

**Fairfax County Advisory Committee for Students with Disabilities (ACSD)**  
**Meeting Minutes**  
**February 12, 2020**

Member Name		Organization	Attendance
Darcy	Acquavella	City of Fairfax School Board	P
Laura	Allen	Region 5	P
Joe	Alston	Member at Large (Moon)	
Ally	Baldassari	SEPTA	P
Michael	Beattie	Disability Services Board	P
Cheri	Belkowitz *	Springfield District	P
Liz	Brocato	Braddock District	E
Brandon	Cassady	Hunter Mill District	P
Sandi	Dallhoff ***	Department of Neighborhood & Community Services	P
Debbie	DeJacques	Region 3	R
Susan	Edgerton	POAC - NOVA	P
Judy	Farabaugh	Member at Large (McElveen)	R
Mary Kate	Ganley	Student Representative	E
Meghan	Gray	Lee District	P
Mary	Hackman	Providence District	P
Harry	Henderson	Mason District	E
Lissy	John	Dranesville District	E
Lynn	Kiewel	Fairfax County Health Department	E
Toby	Latham	Assistive Technology Services	P
Erin	Lauer	Fairfax-Falls Church Community Services Board	P
Connie	Lorentzen **	Mount Vernon District	P
Rachel	Macias	Region 4	P
Linda	Mason	Higher Education	E
Melissa	Morrison	Region 1	
Phara	Rodrigue	Member at Large (Keys-Gamarra)	P
Michael	Simon	Sully District	P
Joanne	Walton	Faculty Representative	P
Ann-Marie	Ward ***	Fairfax County Council of PTAs	P
Cathy	White	Transition Services	P
Jessica	White	Preschool	
Niki	Zimmerman	Region 2	P
Vacant		Federation of Citizens	
Vacant		League of Women Voters	
<b>* Chair **Vice-Chair *** Secretary</b>		<b>P = Present E = Excused Absence R = Resigned</b>	

**FCPS Staff Who Were Present:**

- Mike Bloom, Director of the Office of Special Education Instruction
- Dawn Clements, Assistant Ombudsman for Special Education
- Mary Beth Harrison-Cunningham, Director of the Parent Resource Center
- Dawn Schaefer, Director of Due Process and Eligibility
- Stefan Mascoll, Coordinator of Student Safety and Wellness

**School Board Liaison Present:** Stella Pekarsky, Sully District

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**Call to Order:** The meeting was called to order at 7:01 p.m. by Cheri Belkowitz

**Agenda & Minutes:**

- Connie presented the minutes. Corrections were made to attendance and to clarify a statement that was made about the term limits for the Chair. Susan motioned to approve the December minutes as corrected. Joanne seconded. The motion passed unanimously.
- Connie introduced the agenda for the meeting. The agenda was accepted as presented.

**Public Comment**

- Shannon Duncan spoke about dyslexia and her experience in FCPS with her daughter. She is a founding member of Decoding Dyslexia Virginia. She feels like improvements have been made in identification via iReady, but there is more to do. Delivery of services is not consistent because teachers are not receiving the training they need and programs available to FCPS schools are not used consistently. Access to Assistive Technology is too limited. Parents do not trust that FCPS is doing their best and feel like their children are an afterthought. Ms. Duncan distributed a “state of the union” dyslexia packet to ACSD members. Cheri is noted that she is speaking at a conference on dyslexia at Longwood University on April 25
- Jenna Gould, a student, spoke about her previous school and how the treatment of students and staff impacted her schoolwork and emotional health. Her new school placement has improved her self-esteem and educational performance.

**Parent Resource Center News:**

- Mary Beth Harrison-Cunningham, Director of the PRC, provided an update. The PRC has again applied for a grant from the Department of Education to keep hourly staff for the summer. The PRC will offer the parent/child Mind in the Making series in the summer (5-8 year olds). They will teach 2 skills per week via modeling and activities in the PRC library. The PRC also plans to hold its Educator Lunch and Learn series for teachers to learn and network. In April, there will be a collaboration with Fairfax County for Child Abuse Prevention month. Special Education conference registration will be opening soon, hopefully Friday, February 14. Sign up for News You Choose and use social media to keep up with the PRC.
- Ann-Marie thanked the PRC and Ombudsman’s office for coming to speak to community groups, such as when they presented to PTA members in the Justice pyramid.

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- There was a question about whether transportation would be offered for the Special Education conference. No answer was available.
- There will be a student strand at Special Education conference (not I'm Determined but similar themes).
- Stella Pekarsky, the new School Board liaison from Sully District, introduced herself. The School Board will be undertaking an independent audit of special education in FCPS.

