the SSEAC focused on dispute resolution procedures and ways that VDOE can provide more information about issues arising in these disputes—the vast majority of which are subject to sealed settlements; special education staffing; funding for private day schools and regional programs; and making State SEAC meetings more accessible to parents around the state. The next SSEAC meeting is September 28-29.

In his Special Education Director's report, Mr. Corpening shared with the SEAC on behalf of Deputy Superintendent Brill that FCPS administration would like to move the FCPS Disability Awareness Month from October to March in order to consolidate several disability-related awareness events held during the year throughout the county. This will also allow more time during the school year for planning. Ms. Hunter noted that the SEAC looks forward to working with FCPS staff in developing plans and providing resources for the activities in March. She also reiterated the SEAC's recommendation that the theme be changed to "Choose to Include" from "More Alike than Different, which was used in previous years. Mrs. Hunter welcomed Superintendent Warner to the meeting.

Dr. Schlechta gave the Parent Resource Center report. Dr. Schlechta has attended several back-to-school nights and has spoken with over 100 families to date. The first PRC workshop of the year was on the Virginia IEP portal, which was attended by 35 families. The portal is an add-on feature of Virginia IEP, and its capabilities, as well as the ability to hold IEP meeting with online participation by parents and other team members has dramatically improved IEP meeting attendance. The September workshop on Diploma Options was held the night before the SEAC meeting, and Dr. Schlechta will give a re-cap of that event in her October report. She is planning to

attend the “Connect for Success” conference for PRC representatives from around the state later this month.

Under Old Business, Ms. Hunter pointed out that there are still vacancies on the SEAC and encouraged committee members to reach out, and anyone interested to contact her. Ms. Hunter was asked if A Place to Be had been contacted about possibly doing a Disability Awareness Month program this year, and Mrs. Hunter responded that she is awaiting a returned call from their staff.

Under New Business, all SEAC members confirmed that they have attended a PEATC SEAC training event, and they were given the “SEAC Guide” publication. Ms. Hunter updated the SEAC on the fact that American Sign Language I and II are currently being offered with a portion of the online classes being synchronous with the teacher. ASL III is also being offered but is currently asynchronous.

SEAC members were each asked to identify priority issues that they would like to have addressed by speakers during the coming school year. The following issues were mentioned by SEAC Members. Ms. Hunter will use this list and the list in the Annual Report when identifying topics and speakers for upcoming meetings:

- Assistive Technology Options and Use of Technology in Special Education Classrooms
- Update on Implementation of the Virginia Literacy Act in Fauquier County, including ELA Curriculum in General Education at All Levels
- General Update on N2Y Implementation at All Levels (including a progress update on the implementation in all three high schools), and an Explanation of How N2Y is Adapted for Students with Multiple Disabilities, Including Those with Vision Impairments
- Implications of Various Diploma Options, and an Explanation of the VESOL Standards and the Newly Implemented VAAP Testing
- Virginia Tiered System of Supports (VTSS) and How It Is Implemented for Students with Disabilities (including academic interventions, SEL instruction, and discipline procedures)
- Information about “I’m Determined” Including Training/Conference Opportunities for Students, Parents and Staff

For reference, the following topics identified by the SEAC in the 2022-23 Annual Report as being of interest for future presentations:

- Overview of the Special Education Structure and Process in Fauquier County Schools at the County and School Levels
- Progress on the Inclusive Practices Initiative, and Inclusion of Students with Intellectual Disabilities

- Augmentative and Alternative Communication: Including and Supporting Students with Severe Speech or Hearing Impairments
- Update on VESOL-Aligned Curriculum for High School Students on the VAAP

The meeting was adjourned at 6:42 pm following approval of a motion by Marilyn McCombe that was seconded by Ryan Perry.

Prepared by:  
Marilyn McCombe  
Secretary

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