

Special Education Advisory Committee
Virginia Beach City Public Schools
 Final SEAC Minutes – December 12, 2011

Attendance

Members Present:	Rayna Amoreno, Deb Dougherty, Sandy Hermann, Cheresse Jenks, Elizabeth Jones, Kara Russell, Carolyn Stark, Jennifer Stratton, Cheryl Ward,
Members Absent	JoAnna Bryant, Ping Camano, Jan Solock, and DRS
Consultants Present:	Priscilla Hawkins, Suzie Kumpf, Dr. Brenda Reid, Dr. Daisy Wood, Jennifer Stratton
Consultants Absent:	Allison Jordan,
Guests:	Ann Abraham, Donald Fairheart (SECEP) Sherry Tiaba, Kathie Updegraff
Quorum Present:	No

Welcome/Introductions

The meeting commenced at 9:10 AM, with Sandy Hermann welcoming everyone present. Individual introductions were made around the room.

Public Comment

There was no public comment.

<u>Announcements</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ None
<u>Correspondence</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sandy Hermann and Cheryl Ward both sent letters requesting reappointment to SEAC. • Sandy Hermann also reported that multiple emails have been received from vendors stating that they feel the Community Resource fair was a success.

Reports

Dr. Daisy Wood, OPEC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dr. Wood presented that VDOE representatives are currently here reviewing VBCPS by conducting a thorough evaluation of the school systems compliance. Sandy Hermann asked if SEAC will provide information to these evaluators and Dr. Wood reported that this data is received through alternate means. Dr. Wood states this is about policy compliance, paperwork, building compliance, staff knowledge (ie: APs). VDOE has reviewed paperwork and are conducting interviews. Membership questioned whether VDOE reviews complaints or the Parent Support and Information Center as part of this process. • Dr. Wood states that there have been several complaints and due process filing this year. Sandy Hermann inquired as to the nature of the issues surrounding recent due process filings and complaints. Dr. Wood reports the biggest issue is accommodations in the general education classrooms. IEP is a legal document and this must be done and all staff must understand how to make the accommodations. Modifying curriculum is not easy and this must
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be understood and presented in a meaningful way in the classroom. 9 out of 11 complaints have been about accommodations. Sandy Hermann asked If they were won or lost to determine if there were global issues impacting special education which SEAC should investigate further. Dr. Wood reported of the complaints that have been filed, some have been sided with the division and others with the parties filing the complaint. Many have been related to having teachers sign off on planners. Dr. Wood indicated many teachers feel the students are leaving before they can be signed and she's not sure this is the most effective method. Cherese Jenks spoke about accommodations and needed accountability from teachers. Cherese reported that there is a lack of communication about the assignments required at home, some teachers communicate and others do not, as noted from her personal experience. Students with disabilities are not always able to effectively communicate that information home later in the day which is why reviewing and signing the planner is an important accommodation. Mrs. Tiaba indicated it shouldn't be considered a win in response to Mrs. Jenks' reference that she "won" her state complaint. Sandy Hermann reminded the committee that SEAC's focus is on general systemic issues and not individual issues and to advise the School Board of the needs of all students with disabilities, not just one, which is what needs to be determined here.

- Dr. Wood reported that the state Aspiring Leader Academy was started about 4 years ago and school divisions were recommended to elect and send one representative. The goal is to build special education leaders due to the complexity of special education. Teachers or other staff can apply or be nominated to go. Two people are chosen and presented to Dr. Merrill. This year Chris Cahoon, a new coordinator, was selected to go. This is a two day trip to Richmond every other month and then this information will be brought back to VBCPS. Dr. Wood plans to always have someone apply to go.
- Dr. Wood reports a large learning curve for the new APs entering the special education world and is hoping to gain information of how to better support them. Her goal is to move the division toward more collaboration and this takes time due to the nature of cultural change. Dr. Wood's wants students with disabilities to be accepted just like students without disabilities. She is striving to bring this forward.
- Cherese Jenks inquired about what VBCPS does when a complaint ends up in the favor of the school system. How does the school system talk about this? Dr. Wood talks to APs in training about the specific issues within the complaint. Additional training has been brought to the schools because of accommodation complaints this year. Webinars are being planned and developed to provide access to information. SEAC inquired about training on who participates in an IEP meeting. SEAC expressed concern about the presence of random teacher representatives who are not a part of the students IEP team and have no knowledge of the student or their individual needs participating in IEP meetings.
- Dr. Wood will come to the next meeting to talk about the Special Education Opportunities Review completed in September. Sandy Hermann requested the results be presented to SEAC at the next meeting.

