

Wednesday, September 18, 2024

Special Education Advisory Committee Mtg.

Attendees: Marie Larson, Terrence Jones, Sean McGee, Megan Downes, Stephanie Whitley, Dr. Dawn Marie Brittingham, Jamillah Silver, Patricia Holloman, Matt Booth, Patrice Gantt, Monica Bowles, Marisol Moore, Danielle Horton, Chaquita Kindred, Dr. Cassandra McNair, Kim Warholak, Blythe Johnson Jones, Nanette Solomon-Gaines, Travis Hansin, James Gunther, Nadine Pittman, Melissa Smetts, Holly Boyce, Christy Cole, Kyrsten O'Neill

Online Attendees: Tyrone Riddick, Maurine with Independence Center

Notes

- I. Welcome and Introductions (6:39PM Start)
 - A. Welcome by Kirstyn, SEAC Chair
- II. Announcements and Correspondence
- III. Public Comment
 - A. Ms. Holloman: Asked for clarity of who should be on SEAC Board
 - B. Mr. Jones: Asked why one should apply to be on SEAC when SPS can appoint individuals
 - C. Ms. Maurine from Independence Center (IC): 1) Many youth from Suffolk are going to IC activities. IC would like to see a coordination of an event in the Suffolk area for Suffolk students.
 1. Upcoming Event: Septembers Saturday Meeting is on Public Speaking.
- IV. Special Education Reports
 - A. Directors Report
 1. Introduction of New Department heads
 - a) Dr. McNair introduced herself and her team. Dr. McNair made special mention of the new Department leads/coordinators since our July Meeting:

- (1) Compliance Coordinator: Ms. Solomon-Gaines
 - (2) Secondary (Middle & High): Ms. Bowles
 - (3) Elementary and Transitioning: Ms. Horton
2. Professional Development (PD) Initiatives
 - a) Paras started 3 days early with the new hires for appropriate SPED training
 - b) Administration when through training for high leverage practices, IEP development
 - c) Teachers have mandatory PD
 - (1) Snack Breaks- allow teachers to “hop on” Zoom and have a PD meeting/training.
 3. VCU Autism Center of Excellence- Evidence Practice Course has trained over 80 people through EBP
 4. Upcoming Events:
 - a) October is Disability Awareness Month: Collaborating within school community
 - b) October 30- Big Feet Meet for Middle Schoolers at Lakeland High School. Partnering with Special Olympics

Mr. Jones Commends SPED for the training and successful school start.

V. Old Business

- A. Corrective Audit: SPS is no longer on a corrective audit.
- B. Ordinances 24/25-12: Goes to SPS Board for SEAC to review.

VI. New Business

- A. Approval of July minutes
 1. Dr. McNair asked for clarity on wording in July minutes.
 2. Correction has been made to July Minutes.
- B. Establish Chair, Vice Chair, and Secretary:

1. Ms. Whitley nominates Mrs. O'Neill as Chair
2. Ms. O'Neill suggests that the current board rolls keep their places for the next year. Ms. O'Neill (Chair), Ms. Whitley (Vice Chair), Ms. Cole (Secretary)
 - a) Ms. Downs motioned/ Ms. Kindred second

C. Goals/Sub Committees:

1. Discussion:
 - a) Ms. O'Neill suggested that a survey be sent to parents, community members, and staff members of what they see as needs with SPED.
 - b) Dr. McNair stated that VDOE puts out their own survey, which is a QR code attached to the IEP, and provided at the IEP meeting.
 - c) Ms. Whitney: Can SEAC see the questions asked?
 - d) Dr. Brittingham: Can SEAC get the data from VDOE survey specifically for Suffolk
 - e) Ms. O'Neill suggested an anonymous "box" where people can submit concerns and suggestions
2. Reviewed 2022/2023 and 2023/2024 SEAC goals
 - a) Mr. McGee stated that last year SPED teachers [individuals working with SPED students] were constantly being pulled for other things and not concentrate on their specific students.
 - b) Dr. McNair: Survey taken before she came, but she will look into the outcome.
 - c) Ms. Kindred read the questions from the VDOE survey
 - d) Ms. Whitley suggested SEAC look at survey to assist in establishing committee goals.
 - e) Ms. O'Neill is thankful that the Communications Specialist was present at the meeting and would like to set a goal to get more parents aware of the various forms of communications available.
 - f) Goals need to be established at our November meeting, before SEAC presents to SPS board at the December meeting.

D. Ordinance 24/25-46 Section 9-26: Seclusion and Restraint Policy

1. Ms. O'Neill: Can we get staff up to date on restraint training? Increase the current percent of those properly trained.
2. Dr. McNair reminded attendees that the policy is for everyone and not specific to SPED students.

E. SOL Data:

1. Look at VDOE data
2. Request for a representative from SPS to present to SEAC
3. Ms. Whitley requested that indicator data be available for parents to see the areas that VDOE collects SPED data

VII. Public Comment Review

- A. If someone would like to be a voting member of SEAC fill out name and contact info

VIII. Open Discussion

- A. Mr. Jones hopes to work collaboratively in an open, honest, and fair way; to form a strong SEAC

IX. Adjournment (7:41PM)