

Advisory Committee for Students with Disabilities (ACSD) - Fairfax County Public Schools
Wednesday, February 8, 2023 7:00 - 9:00 p.m.

Summary of Business Conducted:

- The ACSD received updates from the Department of Special Services regarding updating the SR&R and the restraint and seclusion policy, preparations for Extended School Year, and the Special Education Enhancement Plan development.
-

Executive Committee:

Chair, Harry Henderson

Vice Chair, Elizabeth Zielinski

Secretaries, Ally Baldassari (Recording) and Brandis Ruise (Corresponding)

Member Attendance: A quorum of voting members was confirmed by Recording Secretary Ally Baldassari with 28/29 voting members in attendance. There are 34 positions on the ACSD; five currently vacant. The full record of attendance, members, and vacancies is appended.

Liaisons/FCPS Guests:

Mike Bloom, Director, Office of Special Education Instruction and FCPS Liaison to the ACSD

Michelle Boyd, Assistant Superintendent, Department of Special Services

Dawn Schaefer, Director, Special Education Procedural Support

Michael Axler, Acting Director, Intervention & Prevention Services

Ellie Stack, Coordinator, Pre-K-12 Special Education Instruction

Kelly Conn-Reda, Program Manager, Multi-Agency Services

Jennifer Smetek, Program Manager, Procedural Support Liaisons

Kathy Murphy, Assistant Ombuds for Special Education

Mary Beth Harrison-Cunningham, Manager of the Parent Resource Center

Katie Aldridge, Manager, Extended School Year (ESY) and Assessment

Laura Jane Cohen, School Board member, Springfield District and ACSD School Board Liaison

Melenie Meren, School Board member, Hunter Mill District

Business Agenda:

1. Call to Order, Harry Henderson, Chair
2. Approval of Minutes and Adoption of Agenda, Harry Henderson, Chair
3. General Announcements - Thanks to the public for coming and Vice Chair Zielinski for conducting last month's meeting during the Chair's illness. A reminder to the public to watch the meeting quietly without interrupting.
4. Chairman's Message - Chair Henderson reminded the committee he is the ACSD representative on the Special Education Enhancement Plan Steering Committee. They have

worked on mission and vision statements. During the last meeting, many of the members had concerns and objections to items in the draft plan. Mr. Henderson notes that the draft plan shared with the public does not seem to reflect the concerns of the steering committee members. He asked that all the ACSD members pay attention to the Special Education Enhancement Plan.

Randi Constantino: All families were sent a form for feedback. Would the Chair like members to use this, or send feedback to him so that he could collect ACSD feedback specifically? A: Mr. Henderson would like to collect feedback for the ACSD.

Amanda Campbell: Should we inform constituents of the steering committee happenings, and can the ACSD post the feedback opportunity on their social media pages? A: Yes and yes.

5. Parent Resource Center News, Mary Beth Harrison-Cunningham, Manager of the PRC
 - a. Using new technology to support non-English speaking families. They use interpretation rooms in Zoom, but now they are dubbing over the presentation with the Zoom room interpretation so webinars can be heard in other languages instead of having to rely on closed-captioning.
 - b. Meet the Author 2/9 Kathy Hoopman from Australia reading from her children's book *All Cats are on the Autism Spectrum*
 - c. Neurodiversity series with neurodiversity specialist Kristin Haynor is continuing
 - d. *IEP Updates* is one of the many webinars coming up in March. Register for webinars: [Register for Free Webinars and Events - Parent Resource Center | Fairfax County Public Schools](#)

Amanda Campbell: Wondered if it was possible to record the webinar *What to do When my Child Grows Up* due to a conflict. A: PRC is advertising this event for Career and Transition Services (CTS), who is coordinating it. She can't answer for CTS, but will reach out. The PRC records all its events.

6. Attendance Report, Ally Baldassari, Recording Secretary - As above
7. Department of Special Services (DSS) Updates, Dr. Michelle Boyd, Assistant Superintendent, DSS; Mike Bloom, Director, Special Education Instruction; Dawn Schaefer, Director, Procedural Support; Dr. Mike Axler, Acting Director, Intervention & Prevention
 - a. Students Rights & Responsibilities (SR&R) Policy Update - Dr. Axler reviewed the suggestions heard at the three SR&R listening sessions so far. A student listening session is pending.
 - i. Revisions were suggested to the cell phone policy. The request was to make these more specific, detailing when and what exceptions, how parents can contact their children, especially if a military family with a family member deployed who would like to contact their student.