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Melissa Barnett VBDHS	No representative was present to issue report.
Cheryl Ward Endeppence Center	Cheryl Ward reported that they are working on developing public comments for No Child Left Behind. She is participating on a team working with the Department of Defense studying the military access to Medicaid (such as waivers) and educational services.
Dept. Parks and Rec. Carolyn Stark	Carolyn Stark reported: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 143 individuals were served with Fall programs. • 90-100 families attended the warm winter gathering • Dec. 4, 2011. A parent resource night was hosted Dec. 1, 2011. Dr. Reid shared information on the IEP process and encouraged Teacher/Parent communication and rapport. There were 14 present - 8 attendees that were parents, 6 attendees were staff. • New registration Jan 7 2012 9-12 at Kempsville Recreation Center. • January 13 semiformal dinner and dance, like a prom, 6-8:30 – ages 14 and up. • Parks and Recreation guide can be found online www.vbgov.com/parks
Parent Support and Information Center Dr. Brenda Reid	Dr. Reid presented 2 reports. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • November was very busy this year, possibly due to the Community Resource Fair and military families moving to the area. • Dr. Reid asked for suggestions on how to increase parent participation at PCI trainings due to low participation. • Dr. Reid requested members to share the Special Education Parent Involvement Survey from the state with parents to encourage participation. • Let's Get Organized is tomorrow night and 2 are currently registered for the event. <p>For more information please contact Dr. Reid at 263-2066 or by email Brenda.Reid@vbschools.com.</p>
Dept. of Rehab. (DRS)	No representative was present to provide a report.
Jennifer Stratton C&I	No report/ activity reported.

SEAC Standing Subcommittees

Membership Subcommittee Chair: Kara Russell	No other information except for the 2 letters received discussed as correspondence above.
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Policy Review Subcommittee Chair: Sandy Hermann	Sandy Hermann – no activity – Waiting on review of the Companion Service Animal Policy by division attorneys.
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SEAC Ad Hoc Subcommittees:

SEAC Effectiveness Chair: JoAnna Bryant	No report/activity reported.
Minority Review Cheryl Ward	No report/activity reported.
Disability Awareness Subcommittee Chereese Jenks	No activity – plans to meet in January.
Annual Report Committee Chair: Former: Sara MacDonald	No activity
Transportation Subcommittee Carolyn Stark	Carolyn Stark – reviewing the Transportation Training Manual and making changes in content. The changes will be shared with SEAC and they are hoping to get the information to transportation prior to training scheduled in January.
Inclusion Subcommittee Rayna Amorena	Rayna Amoreno stated there was a meeting in October. The results of that meeting will be presented to SEAC today on New Business.

SEAC Representatives

VBCPS Transition Advisory Committee Meeting (JoAnna Bryant/Kara Russell)	No report/activity reported
SECEP Joint Board Meeting	No report/activity reported

VBCPS Curriculum for Students with Moderate to Severe Disabilities Committee SEAC Rep: JoAnna Bryant	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This committee has been disbanded. Elizabeth Jones identified that the UNIQUE curriculum is being used and feels it is able to meet a variety of different levels within the classroom. It is identified as a resource to support the general education curriculum. • Jenniffer Stratton identified that every teacher in an ID classroom should have received ELSB – Early Literacy Skill Builder – training. (72 teachers meet this criteria.). • Ms. Jones reports that she, as an ID teacher, has yet to receive this
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	<p>training. Jennifer Stratton states that all teachers should be using this reading program to evaluate data to determine if its use will continue. She states they are piloting “Read Well” in 8 cross cat classrooms. She offered to bring some information on this to the next SEAC meeting.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cheryl Ward and Sandy Hermann expressed concerns as to why not all teachers have received this information. There were concerns about the fact that the principals were asked to invite their teachers to the training. All teachers were to be invited and this was not done. There was a discussion that the principals are asked to share information with the staff and Jenifer Straton was sad to hear that this information was not passed on. • Sandy Hermann requested that we identify how many ID teachers and classrooms are present in VBCPS. Jennifer Straton reported that the training was targeted at Pembroke Elementary, due them having to 7 ID teachers. Per Mrs. Jones, there were no representatives from Pembroke. SEAC expressed concern about this. <p>Questions for OPEC to Clarify:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>A formal request from SEAC will be made to identify how many ID teachers and classrooms are present in VBCPS. We want to compare this to the number that received the ELSB training.</i> • <i>Which school's didn't have representatives at this ELSB training?</i>
School Board Representative	No report/activity reported

