

**Fairfax County Advisory Committee for Students with Disabilities (ACSD)  
DRAFT Meeting Minutes  
May 12, 2021**

Member Name		Organization	Attendance
Darcy	Acquavella	City of Fairfax School Board	P
Ally	Baldassari ***	SEPTA	E
Sanaa	Bouzit	Member at Large-Abrar Omeish	P
Liz	Brocato	Braddock District-Megan McLaughlin	P
Brandon	Cassady	Hunter Mill District-Melanie Meren	E
Sandi	Dalhoff	Neighborhood & Community Services	P
Susan	Edgerton	Member at Large-Rachna Sizemore-Heizer	P
Mary Kate	Ganley	Student Representative	P
James	Gillespie	Fairfax/Falls Church Community Services Board	E
Meghan	Gray	Lee District-Tamara Derenak Kaufa	P
Mary	Hackman	Providence District-Karl Frisch	P
Harry	Henderson	Mason District-Ricardy Anderson	P
Lissy	John	Dranesville District-Elaine Tholen	P
Lynn	Kiewel	Fairfax Co. Health Dept.	E
Andrienne	Konstas	League of Women Voters	
Toby	Latham	Springfield District-Laura Jane Cohen	P
Connie	Lorentzen *	Mount Vernon District-Karen Corbett Sanders	P
Rachel	Macias	Region 4- -Jay Pearson-Assistant Superintendent	P
Linda	Mason	Higher Education	
Phara	Rodrigue	Member at Large-Karen Keys Gamarra	P
Brianne	Russell-Morris	POAC-NoVA	P
Michael	Simon	Sully District-Stella Pekarsky	E
Dena	Sonneborn	Region 3-Nardos King-Assistant Superintendent	E
Joanne	Walton**	Faculty	P
Ann-Marie	Ward ***	Fairfax County Council PTA	P
Niki	Zimmerman	Region 2-Fabio Zuluaga-Assistant Superintendent	P
<b>* Chair **Vice-Chair *** Secretary</b>			<b>P = Present E = Excused Absence R = Resigned</b>

**FCPS Staff Who Were Present:**

- Michelle Boyd, Assistant Superintendent, Department of Special Services
- Mike Bloom, Director of Special Education Instruction
- Jane Strong, Director of Procedural Support
- Dawn Clements, Assistant Ombudsman for Special Education

**School Board Members Present:**

- Rachna Sizemore Heizer, At-Large, Committee Liaison
- Karen Keys-Gamarra, At-Large

**This meeting was held virtually via Blackboard Collaborate Ultra and live-streamed on the FCPS website. The meeting was recorded. Public comment was submitted electronically.**

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**Call to Order:** The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Connie Lorentzen.

**Agenda & Minutes:**

- Ann-Marie presented the minutes from the April 2021 meeting. Joanne made a motion to approve the minutes as presented. Niki seconded. The motion passed unanimously.
- Ann-Marie introduced the agenda for the meeting. Connie amended the agenda to include Joanne reading the public comment in lieu of Ally, Mike presenting the PRC update in lieu of Mary Beth, and the Nominating Committee reporting after New Business. Joanne made a motion to accept the agenda as amended. Niki seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

**Public Comment:**

- Marissa Goldsmith submitted a written comment about home instruction for children with complex medical needs.
- Michelle Cades submitted a video comment about twice exceptional students and literacy instruction in FCPS.
- Donna Genelin submitted a written comment about students with visual impairments and the services they receive in FCPS.
- Laura Baker submitted a video comment about twice exceptional students and the need for a division-wide specialized program for these students.
- Fairfax County Special Education PTA submitted a written comment about the limited virtual school options for school year 2021-22.
- Jill & Mike Calsetta submitted a written comment about difficulties in retaining their child with complex communication needs.
- Lauren McCaughey submitted a video comment about twice-exceptional students.

**Transcripts of the public comments are appended to the minutes.**

**Attendance Report:**

- There are 26 appointed members who serve on the ACSD. A quorum is established with 14 members present. There were 19 members present at tonight's meeting. FCPS staff in attendance included Mike Bloom, Director of Special Education Instruction, Dawn Clements, Assistant Ombudsman for Special Education, Jane Strong, Director of Procedural Support, and Dr. Michelle Boyd, Assistant Superintendent, Department of Special Services. The school board liaison to the ACSD, Rachna Sizemore Heizer, and school board member Karen Keys-Gamarra were also present.

