



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

**September 3, 2026, 6:00-7:30 p.m.
FCPS Central Office Complex, Bldg. A
430 Shirley Avenue, Warrenton**

MINUTES

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m. by Chair Amy Hunter. Members in attendance were Amy Hunter, Marilyn McCombe, Anna Williams, Elliott Robinson, Zach Roberts, Megan Monnahan, Molly Lawson, Chelsea Racey, and Willette Trevis. Special Education Director Angie Gum was absent due to illness. Director of Student Services Nicholas Napolitano, and Dean Spahr PRC attended as consulting members.

Public Comment: There was no public comment.

The meeting began with introductions from all members present. The agenda was approved with one amendment: the budget update was removed as it was too soon to provide any news. The minutes from the May meeting, where the annual report was approved, were also approved.

Election: A motion was passed to re-elect the current officers for the upcoming school year: Amy Hunter as Chair, Willette Trevis as Vice Chair, and Anna Williams as Secretary.

Reports:

SEAC Chair: The chair thanked members for their work in subcommittees over the summer, noting that it puts the SEAC ahead compared to previous years. The SEAC's presence at the back-to-school fairs was considered a great success. Over forty families signed up for the SEAC distribution list across all locations.

Ms. Hunter met with Mr. Napolitano and Ms. Gum in August to review subcommittee minutes and discuss potential speakers for future meetings.

The SEAC's information was updated for the county resource guide.

Members were encouraged to review the Virginia Department of Education's guidelines on "Functional Behavioral Behavior Assessments and Behavior Intervention Plans," dated March

2025. An associated training module series on the same topic is also available online as a resource.

Special Education Director:

Mr. Napolitano reported for Ms. Gum.

Staffing Vacancies (2026-2027):

- Three special education teacher vacancies at the high schools.
- Two vacant positions at the special education office: a behavior specialist and an early childhood special education teacher.

Staff Training:

- An all-day special education training was held on August 6, which included instructional assistants (IAs) for the first time, using one of their two newly budgeted training days. The feedback was very positive.
- A two-day special education training for administrators was held in July with outside speakers and was also well-received.
- A two-day autism training for staff and administrators also occurred in July.

Curriculum & Programs:

- Readtopia is the new curriculum for middle and high school students assessed on the VESOLs.
- A teacher workday on September 22 will include additional training for special education programs.

Inclusion Efforts:

- Schools have created inclusion teams and are developing school-specific inclusion plans.
- There is a heavy emphasis on specially designed instruction and co-teaching.

Mr. Napolitano also reported the superintendent will begin internal budget planning for the 2027-2028 school year around October. The superintendent's proposed budget will be made public in February. Compensation is expected to be a main priority again in the upcoming budget.

Parent Resource Center:

Mr. Spahr reported that the PRC has begun planning the annual Disability and Transition Fair. It is scheduled for Saturday, February 27. This year, the event will not be a combined "Youth Resources Fair" with FRESH as it was last year.

Old Business:

Policy Subcommittee Report:

The subcommittee met July 2 to review school board policies and map out recommended topics for the year based on the annual report. No policies approved at that time were deemed relevant to the SEAC.

The School Board Policy Committee met again on August 13 and reviewed 21 policy revisions resulting from new state legislation. Four policies of potential interest to the SEAC were identified:

1. Mental health awareness training for staff.
2. A new policy in driver education for initiatives available to drivers on the autism spectrum.
3. New requirements for local alternative assessments that could impact students with IEPs.
4. An electronic device policy allowing students with IEPs or 504 plans to carry cell phones as an accommodation. It is current practice to allow for exceptions for medical needs, such as glucose monitors or hearing aids connected to personal devices.

The group discussed state legislation concerning alternate assessments, which are used in place of standard tests for SOLs. Fauquier County opts to use project-based assessments (PBAs) for certain subjects and grade levels. New state requirements for PBAs were noted, including restrictions on certain “scaffolding” supports and a rule that the grading teacher cannot be the student’s current or former teacher.

Parent Outreach Subcommittee Report:

Parent Survey: The subcommittee is prioritizing the upcoming 2026-27 parent survey. Last year’s survey was sent out in January, which was considered a difficult time for families. A new tentative timeline for the survey is October 20 to November 10. To improve accessibility, the group plans to include instructions in both English and Spanish.

Exemplary Service Award: The subcommittee discussed renaming the award to include “inclusion” to its title. The group reviewed the success of last year’s inaugural award. Although there were many nominations last year, the group wants to ensure nominations are received from all schools, as 4 or 5 schools had no nominees, and solicit more nominations from parents. The selection process involved a blind review by a three-person panel using a rubric to score nominations without knowing the names of the nominees, recommenders, or schools.

Action Items:

- The SEAC aims to provide input or a letter of support advocating for the special education budget to the school board once the superintendent’s budget is released. Ms. Hunter will share the recommendations from the annual report with the School Board
- The SEAC requested data on how often elevators are out of service, for how long, and which school buildings have them.
- The Policy Subcommittee plans to meet again to proactively review policies scheduled for review in the coming year. The group’s role is to monitor policy changes and identify potential issues. Mr. Napolitano will ask Dr. Brill if there is a schedule of policies to be considered for renewal this year.
- The Parent Engagement Subcommittee will meet September 22 at 6:00 pm at Panera to finalize plans for the parent survey. A follow-up subcommittee meeting was scheduled to review the survey and email language.
- Ms. Hunter noted that standing subcommittees should approve their own minutes.

Member Roundtable:

Ms. Trevis gave feedback from parents regarding the harshness of discipline for students with special needs. Another concern was students being pushed onto an SOL track when ASOL might be more appropriate and vice versa. This was noted of particular concern for students who are borderline for receiving a diploma.

Mr. Roberts reported that he is a member of his school's inclusion team, which will meet next week.

Mr. Robinson reported parents have expressed concern with discrepancies between the service minutes agreed to in IEP's and service minutes provided. Mr. Napolitano noted the county has funding; they struggle to find qualified people to hire for these roles. Ms. Monnahan voiced concerns around the use of virtual services, particularly for speech therapy, this is a concern for parents and teachers.

Ms. Hunter reported the Arc hosts a "Moms Night Out" group on the second Thursday of each month. Ms. McCombe noted it is currently fundraiser season at the Arc. A golf tournament, Arctober Craft Fair, and Silent Auction are coming up.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:28 on a motion by Ms. Monnahan that was seconded by Mr. Robinson and approved unanimously.

Submitted by:
Anna Williams
Secretary