- ii. Suggestion on less gendered language in the dress code section.
- iii. There was a desire for more student and family voices in the disciplinary process
- iv. The report to the School Board will be March 20th
- v. DSS will survey staff, families, and students and study their disciplinary data prior to preparing the March 20 report.

Harry Henderson: What is the deadline for feedback from the ACSD regarding the SR&R?

A: Dr. Axler says a feedback form was sent out already to all the school board advisory committee members, and he believes there was a due date on that.

Amanda Campbell : Ms. Campbell attended the listening session and heard concerns regarding P. 58 item 4: Verbal statement from the student. The feedback was that consent vs notice should be required from the parents to allow questioning of a student with developmental disabilities regarding a disciplinary incident. A: Dr. Axler says he recalls that feedback, sorry he didn't represent it tonight.

Ally Baldassari asked to clarify regarding ACSD feedback. There is a difference between individual members returning their thoughts on a feedback form and feedback from the ACSD which has been discussed, debated, and voted on as a group. Will the March ACSD meeting be an acceptable deadline for ACSD feedback? A: Yes.

- b. Restraint and Seclusion Policy - DSS is still not recommending any changes. They would rather look for ways to increase knowledge of, and fidelity to, the policy vs changing the policy, and making sure that any involved in R&S procedures are level 2 trained. However, they are accepting ACSD and community recommendations for changes.
- c. Extended School Year (ESY) Update, Katie Aldridge, Manager, ESY and Assessment
 - i. Ms. Aldridge has been a special education teacher, an assistant principal, principal, and she was the elementary administrator for ESY. This is her eighteenth year in education. She has a child with a disability who has participated in ESY.
 - ii. Service overview of ESY: Special education and related services are provided beyond the regular school year for the purpose of providing free appropriate public education (FAPE). This can be direct class-based services (ESY program) vs homebound and other services.
 - iii. July 5 to 28th are the dates for direct class-based services. The locations, their feeder schools, and the bell schedules are posted on the [ESY webpage](#). This year each ESY day will be 15 min longer, at 3 hours 15 minutes for elementary and 4 hours 15 minutes for secondary. This year we have 18 days vs 19 days. However, the hours are exceeded at 58.5/76.5 hours (ES/Secondary) versus the previous 57/76 hours. A "frequently asked questions" ESY document is coming soon.
 - iv. As of April 18th staffing status updates that will be shared on the website and which will be updated every Tuesday after that.

- v. Letters including staffing updates will be sent on a certain schedule to ESY families, until a certain date at which the administrators of the programs will have been assigned and will take over the communications.
- vi. Ms. Aldridge displayed a chart listing the staffing categories and hiring goal for each. Note: this is on projected ESY students, so the needs may change.
- vii. Hiring process: Applicants must apply for each position for which they are interested and provide two references.

Ally Baldassari: Is the process more streamlined for FCPS employees or teachers at the special education centers, and can you describe this? A: Yes, it is a different process for hiring FCPS employees that is more streamlined. They will still need to get a reference from their administrator.

Susan Edgerton: Can you get me information to pass to PoAC, to help college students who might want to be IAs, and others. A: Yes.

Lauren McCaughey: Is this info out earlier this year? A: Question got deferred to Ellie Stack, and yes, the information was made available earlier this year. The public web page was posted in the last days of January. The "lofty goal" from Michelle Boyd is ultimately to post this information in December.

Amanda Campbell: Do non-FCPS have to fill out a new, full application for every new position? A: The website streamlines some processes in the application portal, such as making uploaded resumes available for all applications. But you do have to apply to each position separately in the portal.

Sanaa Bouzit: Are wages increased, decreased, or same vs last year? A: They got approval to keep the same wages, which are higher than those for other FCPS summer programs.

Carolyn Haydon: In the past higher wages haven't been enough to attract adequate staff. What else are you doing to make sure that you have enough staff? A: Ms. Aldridge says starting early and doing the hiring process well. Ms. Stack added: She feels that advertising early, prior to other FCPS summer positions, is key to getting more staff.