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**Parent Resource Center News**

- Mike Bloom shared an update about the Parent Resource Center on behalf of Mary Beth Harrison-Cunningham. PRC staff will be returning to Dunn Loring Center full time on July 1. The PRC will be open for library materials and consultations, by appointment. E-books are ready for checkout. See the PRC website for details. Updated webpage of digital resources. Contact [prc@fcps.edu](mailto:prc@fcps.edu) for ideas for summer camps for children with special needs. May and June webinars include COVID 19 vaccine webinars, ST Math Updates, Conversations about the Pandemic and Strategies to Have a Great Summer. Don't forget to check out the PRC YouTube channel.

**School Board Update**

- Rachna shared that budget season continues. Next year's budget includes a neurodiversity specialist and trauma informed specialist. They are focused on recovery services and summer school planning as well as planning for Fall 2021. Public Engagement Committee is revising the requirements, processes, and procedures for advisory committees. Advisory committee seats are currently added by revising the governance manual, but they are hoping to have the new recommendations soon.

**Presentation: Twice Exceptional (2e) Learners**

- Beth Baldwin, Advanced Academics office, and Janeen Waddell, Behavior Intervention Services, presented about support for twice exceptional learners in FCPS. They shared a video for staff and parents about twice exceptional students and the 2e handbook.
- Next steps after the handbook include district-wide and school-based training, utilizing a student profile and team-based approach.
- Questions included if training is happening during virtual learning – yes, including the AAP summer institute. This is optional PD. 2e class for one credit. 45-minute asynchronous video in MyPDE. How can we focus on other types of exceptionality, not just academic? Are we including PSLs to promote consistency throughout the division? Yes, and also other support staff, such as school psychologists. How are you collaborating with other school divisions, like Montgomery County? They are working together to share resources with each other. What recommendations from the AAP program review have been implemented? Hoping to get AARTs in middle school.

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**Special Education Update:**

- Dawn Clements shared a 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter update from the Ombudsman's office. Total cases: 305, general cases: 63, special education: 37 (general information – FCPS policies about attendance, restraint/seclusion/private nursing and points of contact, instruction – grouping of students, resource availability, behavioral supports, covid 19 – return to school cohorts, in-person instruction, masking, procedures/compliance – IEP implementation, IEP procedures and timelines, 504, eligibility, issues with staff, consent/appeal), employee cases: 205 (significant increase regarding unemployment claims of transportation and food service employees). 571-423-4014, [ombudsman@fcps.edu](mailto:ombudsman@fcps.edu) – [www.fcps.edu/ombudsman](http://www.fcps.edu/ombudsman)
- Dr. Boyd addressed the comments about virtual instruction for 2021-22 and said more information will be coming in the next few weeks. They are excited about the approval of the vaccine for 12–15-year-olds and information from FCPS about vaccine access will be coming. Updates to staffing changes will be coming at the June meeting.
- Mike Bloom shared about Dr. Greene's work with FCPS. Collaborative and Proactive Solutions approach. 5 different meetings so far. Groupings of staff (BITs, ABAs, adaptive curriculum, central office staff, principals and administrators, resource teachers, security staff). Smaller groups to follow up about challenges/barriers as they roll-out training. Targeting specific schools first? Meetings will continue to finalize training plans.
- The virtual Special Education conference was very successful. 900 people registered but because all sessions are recorded and saved on the website, all members of the community can benefit from the 40+ workshops.
- Jane Strong shared that they are monitoring ESY and recovery services that are being added to IEPs leading up to summer.

**Old Business:**

- Connie thanked the staff on the virtual Special Education Conference Planning Committee, Karen Hawley, & Melissa Johnson, and the ACSD Liaison on the Conference Planning Committee, Susan Edgerton.
- Winners of the First Class Award, awarded at the Special Education Conference. Awards will be given to staff personally at their schools:
  - Elementary Category  
Michael Chierichella, 5th Grade Gen Ed, Coates ES
  - Middle School Category  
Keely Norris, Cat B Lead Teacher, Glasgow MS  
Julie Tiss, LD Teacher, Rocky Run MS  
Allie Ojeh, LD Teacher, Herndon MS

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- High School Category  
Mark Thompson, Cat B Department Chair/Multiple Disabilities Teacher, McLean HS  
Deb Opalesky, Speech & Language Pathologist, McLean HS  
Anna Southworth, Employment and Transition Representative (ETR), McLean HS
  
- Central Office Category  
Eric Fleming & Mary Beth Fleming, Assistive Technology Services

**Chair Update & New Business:**

- Connie shared that committee members are invited to join the Equity Action Plan Focus Group on May 26, 7-9 pm. Please email Connie for more details.

