

**Fairfax County Advisory Committee for Students with Disabilities (ACSD)
Meeting Minutes
May 6, 2020**

Member Name		Organization	Attendance
Darcy	Acquavella	City of Fairfax School Board	P
Laura	Allen	Region 5	
Joe	Alston	Member at Large (Moon)	
Ally	Baldassari	SEPTA	P
Michael	Beattie	Disability Services Board	
Cheri	Belkowitz *	Springfield District	P
Liz	Brocato	Braddock District	P
Brandon	Cassady	Hunter Mill District	P
Sandi	Dallhoff ***	Department of Neighborhood & Community Services	
Debbie	DeJacques	Region 3	R
Susan	Edgerton	POAC - NOVA	P
Judy	Farabaugh	Member at Large (McElveen)	R
Mary Kate	Ganley	Student Representative	
Meghan	Gray	Lee District	P
Mary	Hackman	Providence District	P
Harry	Henderson	Mason District	P
Lissy	John	Dranesville District	E
Lynn	Kiewel	Fairfax County Health Department	
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	
Melissa	Morrison	Region 1	
Phara	Rodrigue	Member at Large (Keys-Gamarra)	P
Michael	Simon	Sully District	
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	
* Chair **Vice-Chair *** Secretary			P = Present E = Excused Absence R = Resigned

FCPS Staff Who Were Present:

- Teresa Johnson, Assistant Superintendent for Special Services
- Mike Bloom, Director of the Office of Special Education Instruction
- Mary Beth Harrison-Cunningham, Director of the Parent Resource Center
- Jane Strong, Director of the Office of Procedural Support
- Ellie Stack, Coordinator of Adapted Curriculum
- Dawn Clements, Assistant Ombudsman for Special Education

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School Board Members Present:

- Stella Pekarsky, Sully District (Committee Liaison)
- Rachna Sizemore Heizer, At-Large

This meeting was held virtually via Blackboard Collaborate Ultra and live-streamed on FCPS channel 99. Public comment was submitted electronically.

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 5:03 p.m. by Cheri Belkowitz

Agenda & Minutes:

- Connie presented the minutes. Joanne motioned to approve the March minutes as presented. Brandon seconded. The motion passed unanimously.
- Connie introduced the agenda for the meeting. The agenda was revised by Ally, who added a discussion of a commendation of FCPS to the agenda. Joanne motioned to approve the agenda as presented. Brandon seconded. The motion passed unanimously

Public Comment

- Nicole Zupan is an enhanced autism teacher. She is concerned about options for students who have not been able to adapt to the current distance learning model, options for ESY, whether in person or virtual, and options for the fall/next school year.
- Jenna White is a parent and FCCPTA's liaison to Fairfax County's Trauma Informed Community Network. "As we go through this global pandemic as a school community, we are more aware than ever of the social- emotional and mental health needs of our students, families and staff. While there is a great deal of work underway to meet this challenge, I urge this group to also understand and advocate for the needs of those who came into this crisis with an existing trauma background. People who have already experienced ongoing trauma due to things like abuse or neglect, violence, poverty and chronic instability, or immigrant and refugee experiences, have brains that have been wired differently and we must recognize and understand that science. The work to be a trauma informed school system and community is more important than ever before, please advocate for the awareness, resources and staffing to do this comprehensive work."

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Parent Resource Center News:

- Mary Beth Harrison-Cunningham, Director of the PRC, provided an update. The ACES Workshop referenced by Jenna White is available on the PRC YouTube. The PRC is still providing services to families virtually. Two webinars (150 attendees) now on YouTube: Supporting Students in COVID19 and Helping Your Child Organize During Distance Learning. Upcoming webinars - Friday, May 8: Family Wellness at 10 am. Friday, May 15: Behavior When Kids are Home 24/7 – they have closed registration for this one because there are 250 max attendees in the webinars. Friday, May 22: Behavior Intervention Teachers - Motivating Adolescents. All will be recorded and put onto YouTube. In summer, there will be more webinars and virtual storytimes. They are planning on continuing virtually into the fall. They are also continuing to provide consultations to families.

- **Ally Baldassari** presented the text of a commendation for the Office of Special Education Instruction, which the members will vote on at a future meeting.