OLD Business

Community Resource Fair Recap

Sandy Hermann reported it was a big success with approximately 100 vendors with good reviews.

- Cherese Jenks presented information from the parent surveys:
 - 141 survey completed – 302 guests. 104 yes to having a child or family member with a disability. 2 listed as self-advocates. Age groups – 7 5 year olds, 8 11 year olds, 9 17 year olds – top groups. Types of disability - #1, 35 with Asperger’s or ASD, 17 with CP, 11 with down syndrome. 67 of surveys were VBCPS school attendees. 8 preschool, 25 elementary, 14 middle school, 27 high school. 51 heard about program from school flyers, North Landing Elementary had 28 responding to this info, TCC was another big source, 9 – professor Leo, VBCPS website. Issues of importance – PreK top 3 IEP implementation, related services, curriculum Elementary – top 3 IEP implementation, curriculum, related services and accommodations. Middle school – 3 top spots – accommodations, curriculum, IEP implementation – then transition and transportation. High school - #1 by FAR was transition, curriculum, IEP implementation. 45 would attend more meetings if more evening meetings. 57 were aware of the parent resource center 18 Not aware. 16 responses to services needed --- services private school, disability benefits and life after school, transition services, training lending library, parents on IEP team, advocacy and community centers. 20 responses to questions regarding what SEAC does – PreK - Lack of staffing for support for nonambulatory students, visual learning accomadations, Elementary – after school care and extracurricular activities for special needs kids, Middle school – wider bridges implementation, Montgomery county MD reference and TX, teacher training, considerations for physical disabilities, more info on IEP report cards (SP not enough), male vs female teachers, High school – transition –
 - Suzie Kumpf requested that a thank you letter come for her door prize brought to the resource fair.

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Discussion was held regarding keeping a list in future years to help with this problem.

- Tabled Meet and Greet Recap due to Joanna Bryant not here.
- Tabled the Inclusion presentation due to absence of OPEC representatives.
- SECEP program – New name to reflect person first language. Information will be reported back at the next meeting.
- Allison Jordan indicated once review is finalized she will provide it back to the subcommittee for review.

New Business

- A secret ballot was held to vote on reappoint for Sandy Hermann and Cheryl Ward. If voted in favor of reappointment their reappointment request letters will be presented to the School Board, hopefully December 20, 2011. SEAC membership resignation letter from Sara MacDonald due to relocation will also, be included. Secret ballot vote determined to forward reappointment request from Sandy and Cheryl to the School Board December 20 for information and for vote on January 3, 2012.
- Secretary Nominations – Sandy Hermann requested the Nominating subcommittee meet to determine potential nominees. Chereese Jenks said she would volunteer but would require a tape recording accommodation. Sandy Hermann clarified this would only be for purposes of secretary minutes. Discussion was held to check with the school attorney or FOIA regarding this accommodation.
- Three representatives were chosen – Kara Russell, Carolyn Stark, and Cheryl Ward for the nominating committee. The information Sandy receives will be sent to everyone and the nominating committee will illicit interest for secretary. (April)
- The Inclusion presentation was tabled until the January meeting because OPEC representatives had to leave prior to the presentation due to on sight VDOE compliance monitoring.

Other Business - None

Review of Public Comment - None

Chereese Jenks motioned to adjourn the meeting and Rayna Amoreno seconded. The meeting was adjourned by Sandy Hermann at 11:15 AM.

Next SEAC Meeting: January 9, 2012 ■ 9:00 a.m. at the Special Education Annex, Room 25