**Nominating Committee:**

- Sandi Dalhoff presented a partial slate for candidates. Thanks to Ally, Toby, Lissy, and Darcy for their help.

Ally Baldassari, Secretary  
Joanne Walton, Vice Chair

Need another secretary and a chair.

This will be Connie's last year on the committee.

**Member Time:**

- Sandi shared that staff is needed for the Therapeutic Recreation camps this summer.
- SEPTA Awards live on May 22, 7 pm.

Next ACSD meeting is June 9, 7 pm – 9 pm.

**Meeting adjourned:** Connie adjourned the meeting at 9:08 p.m.

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**Public Comment**

Marissa Goldsmith

I want to talk about home instruction for children with complex medical needs, and how FCPS can improve home instruction for all children who need it whenever they need it, not just during the COVID crisis. My 9-year-old daughter, who has an 18-page long IEP, had several surgeries over the course of two years. She missed a lot of school. She spent much of it recovering at home or at a rehab hospital. During that time, she qualified for home instruction. But the offering was extremely limited. Specifically:

- Remote instruction was never presented as an option.
- She received no instruction for the eight week she spent in a rehab hospital, even though we had time and availability.
- When she was home, she received 30 minutes 3 times a week. But only after 4pm. That was when her pain medication wore off. We had no flexibility with scheduling.
- It was extremely difficult to find a teacher to teach the special education curriculum we needed. We didn't even know if we had a teacher until the day before home instruction began.
- When she returned to school between surgeries, the home instruction waiting period of two weeks restarted.
- We weren't allowed to use any technology to do something as simple as streaming into the occasional morning meeting.

For us, home instruction was no instruction. With our pandemic experience soon to be in the rear-view, I hope that FCPS recognizes that remote instruction is not only possible, but at times necessary. In the post-pandemic era, I want FCPS to think of home instruction as more than just an annoying legal requirement. FCPS should be a leader in home instruction for children in medically complex situations. This means some level of remote instruction, during school hours, by qualified teachers, for those children whose condition means they cannot physically be in school, even if just temporarily.

Donna Genelin

Thank you for your dedication to 2e students, a population which includes gifted blind/low vision students. FCPS must commit to establishing equally high expectations for gifted, blind/low vision students (and all blind/low vision students) by providing equal access to braille technology, braille materials, and braille instruction. Currently, FCPS reports Vision Department staffing and technology to be sufficient; however, such resource allocations have been determined using data which does not represent the needs of all braille learners. Recently, FCPS reported that of "325 VI students served by the district, 88 are identified as being primary braille readers." That number of "primary braille readers" was then used to justify the number of braille embossers (braille printers) needed by the district. This math resulted in a 4:1 ratio of students to braille embossers, a ratio which was deemed acceptable by the FCPS. However, this formula is problematic because it leaves out MOST braille learners in the district, including those who are most at risk of low literacy rates. According to IDEA, braille is THE assumed reading medium of ALL kids who qualify for an IEP under blindness/visual impairment, unless a formal assessment is done which determines braille to be inappropriate. So does that mean that of the 325 B/VI kids in FCPS, the district did an assessment on 237 of these students which determined braille is not

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appropriate? More than likely, there are many more students who are learning braille and do not yet have the braille reading skills and access to braille materials needed to use it exclusively (or predominantly). Calculating staffing and/or technology needs based only on the small number of students identified as being “primary braille readers” leaves out the following groups of braille learners:

- dual-media learners: students who use some amount of both print and braille (and therefore need to learn both for sustainable literacy)
- students who are learning braille because their vision will likely change (for example, students with glaucoma or other conditions who are currently at least partially sighted but likely to go suddenly or progressively blind)
- students who are learning braille because, while their vision may be stable, their reading needs are likely to change due to increased text demands (for example, students who have enough vision to read large pre-K/K texts, but not enough to read 2nd grade texts which are longer and in smaller font)
- students who are learning braille but do not yet have the skills needed to read braille exclusively (for example, due to inequitable instruction or lack of materials)