I move for the ACSD to commend the Office of Special Education Instruction for their openness to new ideas and bold change in efforts to affect a truly vulnerable student population.

Whereas; the special education update Mr. Bloom gave to the ACSD on March 11 included the news that Dr. Ross Greene, creator of the Collaborative and Proactive Solutions and founder of the non-profit Lives in the Balance, would provide training to administrators of CSS programs. Further, plans were to consider expanding training in the Collaborative and Proactive Solutions approach into the 2020-2021 year. While the April 2nd training had to be cancelled, Mr. Bloom has communicated they do intend to reschedule this training as soon as possible, and that what they learn from spending a day with Dr. Greene would inform bringing his approach to all CSS sites and three specific public day schools.

Whereas; This decision has been to the delight of stakeholders like the Special Education PTA, and groups with advocacy around reducing restraint and seclusion. The groups see Dr. Greene's model as more compassionate to students whose school site placement reflects their difficulty in meeting expectations and exhibiting pro-social behavior. These stakeholders also know that Dr. Greene's model is a complete departure from the current behavior management systems used in CSS and Public Day School sites, which follow "behaviorism" models, such as the point-and-level system.

Whereas, The ACSD believes consideration for adopting a fully different behavior management model represents investing in, and weighing, a bold and difficult action. Dr. Greene himself admits performing his model effectively takes immense practice. The change would surely necessitate numerous trainings and extra support from teams from the central office. The willingness of the Office of Special Education Instruction to make such an investment, and open themselves to big change, is truly commendable.

Therefore, be it resolved that the ACSD requests the Director of the Office of Special Education Instruction, Michael Bloom, to please accept this as an official commendation of his office from the Advisory Committee for Students with Disabilities.

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Distance Learning Update:

Teresa Johnson presented about the Special Services Distance Learning Plan. This presentation was also given to the school board and is available on BoardDocs.

- Supports and services for distance learning cannot be a substitute for in-person learning
- Early Childhood Curriculum vs. Adapted Curriculum vs. General Curriculum – both online and offline activities that need parent support. Ages 2-5: packets by mail, synchronous and asynchronous activities. K-12 adapted: packets by mail; synchronous and asynchronous. K-12 gen ed: receive supplemental packet in addition to grade level.
- Special Education Teachers: plan synchronous and asynchronous activities, connect with students, create community
- Related Service Providers: SLPs, OT/PT, school psychologists and social workers – small group and individualized instruction in virtual/online settings – collaborate with teachers and parents – parental consent must be obtained for online services
- Hearing & Vision – collaborating for supports, captioning, braille, etc.
- APE teachers, BITs, ABA coaches, ATS – providing consultation to teachers
- Substance Abuse Prevention Specialists, Restorative Justice Practitioners, MTSS – collaborating
- Federal and VDOE guidance – because COVID19 is beyond the control of the division, need to prioritize health and safety, be flexible and consider a variety of delivery options
- Temporary Learning Plans (TLP) designed to manage student needs – not an IEP – distance learning is not offering instruction in the same way or amount – parent signature indicates agreement but is not a waiver of rights – IEPs will be implemented as soon as in-school operations resume. There are 28,400 students with IEPs: TLP documents selected goals, accommodations, and services that will be delivered via distance learning. Will not contain the same set of services or with the same frequency, or be in person
- Required trainings – teaching special education online, distance learning, accommodations toolbox, related services, procedural supports, IEP meetings in online/virtual format, TLP training, principal trainings, PSLs have been providing support for school staff
- Resources for parents provided on Blackboard 24/7: Early Childhood, Adapted/General, Distance Learning Packet, Additional Supports. Resources also available for Teachers on Blackboard
- FCPS Website for Distance Learning, Special Education FAQs also
- Focusing on fidelity of implementation with DSS and Region Leaders
- Thanks to staff, especially Mike, Jane, and Ellie.

- Question about whether a family is waiving their rights to compensatory services by executing a TLP. Jane Strong noted that signing the TLP does not prohibit families from requesting compensatory services at a later date.
- What should parents do to get related services if they are not specified in the TLP? Providers should be collaborating with teachers and parents to determine what is possible for the child.
- Are goals being measured? Teachers should keep data with regards to what students are doing but cannot be measured in a typical way. If parents have questions after speaking with the provider and/or case manager, please contact the PSL.

