

Advisory Committee for Students with Disabilities September 11, 2024

Committee Members in Attendance	Committee Members Absent	Staff and Guest in Attendance
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Elizabeth Zielinski, <i>Chair</i> • Holly Stearns, <i>Vice Chair</i> • Mimi Abdulkadir • Ally Baldassari • David Bean • Jay Berkenbilt • Adriana van Breda • Amanda Campbell • Rachel Charlton • Anita Chinyavong • Shannon Duncan • Susan Edgerton • Carolyn Haydon • Harry Henderson • Colleen Jones • Hope Luong • Lauren McCaughey • Nita Payton • Sonan Sahgal • Rajiv Satsangi • Stephanie Smith • Joanne Walton • Amanda Wittman • Daniel Yeum 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delaney Brooks • Ahsen Cakez • Brandon Cassady • Mary Kay Ciziunas • Daniel Cronnell • Brandis Ruise • Elizabeth Shapiro 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mike Bloom <i>Director, Office of Special Education Instruction</i> • Terri Edmunds-Heard <i>Assistant Superintendent, Department of Special Services</i> • Rachna Seizmore-Heizer <i>School Board Liaison</i> • Kathy Murphy <i>Assistant Ombuds for Special Education</i>

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 7:02 pm. A quorum of committee members were present in the room, no members were participating virtually.

Minutes

Without objection, the minutes of the previous meeting and the agenda were approved by the committee. The chair made brief announcements, including welcome of new and returning

committee members, and a recognition of the event of September 11, 2001. Committee members were reminded that they must sign in at each meeting to have attendance recorded accurately.

Public Comment

Lauren McCaughey: FCPS is moving forward with plans to support twice exceptional students. Members of the public who are interested should be vocal in public forums, including speaking before the School Board.

School Board Liaison Report

Rachna Sizemore-Heizer returns as the School Board Liaison to the ACSD. Her updates included:

1. Ms. Sizemore-Heizer chaired the School Board's Governance Committee last year, during which time the committee looked at two policies related to students with disabilities. She has asked the current chair to send those policies to the ACSD for comment.
2. The School Board is starting its budget process for the year.
3. The state has implemented changes to school accreditation standards for schools, which implements punishments for schools for students who do not graduate on time. However, the new standards do not take into account special education students who benefit from continuing with FCPS until the age of 22.

Committee Operations 2024-2025

The Chair reviewed changes that are being made to the committee's operations during this program year in response to the School Board's updated Community Advisory Committee Operating Manual, approved by the School Board on June 27, 2024. The changes to the committee will be to adhere to the operations manual, and to create greater alignment between the recommendations of the Annual Report with the 2024-2025 School Board Charge and the 2023-2030 FCPS Strategic Plan.

New Business

A motion was made by Holly Stearns, seconded by Joanne Walton as follows:

Motion: The Advisory Committee for Students with Disabilities (ACSD) recommends that it have five subcommittees for the 2024-25 school year, and that those subcommittees align with the five goals of FCPS's Strategic Plan 2023-30. Those five goals are:

1. Strong Start: PreK-12
2. Safe, Supported, Included, and Empowered
3. Academic Growth and Excellence
4. Equitable Access and Opportunity
5. Leading for Tomorrow's Innovation

The School Board's recently updated guidance to its advisory committees makes the former subcommittee structure ineffective for aligning with these goals. The Operating Manual permits the committee to determine the structure of its subcommittees each year, in a manner that best supports the work of the committee.

The ACSD has an update to its bylaws planned for this program year that will incorporate the Operating Manual changes in future years. This motion is necessary to begin this year's work under the terms of the Operating Manual prior to the planned update to the bylaws.

The motion passed by a vote of 22 in favor, none opposed, one member abstaining.

Member Time

Ally Baldassari introduced herself as the FCPS Special Education PTA (SEPTA) representative to the ACSD:

- Members are encouraged to visit the SEPTA website at www.fairfaxcountysepta.org and to attend the group's first meeting on September 24 at 7 p.m.
- SEPTA awards mini-grants to teachers. The fall deadline has passed but another opportunity will be available in the spring.
- SEPTA will again host its IEPalooza, which provides information to parents who are new to the IEP process. The event will take place in November.

Susan Edgerton introduced herself as a member of the Parents of Autistic Children of Northern Virginia (POAC-NOVA). Members are invited to attend the group's meeting on September 21, at which FCPS staff would be present to discuss the upcoming school year.

Amanda Campbell noted that Rolling Valley Elementary School will host a sensory-friendly hour during its haunted house event on October 26.

Closing Remarks

The Chair reminded committee members that they will be receiving an email requesting their preferred subcommittee assignment. Subcommittees will meet prior to the main committee meeting beginning in October, at which time each subcommittee will be tasked with selecting a subcommittee chairperson.

Meeting adjourned at 8:30 pm following a motion of unanimous consent.