**Presentations:**

- Dawn Schaefer, from the Office of Due Process and Eligibility, gave a presentation on Eligibility Basis for Committee Decisions (BCDs) forms. Students must meet the criteria on the BCD form in order to be eligible for special education. Changes to the forms were made to bring them in line with Virginia forms. A statement was added about medical diagnosis not being sufficient to determine eligibility. The language about specially designed instruction was clarified.
- The forms for all 14 categories are available on FCPS Special Education Forms page under the Eligibility section. A summary of the changes is noted below
  - Autism: does not need to have documentation for PDD, criterion A (must meet all), criterion B (must meet one)
  - ED: moved social maladaptive statement
  - Hearing Impairment: 4 types of hearing loss (must meet one)
  - ID: document specific instrument for intellectual functioning and adaptive functioning, age of onset, rule-outs added limited English proficiency
  - Multiple Disabilities: examples changed, multiple labels vs. MD
  - Orthopedic Impairment: removed one or more instructional areas because it was repetitive
  - OHI: no changes
  - SLD (most common eligibility category): criteria B was moved to criteria A; spelling was added for underachievement; added to processing: long term recall, rapid naming, working memory; evaluation outcomes: discrepancy model, response to intervention, patterns of strengths and weaknesses; must document adverse effect on educational performance
  - SLI: significantly "discrepant"
  - TBI: sensory and perceptual abilities separated
  - Visual Impairment: no changes
  - DD: no substantive changes, adverse effect on age appropriate activities
  - Deafness: types of hearing loss
  - Deaf-Blindness: no changes
- Trained all local screening committees
- Categories convey information as the starting point – any service is eligible to be given, services and supports are not category dependent

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- Education is more than academics
- Cheri noted that there are limitations to technology (CSTARS) that prevent teams from typing all the information in
- State Parent Handbook has information about eligibility and the categories
- FCPS Parent Handbook is still in process
- Questions: Dawn Clements, Office of Due Process and Eligibility, PSLs, Special Education Department Chair
  
- Stefan Mascoll from the Office of Bullying Prevention and Intervention gave a presentation about bullying.
  
- SR&R definition of bullying – via VDOE: behavior is repeated; intent to harm, embarrass, hurt another student; power imbalance must be present (size, age, number of students). If the interaction is something other than bullying, the school will address it and not label it as bullying
  
- Educate students about bullying before it happens: SR&R review at beginning of the year, then mid-year; video for 7-12 (bullying, harassment, substance abuse) – elementary level is lesson provided by their teacher. Educational lessons by counselors via school need, classroom or school wide. Bullying lessons are not mandated but harassment lessons are mandated, so many counselors just incorporate bullying into that. Health and PE classes have bullying component, via healthy relationships. There is not one mandated curriculum that FCPS uses. Each school has its own culture. There is not a particular effort to prevent or educate about bullying students with disabilities. All students are encouraged to advocate for themselves or others. Students with disabilities: if unfounded, IEP case managers are notified. If founded, an IEP meeting is convened.
  
- What is the school’s response? BHMS (administrators only, 5 years only) – captures detailed notes of allegations of bullying and harassment; SIS – captures all incidents that are determined to be in violation of the SR&R. Parents can request the information from BHMS but it would be redacted. Administrator must investigate the allegation, speaking to students, parents, teachers, viewing video. After collecting information, administrators determine if it meets the definition of bullying. By Day 4, parents should have an update. The BHMS captures the school response and attempt to resolve the issue. Parents should receive a summary letter and phone call from an administrator. There should be an attempt to collaborate. School administrators don’t always follow the procedures. Complaint (parent not satisfied with resolution) vs. appeal (for students who have been suspended). Speak to the administrator in charge of investigation. Then go above the administrator (most likely to principal). Then go to the region assistant superintendent.
  
- Questions or concerns: smascoll@fcps.edu

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**Special Education Update (Mike Bloom):**

- 15<sup>th</sup> annual Special Education Conference – April 18 @ Hayfield – Dr. Mary Brenel – High Leverage Practices for Inclusive Classrooms – addressing both parents and teachers – volunteer sign-ups needed – there will be a session about the ACSD – inclusion spotlight (last year 17 schools) – First Class Awards: online application
- ESY sites online with scheduling/feeder school information
- Professional Development days – ABA classes, positive behavior supports for kindergarten teachers, category A teachers, VAAP, ESY, literacy, math intervention
- Animal Shelter Visit with beginning Braille readers
- TOPS (Teacher Outreach Program Support) – teachers who are interested in learning more about Assistive Technology – 160 teachers with cohorts – April 1, Share Fair – teachers with extra professional development, totally voluntary

**New Business:**

- Subcommittee chairs should contact Cheri if they want to schedule a work day
- Letter from Minority Student Achievement Oversight Committee – arranging a meeting of all advisory committee chairs
- Equity Stakeholder Meeting – March 4
- Email Address – discussion of access agreement – what can we share
  - Connie made a motion that the ACSD approve the draft email access agreement as presented by FCPS. Joanne seconded. 15-0-1. Motion passes.
- Request FCPS to add to website: email address and social media
- Brandon made a motion to write a letter to the VHSL in support of a wheelchair division, which would be lane 1, in track and field. Joanne seconded. Motion passes.

**Announcements:**

- Reel Abilities Film Festival
- Fairfax County Advocacy Night – March 31
- POAC Nova – Trauma – February 29, 1-4 @Lee Community Center
- SEPTA – February 27, 6:30-9, Gatehouse – Special Needs Travel
- I'm Determined – Parent & Youth Summit (13-22) – deadline to apply is coming up
- Super Transition Saturday – February 22 @ Luther Jackson

**Meeting adjourned:** Cheri Belkowitz adjourned the meeting at 10:12 p.m.