David Bean: Please update on ESY transportation. Ms. Aldridge says that transportation is provided at no charge. Route information should be available on June 16th.

Ms. Baldassari: Last year the Student Achievement and Outcomes Subcommittee did a report on ESY staff recruitment. They recommended hiring teachers on year-round contracts to include ESY; changing the pay schedule to make sure all staff is paid regularly, monthly; and improvements to the job such as getting student IEPs before the start of the year. Are any of these ideas reflected in this year's planning? A: Ms. Stack-ESY staff will receive their paycheck in 2 parts, half one month and half in the next month. She says it is July and August. There are some complicated issues affecting hourly-paid employees that affect their pay schedule that are difficult to overcome.

They will work on making sure all IEPs are available on day one of teacher planning. Currently have no teachers on extended, or year-round contracts. Dr. Boyd answered that it is in discussion, but it has a budgetary impact. It is not in the FY24 proposal.

Harry Henderson: Anecdotal note that while current-year FCPS graduates are eligible to apply, he is aware some weren't awarded an interview. A: Ms. Aldridge says that they are working on a document for high school seniors to shepherd them in the process.

Lauren McCaughey: Wants to make sure that families are aware of all the information. Knowing the bell schedule and dates lets families decide if ESY class based will work for their families. A: Thanks, next steps are looking at how to push the information out.

d. Special Education Enhancement Plan

- i. She discussed the email that went out to everyone last eve which was a targeted email for special education families. Soon an email will be distributed letting all families know how to participate in the discussion if they desire.
- ii. Dr. Boyd gave an overview of the activities of the Special Education Enhancement Plan steering committee. The committee consists of over 100 members who are representatives from stakeholder groups, students, families, school based and central office staff, and members of the AIR research team. They have drafted objectives, drafted a mission statement, and a list of core values. Each objective will have a list of strategies. Greater details for each strategy was desired by steering committee members. There are implementation teams that will carry out the objectives/strategies. She reported the steering committee was very interested in where the AIR recommendations come into play, and making sure each would be addressed. Hence, draft objectives will be aligned with all the AIR objectives.

Ally Baldassari: Regarding the steering committee members' interest in ensuring that all AIR recommendations will be addressed - it seems that the work of the steering committee is not directly driven by the AIR recommendations. Is there any work that the AIR report will directly drive? What does Dr. Boyd think of the December recommendation approved by the ACSD to create a master tracking system for AIR recommendations, to have a person in charge of ensuring each recommendation is addressed and a website tracking this for the public? A: Dr. Boyd said the work will definitely address each and every AIR recommendation, but the work of the committee is bigger than the AIR report, as it is addressing 3 years worth of strategic goals set by the community. Just like in previous strategic plan tracking, there will be tracking and data visible to the public, and since all AIR goals will be addressed, the tracking of the AIR recommendations will be visible to the public.

Amanda Campbell: (1) The goals are lacking some components that make good goals such as specificity and measurability parameters. A: There will be objectives under goals with measurables and deliverables. (2) Ms. Campbell thought there was vagueness in

some of the objectives. One particular objective regarded improved outcomes on assessments. Her child might not be reflected because she has to opt out of assessments that aren't accessible to her child.

Lauren McCaughey: Wants to know if the makeup of the steering committee is public, transparent, so that we can see the number of staff vs parents vs students, etc. A: This isn't on the website yet, but she could check with the participants to see if it is okay to share that information (it would divulge parents of students with disabilities).

Mr. Henderson: Perhaps you could make the staff members on the steering committee public immediately. A: Dr. Boyd replied, "Sure."

8. Public Comment (1 participant), Elizabeth Zielinski, Vice Chair. Delayed from earlier in the agenda as the only community member wishing to testify arrived late.

