

Wednesday, January 15, 2025

Special Education Advisory Committee Mtg.

Attendees: Dr. Casandra McNair, Jonita Shabazz, Sarah Mohr, Chaquita Kindred, Hitomi Dillon, Dr. DawnMarie Brittingham, Stephanie Whitley, Megan Downes, Jamillah Silver, Darlene Symborski, Caitlyn Symborski, Terrance Jones, Christy Cole, Kirstyn Oneill

Online Attendees: Charlotte Brooks- Dale, Blythe Johnson Jones, Holly Boyce

Notes

- I. Welcome and Introductions: 6:37 PM Start
 - A. Welcome by Kirstyn Oneill, SEAC Chair
- II. Announcements and Correspondence
 - A. PTA Counsel Meeting next Thursday, January 23 in Richmond with officials child advocacy
- III. Public Comment
 - A. Ms. Whitley read a letter that a parent sent to her in regard to program changes that made them feel that their child wouldn't be receiving specific or all services that they were supposed to receive.
- IV. Special Education Reports
 - A. Literacy Act Presentation- Dr. Shabazz and Sarah Mohr
 - 1. Literacy Overview:
 - a) VALLS test is given 3 times a year
 - b) Reading Plan is teacher modified
 - c) Ms Downs asks how are parents notified?
 - d) Ms. Kindred asks if something is in the works for grades 9-12?
 - e) Ms. Whitley asks how is SPED included in the intervention program, ie. LEXIA? (Response: Yes)

- f) Ms. Silver comments that students have specific designated instructions that allow them to work off the “list” that the state gives.
- g) Ms. Mohr adds that on the VDOE website it shows the rigor that is involved in picking specific programs. Vetted against science based evidence research.
- h) Mrs. Oneill asks if they are audited yearly? (Response from Dr. Shabazz: Yes- The Division Literacy Plan does)
- i) Ms. Whitley asks, are all teachers receiving the training? (Response from Dr. Shabazz: Yes, everyone. Even resource teachers have a smaller amount of training)

B. Director’s Report- Dr. McNair

- 1. Responds to letter that Ms. Whitely read. She clarifies that IEP’s are individualized and that it will not affect the services of students.
- 2. Directors Report:
 - a) Recent and Upcoming Events:
 - (1) The Little Feet Meet; for elementary students, on Wednesday, April 2, 2025.
 - (2) The Champions Together track and field event for high school students. No date yet.
 - b) Special Education Parent Resource Center:
 - (1) The Virtual Teacher will serve as the daily facilitator for two hours a day and by appointment. Ms. Solomon-Gaines will also be available.
 - (2) Virtual teacher will offer in-person, virtual and recorded learning opportunities for parents beginning Feb. 12, 2025.
 - c) Professional Learning: Continued professional learning for staff during clerical days. Partnering with ODU and TTAC for adaptive classrooms.
 - (1) Transition Tuesday was first held in November. The topic was College and Career options for students with disabilities. School counselor and ACCESS counselor from LHS were the speakers. 14 participants
 - (2) Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS) begins in all 3 high schools the week of Jan. 13, 2025

- (3) The PERT (Postsecondary Education Rehabilitation Transition) Program- school to work transition. Four students were selected to attend PERT for a 5 day comprehensive vocational evaluation at Wilson Workforce in and Rehabilitation Center non Fishersville, VA
- (4) The Student Employment Experiences Under Supervision (SEE/US) Program is up and running. Approx. 35 students are participating.
- (5) Business partnerships with 2 Applebees' locations, Greater Works Outreach Ministry, the Teacher Supply Store at JFKMS, and Lake Prince Center Retirement Community. Hampton Inn has agreed to be apart of the partnership.
- (6) SEE/US Program, has developed school-based enterprises at all 3 high schools. They are up and running.
- (7) The Start on Success (SOS) Program's- a collaboration between families, DARS, VCU, CTI, VDOE, students, communities, and schools. SOS new business partner is the City of Suffolk. Four students at LHS have been selected to participate in the program.
- (8) There are 19 new applicants to DARS this year.
- (9) Monthly Transition Information for Parents and Students (TIPS) is in Peach Jar.
- (10) \$60,000 Grant Scholarship at Mac Benn with SPED
- (11) 652 visits to schools this year
- (12) Annual plan at March meeting

3. Comments from Audience:

- a) Ms. Whitley- Kuddos for getting SPED more close to pre-Covid activities.
- b) Mrs. Oneill- Training is mandatory for all teachers, which is great.
- c) Ms. Silver- First time to be able to train the whole staff instead of specified groups.
- d) Ms. Downs- First year IEP meeting in the first month of school.
- e) Great positive direction for SPED Dept.

V. Old Business:

A. Goals:

1. Parent survey comes at the end of January. Goals will be changed and/or updated based off of the results from the survey.

B. Policy Review Committee Findings:

1. Updated policies will be presented at SPS Board Mtg, Jan. 16th.
2. Ms. Whitely asks if there are nay other revisions coming up. (Response: Not that we are aware)

VI. New Business

A. Approval of November minutes

B. Presentation to School Board- Update

1. SEAC is more visible on SPS website

VII. Public Comment Review:

- A. Ms. Whitley asks, regarding VAP- Can there be/ would it be helpful if there was a parent info session from SPED dept. regarding criteria worksheet?
- B. Ms. Johnson-Jones responds that criteria changed July 1. A new rubric is out. Those that no longer approve for VAP still receive services.
- C. Dr. McNair adds that Ms. Johnson-Jones gave a session of new criteria and will be providing another session at in service next week.
- D. Mrs. Oneill comments that it seems like VDOE is trying to slow down the track for graduation at a young age.
- E. Ms. Silver comments that if you don't meet the curriculum for VAP then look at SOL based curriculum for what you need for that student.
- F. Ms. Kindred states that it forces various school systems to be more creative.

VIII. Open Discussion:

A. State SEAC mtg. as a possible field trip.

B. Mr. Jones-

1. In regard to school board mtg. Hope we can move together collaboratively with the board.

2. As the Community Engagement lead- Do we have any listed responsibilities/ outlines of expectations? (Response from Mrs. ONeil: No)
3. Happy to hear about the training. Mr. Jones attends Little Feet with daughter and loves it.
4. We (SEAC) should push the events.

IX. Adjournment: 8:22PM