

**Local Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC)  
Prince George Public Schools, VA (Region I)**

**Meeting Minutes**

**April 25, 2019**

- **Attendance:** This meeting had nineteen (19) participants. It was the largest gathering of participants at a SEAC meeting in many years. A detailed list of attendees by category are included at the end of these minutes. During the meeting Ms. Jenae Briggs was introduced as the SEAC's newest member.
- Chairperson Lee called the meeting to order at approximately 5:10 pm.
- Two members had contacted the Chairperson and were excused from the meeting.
- **Public Forum Period:** There was a visitor who attended for public comment but he had to leave due to time constraints. He agreed to return at a later date or submit his comment in writing to the Committee. Another parent commented on the successful transfer of her child from Walton to Beazley and her happiness with the environment/support at the new location. There was also a comment on the desire for more inclusionary gym/exercise, art, and music time for children in the special education Pre-K program. Another parent discussed an incident involving her child (who was seen crying during the school day) at JEJ Moore. Special Education staff members responded and then followed up by calling home in the evening to ensure the child was alright. The staff went above and beyond and were complimented for expressing concern about the child. This was well received by the parent.
- **Past Business:**
  - Members reviewed the minutes from the previous two meetings (February 21 and March 21, 2019). The February 21 minutes were approved. The March 21 minutes were held for further review as there were possible additions pending.
- **New Business:**
  - The upcoming workshop on Medicaid Waivers was announced. It will be held on Wednesday May 14, 2019 from 5:00 to 6:30 pm at the Prince George Public Library. Plans and preparation for the event were reviewed and discussed but not finalized. It was agreed to finish the logistical details and volunteer food list via email.
    - Discussions about the event included:
      1. The importance of the topic and the difficulties with the actual waiver process.
      2. Advertising to include all of the usual communication avenues including email, flyers, Facebook posts, and word of mouth in hopes of attracting parent and teacher participation.
      3. Speakers - **Tamie Burns** from PEATC will present.

- There was a considerable amount of discussion on our district's special education web site presence. Many improvements were suggested to include the publication of a Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) section with information that addresses what parents need to do when they find out they have a child who has a disability. There was a suggestion to produce a sequence of steps or a checklist to assist with this issue. Other helpful suggestions discussed included a "drop-down-box" describing the various evaluations. There was also an understanding that there are two different landing pages that contained different information for Special Education and the SEAC. It was agreed that this is confusing to the user. Ms. Ethington committed to consult with the staff responsible for the web site and ensure they make improvements.
- The SEAC Facebook site was discussed and there were suggestions on new posts to include a picture of the special needs swing at Scott Park, previously donated by the Rotary Club. It was discovered that an upcoming event flyer for the Communication Workshop being put on by the Parent Resource Center that was posted on Facebook contained an administrative error. An update will be created and posted. Participation with this site was encouraged and the sharing of information suggested.
- There was a suggestion to use the "Remind" technology to send out information on Special Education and SEAC gatherings to interested parties. The school will establish an opt-in user group for this message service. The Committee agreed that this is a good idea and a great way to disseminate information.
- The final school year meeting date for the SEAC was discussed. Historically, SEAC gatherings were concluded in the month of May but that will be reviewed in the future. June meeting has typically been unsuccessful due to end of school and family vacations.
- Ms. Lee was in receipt of applications for five new SEAC members. She agreed to scan the applications digitally and send them to all the SEAC members to review and vote on electronically.
- There was discussion about the requirements for early childhood education. This inquiry was directed to and responded by Ms. Ethington.
- There was also discussion on the possibility of hiring a behavior expert on staff for the school district or obtaining support from outside sources. The school representative advised these requests have been not approved in the past or limited by budgetary concerns.
- There was considerable discussion regarding parents being able to observe their child in a self-contained classroom. The school representatives advised the current school policy is that parental observation is only permitted if all the parents in the class sign a consent form to allow the observation in self-contained classrooms. If one parent disagrees, the parent making the request is not allowed to observe due to the protected status and privacy of the child. There was discussion on videoing the classrooms as well. These rules do not apply are not used in general education, collaborative, or inclusion classrooms and only applied to the self contained environment. Chairperson Lee asked to review the policy or law that indicated this restriction. Ms. Ethington agreed to get the information to the Committee.
- Prince George County School Board Chair, Bobby Cox, spoke to the SEAC committee and advised there would be a member of the board at each SEAC meeting moving forward. The committee was welcoming and happy to receive the support.

- The Special Olympics Report was given by Ms. Mitchell. During the meeting there were many kudos given to the Special Olympics program.
  - The Torch Run will be held on Jun 6th, 2019.
  - Tip a Cop will be held on Friday, May 3rd, 2019 at Nanny's Restaurant.
  - The Toddler Fair was a great success.
  - There are plans for "Honey Captains" to participate at each Football game. Kids will participate in the coin toss and other game events.
  - The success of the Transition Fair was also mentioned.
- The next meeting will be held on May 23, 2019. The meeting adjourned at approximately 7:20 pm with everyone looking forward to the upcoming workshop.
- LAST ENTRY

### **Members in Attendance**

- William Gandel
- Kathy Mitchell
- Kimberly Lee
- Margie Rosas
- Ritchie Shumate
- Cynthia White
- Mark Simpson
- Kim Shanks
- Jenae Briggs

### **Student Services Office**

- Zetta Ethington
- Jennifer McGuire

### **School Board Members**

- Chris Johnson, School Board Member - 1st School Board Member to attend
- Bobby Cox - School Board Chair - 2nd School Board Member to attend

### **Other Attendees**

- Susan Hager
- Kristin Scoggins
- Kelli Caughman
- Rhonda Hamlin
- Michelle Christ
- Gene Shanks

### **Members Unable to Attend (Excused Absence)**

- Chaundra Taswell
- Adrian Thomas
- Larry Hahn