Callie Oettinger stated her reason to come was to share information she received as a FOIA request regarding the OCR resolution training given to teachers. The first concern she lists is that families whose students were evaluated during COVID and denied services could receive an IEE. These students may now be identified and may be found to be behind and eligible to receive services, and the information should be in the training. She is also concerned that training tells staff that they must reach out to moved and graduated families, but once contacted, it's up to the family to pursue services. Ms. Oettinger says once you have moved or graduated, you delete FCPS emails without reading. She is also concerned that for families eligible for reimbursement, the reimbursement is not occurring in a timely fashion so that parents that can't pay out of pocket or on credit to be reimbursed later will not be able to secure services. Ms. Oettinger asserts that the training includes that if a service provider can't be found, FCPS is allowed to deny FAPE in the meantime. Ms. Oettinger is concerned that the IEP teams deciding don't match the IEP teams the student had. Teachers who know the students aren't attending. She asserts central office staff are conducting meetings.

9. Old Business & New Business

- a. ACSD Bylaws - Still looking for members to volunteer to be on a Bylaws committee
- b. Annual Report Preparation - Reminder that the we need 30 days to review your subcommittee reports.

Randi Constantino/Rachel Charlton: Need help getting data returned and facilitating a meeting with Assistive Technology Services to answer questions the Student Achievement and Outcomes subcommittee need for report preparation. A: Mr. Henderson will follow up.

Ally Baldassari: Point of clarification: Then the due date for subcommittee reports is March 8, one month prior the planned April meeting approval of the final report? A: Yes.

Ms. Zielinski: March 8 also the deadline for executive summary and all report parts? A: Yes.

Brandon Cassady: How can the recommendation for the wheelchair division, which Dr. Boyd supported, be included in the report? A: Mr. Henderson will ensure it gets in the report if Mr. Cassady follows up with him.

Amanda Campbell: Is there an update on the December motion about immediate review of the fire and emergency policy, considering part of the motion was to update the ACSD by February 8th? A: Mr. Bloom and Mr. Henderson have not received anything back from the school board; Mr. Bloom indicated he would follow up after ensuring the recommendation has made it to the school board.

10. Member Time, Elizabeth Zielinski, Vice Chair

- a. Ms. Zielinski commented on the Family Engagement Subcommittee's work preparing for the First Class Awards. She urges ACSD members to spread the word of the nomination process to constituents and be invested in the process of choosing winners.
- b. Mr. Henderson: Asks committee members to check out the FCPS and media coverage on pet therapy at Key Center, which was broadcast on channel WUSA9 and NBC 4
- c. Susan Edgerton PoAC-NoVA has an upcoming meeting on the IEP process, they will also cover social emotional goals and learning, and that will be February 25th at 10AM.
- d. Ally Baldassari-As the SEPTA representative on the ACSD, she shares SEPTA's press release in Opposition to HB1461 as can be found at <https://fairfaxcountysepta.org/>. Link: <https://fairfaxcountysepta.org/2023/02/08/press-release-opposition-to-hb-1461/>
- e. Brandon Cassady spoke in approval of ACSD members educating themselves on HB1461.
- f. Point of clarification: For committee members, what is HB1461? Mr. Cassady and Ms. Baldassari replied it regards a three strikes rule to create uniformity in discipline and remove students from school for disruptions/disciplinary issues regardless of underlying disability concerns.