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- Issues with students in a self-contained classrooms not receiving synchronous instruction with the same amount of time and also not receiving new instruction. Parents should contact teacher, case worker, principal, Region superintendent, PSL, or ombudsman.
- Are goals the same? Or being watered down? Variety of experiences among committee members.
- Why the TLP vs. IEP addendum? To make things simpler with over 28,000 IEP teams to meet/eliminate paperwork.

ESY Plan:

Mike Bloom and **Ellie Stack** presented on proposed scenarios for feedback before presenting to the school board. Not discussing consult or other options for individual students.

- Typically class-based ESY is held in the month of July, but face-to-face attendance in July is not likely. Want to decide next week (week of May 11)
- Scenario 1: distance learning June 29-July 24. Staff, families, and students are now familiar with online tools, safer than face-to-face for vulnerable students and staff, can remain open no matter what is happening. Fewer staff required, but what would their availability be, can't replicate face-to-face. Technology access/support is still a concern, include packets but structure them differently, provide both asynchronous/synchronous sessions. Costs for curriculum/licenses, printing/mailing packets, but reduced costs for staff, transportation
- Scenario 2: face-to-face, August 3-13, 15-20 hours per week, would be best for students, but social distancing difficult, unclear on availability of buildings and staff. Need masks, gloves, materials, cleaning measures, set-up time. Might need more staff, busing, plus extra PPE/cleaning, staff hours would be reduced
- PAC – Preschool Autism Classroom – typically starts in July. Same scenarios. Scenario 1: distance learning in July or Scenario 2: face-to-face in August.
- What about families who don't have access to WiFi? Telephone calls are a possibility. More MiFis are not available or on back-order.
- What considerations are being made if distance learning needs to be more long-term?
- How will learning packets be utilized and revised? Summer packets should be skill focused rather than content focused in the various academic disciplines.
- IEP teams should be able to choose other scenarios that are not out of the two proposed class-based scenarios.
- How do we share success stories to help with improvements for ESY and possibly next year?
- Concerns about the long gap between the end of the school year and potential face-to-face session, what if face-to-face is chosen and then has to be cancelled due to a spike in cases?
- What about hybrid learning for ESY vs. next school year?
- What about specific reading programs? These programs are not all designed for distance learning and many publishers are not permitting their use in a virtual setting.

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COVID-19 Discussion:

- Cheri is frustrated that the ACSD was not included in the beginning stages of planning the distance learning roll-out.
- Brandon would like to see summer school be offered more broadly rather than just for special education, like summer term in college. Teresa said summer school for general education students is being considered by a different group and proposals will be presented at Monday's school board work session.
- Erin said there are a lot of crisis-related needs among people with disabilities and with limited resources. Lack of structure for people with developmental disabilities is causing a lot of trauma.
- Ally is an ABA instructional assistant and is looking for ways to contribute. She thinks IAs are being underutilized.
- Toby asked about annual IEP hours/how they are being written for the end of the school year.
- Connie mentioned concern about trauma among students with disabilities, a theme that has been shared by many in the meeting. Resources for mental health and social-emotional supports are available on the FCPS website. This will be a priority from the district going into next year.
- Ally asked for elementary students, how can gen ed / special education packets be aligned?
- Cheri asked if high school students have appointments with transition specialists to work on career planning during this time.
- Brandon asked about accommodations for the packets that are being sent out, specifically for students who have vision impairments.
- Phara asked about students with complex medical issues and how they will be handled in the next school year. Planning is still in the early stages.

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Announcements:

- Mike discussed scheduling our next meeting to discuss the subcommittee reports for our annual report. Presentations to the school board will be rescheduled but we're not sure when. Will subcommittees need to amend their reports based on the current situation we are in? Would June or September be better for reporting? We also need a nominating committee and elections.
- Connie motioned to hold the regularly scheduled meeting virtually on May 13 at 5 pm and Joanne seconded. The motion passed unanimously.
- Nominating committee: Phara, Brandon, Meghan – try to finalize the nominations for next Wednesday, so that we can vote in June.

Meeting adjourned: Cheri Belkowitz adjourned the meeting at 7:31 p.m.