All of these braille learners need access to braille instruction, braille materials, and braille technology, just as their fully-sighted peers learning to read print need access to print instruction, print materials, and print technology. In fact, most braille learners fit into one or more of the categories listed above. Even students who ultimately end up being defined as a “primary braille reader” often start out in one of the groups listed above when they are first learning to read. Most blind people have more vision than Hollywood stereotypes would have us believe; many blind people have enough vision to see some print, but not enough vision to read print sustainably. It is these blind/low vision students who are most at risk for low literacy rates because they do not have the vision to sustainably, equitably read print, and they are too often denied access to the instruction, materials, and tech needed for equitable braille literacy. When braille learners can see even a small amount print, they are often defined as being primary print readers or dual-media readers, even if only braille offers true, sustainable literacy. Misallocation of resources negatively impacts all VI students, all braille learners, and all teachers of VI students because this faulty math results in short staffing and insufficient tech resources, even as numbers appear to be sufficient to someone unfamiliar with braille needs. So what next steps are needed to remedy this situation? To start, FCPS should conduct an audit of VI student IEPs to determine the total number of students who are learning braille. Next, FCPS should recalculate resource allocations based on the total number of braille learners, rather than simply the total number of students identified as being primary braille readers, in order to provide for all of the students who need braille instruction, braille materials, and braille technology. Equipped with accurate data, FCPS needs to then ensure that every braille learner (not just every primary braille reader) has appropriate access to braille instruction, braille reading materials, and braille technology including refreshable braille displays and/or braille notetakers and braille embossers. Finally, FCPS should investigate the possibility of providing fully-accessible electronic textbooks or other fully-accessible mass-distributed literacy materials for all students in order to provide more consistent, easily-deliverable access for all. However, change must start by first identifying the true number of all students who are learning to read braille; this number is likely far greater than the 88 primary braille readers currently receiving resource allocation. Thank you for your attention to this matter and for working to ensure equitable literacy for blind/low vision students.

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Fairfax County Special Education PTA

Last week, Fairfax County Council PTA and Fairfax County SEPTA wrote to the School Board & FCPS Leadership to express concerns about the limited virtual schooling option for the 2021-2022 school year, both in the application process and the implementation. Here, we will summarize these concerns, which we heard from a variety of community members. First, there are questions about whether the rigid, selective virtual option is within the regulations set by the Virginia Legislature. The enacted bill reads, “Any local school board may, for any period during which the Governor's declaration of a state of emergency due to the COVID-19 pandemic is in effect, provide fully remote virtual instruction to any enrolled student upon the request of such student's parent, guardian, or legal custodian.” By limiting which students qualify for the virtual option, this seems to be in direct violation of these regulations. Limiting enrollment to high-risk students but not students from high-risk households put families in a terrible position where they must send a young student who cannot yet be vaccinated to school and risk exposure being brought home to a high-risk or medically fragile sibling, parent, or other household member. These households want their children to be back in school, and keeping their children home is, in itself, a tremendous sacrifice that they make in order to keep their at-risk family members healthy. The tight timeline that FCPS released on Wednesday, 5/5, requiring families to respond with initial intent by May 9th, was entirely unreasonable. Being notified by email on Wednesday, 5/5/21, that their intention decision must be submitted by Sunday, 5/9/21, allowed families only two full business days to respond to FCPS. This window did not give families a reasonable nor sufficient amount of time to consult with their medical and mental health providers for their required expert input into the families’ medical decisions for their students. Requiring that the official request form be completed by a care provider by 5/21/21 does not give families adequate time to set appointments to meet with their providers and have providers complete the paperwork required, particularly putting an additional burden on families who rely on public health services and creating an inequitable hurdle for low-income FCPS families. Many questions have been raised regarding the semester-long commitment to virtual learning. Given that Pfizer just announced that they plan to seek emergency authorization for children ages 5-11 in early September, there is a very real likelihood that all K-12 students will have access to a vaccine within a few weeks of school starting. Demanding that parents keep their fully vaccinated children at home until midway through the school year puts an undue burden on parents and deprives students of the best practice of in-person education, the deprivation of which is also counter to the guidance from the American Academy of Pediatrics that FCPS cited on their social media this morning. We question to what extent these shifting plans were thoroughly considered, including factors such as accurate headcounts of potential virtual students and the cost effectiveness of establishing a centralized virtual program versus livestreaming regular class instruction to students as is sometimes done for Homebound Students. How difficult will it be to shift master schedules midway through the year when the virtual students return to school? How difficult will it be to hire additional special education teachers midyear? Consider the concept of livestreaming regular in-person instruction with an IA to facilitate interactions with at-home students. Assistive technology applications can be used to convert pictures of worksheets or other materials into writable PDFs. Students would be more likely to keep their cameras on and stay engaged when they are 1:1 with an IA. Students would avoid additional trauma from being separated from their familiar community peers. Students would be able to seamlessly shift to in-person as soon as they are fully vaccinated. Students would not

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need to establish new relationships with their teachers, related services clinicians, or break into friendships that already have been developing for half of a school year. Finally, this plan raises many significant questions related specifically to special education students. We know that students with disabilities have a higher rate of chronic health problems than neurotypical students, so there is a strong likelihood that a disproportionate number of students requiring virtual instruction will be special education students. How will specific special education classes be centralized virtually? Specifically, what are the plans for programs such as classes for autism, intellectual disabilities, non-cat, and cat B? How will special education related services be provided to virtual students? Will students need to switch to new providers midyear? These details have not been addressed at all and are of major concern for many special education families. We ask that the school system not continue to repeat mistakes made a year ago in rolling out new plans that will affect large numbers of students without thorough planning, consideration, and notice to families. Please reconsider questions such as these and how these decisions will impact many students and families due to circumstances that are beyond their control.

Jill & Mike Calsetta

Hi, my name is Jill Calsetta, and I'm a parent of two students with special needs in the Fairfax County Public School system. The reason for my public testimony before the committee is twofold: first, I would like to discuss the FCPS policy about retention of special needs students and how such decisions lie entirely with the base school principal and not the IEP team; and secondly, how this policy is adversely impacting our desire to retain our son, Zachary, who is a 6th grader at Crossfield Elementary with a diagnosis of autism and apraxia. He is non-speaking. As documented in IEPs from the last 2 years, we have brought up the issue of retention for our son Zach. In his 5th grade year, Zach was placed with Mrs. Christina Kern and he learned how to use a letterboard to communicate. After 10 years of not having a voice, Zach finally had a means to demonstrate his aptitude for reading comprehension, math, science, and history. He blew through his IEP goals by November of that year, and Mrs. Kern began bringing him into the GenEd classroom where he was not only able to be quiet and attentive for long durations, but he was actually able to demonstrate his comprehension of the GenEd curriculum through his use of the letterboard. Because his classmates were a year younger than Zach, Zach was going into a 4th grade GenEd classroom when he was in 5th grade. However, we were amenable to this arrangement because we always had retention in mind and knew he'd eventually get 6<sup>th</sup> grade curriculum. Then in the spring of his 5th grade year, COVID hit. We didn't know how long school would remain virtual, but like so many other special needs kids, virtual learning was pretty abysmal for Zach. In Spring 2020, we had our IEP and once again brought up the issue of retention. At this point, Zach had already exhibited significant regressions both academically and developmentally, reverting to once-extinguished behaviors such as self-injury, elopement from the home, and severe sleep disturbances. Because we had no idea how long this situation would last and just hoped/assumed things would return to normal by the fall, we were persuaded to adopt a "let's wait and see" attitude when it came to how much ground Zach could recover once he was in the classroom again. The IEP was written to include 15 hours per week of GenEd classroom inclusion, which was the level he was reaching prior to COVID, and Mrs. Kern advocated for Zach to be in her classroom so she could continue to work with him on his letterboard and try to make up the lost ground.

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Of course, in the fall things did not return to normal. Because of two forced quarantines and the early shutdown of the special ed cohort, Zach had literally 6 days of in-person instruction in the Fall and did not return to the classroom until late February 2021. He is finally starting to make gains again and regain his fluency on the letterboard, only for the school year to soon be over and the push for his transition to middle school. In February, Mrs. Kern encouraged me to initiate a request for retention with the principal, which I did. We both mistakenly assumed this would be a simple request. There is precedent in our school for retention of special needs kids, however our school administration team, Mr. Mark Granieri and Ms. Barbara Fant, denied our request, simply stating that any concerns we had could be addressed by the middle school staff at his Transition IEP. We requested a meeting, where Mrs. Kern once again advocated for his retention, and she was firmly told this was not an IEP decision. As his teacher and his parents, we were the people who knew Zach the best compared to the administrators who spent collectively 20 minutes over 7 years with our child and know nothing about his needs. Why wouldn't this be an IEP team decision? School Placement is a page on the IEP itself, as are assessment types and hours of inclusion and service hours. It all goes hand in hand. After a denial at our base school, we went to Regional Assistant Superintendent Doug Tyson. He agreed to a phone call during which he listened to our concerns and took notes, and true to his word he visited Crossfield. After 10 days, he finally related to us his position that he would not intervene or override Crossfield's decision. Again, no reason given. We know for certain that Zach is not taking a spot away from another special needs kid, the student/teacher ratio remains the same, no additional hiring would be required if Crossfield retained him. We have another special needs son in high school, so we understand the ramifications of retention now and what we lose in the later years in terms of vocational training. We have been through a middle school transition, so we know the school, the staff, the course offerings and types of learning opportunities available. We had no hesitancy promoting his older brother to middle school, but Zach is a different kid with different needs. He is not developmentally or academically ready. There is so much more I can tell you about all of the reasons why he needs this year of retention, but 3 minutes does not allow. In short, he needs a full uninterrupted in-person academic year with Mrs. Kern using his letterboard to communicate, receiving in-person GenEd inclusion hours at his grade level, to recover the losses and gain the foundational skills he needs to be successful in middle school.

We realize that with COVID, nearly every family in Fairfax County would want a do-over. But unlike a neurotypical, speaking student you just can't throw extra service hours or tutoring at Zach and expect his needs to be met. We are sincerely appalled that an Administration that has no understanding or experience with our child could flat-out deny a legitimate request for retention, one that is fully documented and discussed prior to COVID and one that comes from both the parents and the teacher. It costs them nothing to say yes and do what is in this student's best interests. My husband and I are regretful that we didn't have the foresight to know how COVID would be used as an excuse to deny a retention request that we've made for the past 2 years, or how this would become a battle rather than a simple request.

We have video of our son using his letterboard to explain what he missed out on this year, why he wants to repeat 6th grade and work with Mrs. Kern for another year, but the allotted time does not allow us to include his testimony too. We are happy to provide it upon request. Thank you for your time.

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Lauren McCaughey

My name is Lauren McCaughey and I am the parent of three FCPS students.

Twice exceptional students are those who are gifted and have learning disabilities or differences. Two of my children are 2e, and they have struggled to get help in FCPS schools. Staff are reluctant to properly evaluate and identify these students, regardless of federal obligations. The following unacceptable things have happened to us: First, a school psychologist who had never met my child advised his Local Screening Committee that evaluations were not needed (despite private diagnoses of autism and ADHD) because "medical autism and educational autism are not the same thing." Note that these private diagnoses happened because my son's teacher was having profound difficulties with him in her Level IV AAP classroom! Second, the first LSC for my younger son dismissed both parent and teacher concerns and opted not to do evaluations in kindergarten despite significant challenges in the classroom. A year without help later, his first grade teacher did a more complete job of documenting these same challenges, and he qualified for an IEP in three areas. Third, my older son has fallen off a cliff in the transition to middle school, which is common for 2e kids in the county. Going from having one core teacher relationship to 7 is not possible without extra supports. Because this is a covid year, he will end up with straight P non-grades on his record. Parents are often wrongly told that greater support in advanced classes is not possible, and students are made to choose between team-taught gen ed classes OR AAP/honors classes without supports. This is illegal and unjust. I could go on, and I will note that our kids have been treated better than many other 2e students.

I would like to thank Beth Baldwin for her efforts to improve 2e approaches.

Nearby Montgomery County handles its 2e students very differently. I would like to hear tonight specifics about Ms. Baldwin's collaboration with MCPS and actions being taken now to fail FCPS 2e students less epically. Currently the best options available for FCPS 2e students are to homeschool or to move to Montgomery County. Why can't Fairfax County properly support these brilliant students? Why are gifted students with disabilities being disproportionately disciplined, sent to CSS schools, and left out of the AAP program? The siloing between special education and AAP staff prevents them from partnering together to fully support 2e students, as has been done in MCPS for decades. When will FCPS provide the level of 2e support which students in Montgomery County have received for more than thirty years?! I am hopeful that the budgeted hiring of a Neurodiversity Specialist and a Trauma Informed Specialist will help staff to develop proper supports and placements for all our 2e students. Thank you.

If you'd like to read a really old article from 2004 about Montgomery County, here's a link:  
[http://www.weinfeldeducationgroup.com/uploads/6/5/5/4/6554000/2einterview\\_with\\_rich.pdf](http://www.weinfeldeducationgroup.com/uploads/6/5/5/4/6554000/2einterview_with_rich.pdf)