11. Adjournment - 8:59 PM

| Member | Name | Organization/Representing | 7.12.21 | 8.12.21 | 9.12.21 | 10.12.21 | 11.12.21 | 2.8.23 | 8.22.10.2-0 | | | | | | | | |
|---|--|---|---------|---------|---------|----------|----------|--------|-------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Ally | Baldassari | SEPTA | IP | IP | V | IP | IP | IP | | | | | | | | | |
| Amanda | Campbell | Sprinfied District-Laura Jane Cohen | V | IP | IP | V | IP | V | IP | | | | | | | | |
| Anne | Hobbs | PoAC-NoVA | IP | IP | IP | V | V | V | V | | | | | | | | |
| Brandis | Ruise | Fairfax Area Disabilities Services Board | IP | IP | IP | IP | IP | E | | | | | | | | | |
| Brandon | Cassady | Member at Large-Karen Keys Gamarra | NYA | NYA | NYA | IP | V | IP | IP | | | | | | | | |
| Carolyn | Haydon | Braddock District-Megan McLaughlin | IP | IP | IP | V | IP | IP | IP | | | | | | | | |
| Colleen | Jones | Fairfax County Council of PTA | IP | IP | IP | IP | E | IP | V | | | | | | | | |
| Daniel | Cronnell | Fairfax/Falls Church Community Services Board | IP | IP | IP | E | IP | IP | IP | | | | | | | | |
| Darcy | Acquavella | Fairfax City School Board | | V | V | V | V | V | V | | | | | | | | |
| David | Bean | Providence District-Karl Frisch | NYA | NYA | IP | IP | E | IP | IP | | | | | | | | |
| Denise | Stitt | FCPS Teacher | IP | IP | IP | IP | IP | IP | IP | | | | | | | | |
| Elizabeth | Zielinski | Assistive Technology | IP | IP | V | IP | IP | IP | IP | | | | | | | | |
| Harry | Henderson | Mason District-Ricardy Anderson | IP | IP | IP | IP | IP | E | IP | | | | | | | | |
| Hideshi | Ishikawa | Region 5-Rebeca Baenig-Assistant Superintendent | NYA | NYA | IP | IP | | V | am | | | | | | | | |
| Holly | Stearns | Region 2-Fabio Zuluaga-Assistant Superintendent | NYA | NYA | IP | IP | IP | E | V | | | | | | | | |
| Jovieh | Liray | Fairfax County Health Department | E | E | V | V | V | | V | | | | | | | | |
| Kaitlenn | Erkilla | Mount Vernon District-Karen Corbett Sanders | IP | IP | V | IP | | E | V | | | | | | | | |
| Lauren | McCaughy | Hunter Mill District-Melanie Meren | IP | IP | IP | V | V | IP | IP | | | | | | | | |
| Linda | Mason | Higher Education | | V | V | E | V | E | IP | | | | | | | | |
| Michael | Simon | Sully District-Stella Pekarsky | | | V | | V | V | IP | | | | | | | | |
| Nita | Payton | Region 1-Douglas Tyson-Assistant Superintendent | IP | IP | V | | V | IP | IP | | | | | | | | |
| Rachel | Charlton | Early Childhood Education (Preschool) | IP | IP | IP | V | IP | IP | V | | | | | | | | |
| Randi | Cosentino | Dranesville District-Elain Tholen | IP | IP | IP | IP | V | V | IP | | | | | | | | |
| Sanaa | Bouzit | Member at Large-Abrar Omeish | IP | IP | IP | IP | E | V | IP | | | | | | | | |
| Sandi | Dallhoff | FC Dept. of Neighborhood and Community Service | NYA | NYA | IP | V | E | V | V | | | | | | | | |
| Shannon | Duncan | Decoding Dyslexia Virginia | | V | V | V | V | V | V | | | | | | | | |
| Stephanie | Smith | Franconia District-Tamara Derenak Kaufax | NYA | NYA | IP | V | V | | V | | | | | | | | |
| Susan | Edgerton | Member at Large-Rachna Sizemore-Heizer | | V | IP | IP | V | V | IP | | | | | | | | |
| Yasmeen | Merani | Student Representative | IP | IP | IP | | | IP | IP | | | | | | | | |
| Vacant | | Region 3-Grace Taylor-Assistant Superintendent | car | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Vacant | | Region 4-Penny Gros-Assistant Superintendent | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Vacant | | Fairfax County Federation of Citizens | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Vacant | | League of Women Voters, Fairfax Area | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Heather | Sable | Region 3-Grace Taylor-Assistant Superintendent | IP | IP | R | R | R | R | R | R | R | R | R | R | R | R | |
| Mirna | Galeano | Career and Transition Services | V | V | R | R | R | R | R | R | R | R | R | R | R | R | R |
| V | Attended virtually | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| IP | Attended in person | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| E | Excused absence | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| NYA | Not yet appointed; hadn't been appointed to this position at the time of the meeting | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| R | Resigned from the ACSD. | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Please note that attendance was not required of returning members at the 9-14-2022 Orientation. | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

Parent Resource Center Update – ACSD – February 8, 2023

- PRC Hours – Monday-Friday, 8:00 am to 4:00 pm
 - Consultations – please call or email for an appointment but walk-ins are accepted
 - 703-204-3941
 - prc@fcps.edu
 - The library is open for walk-ins and check-outs

PRC website: <https://www.fcps.edu/resources/family-engagement/parent-resource-center>

You Tube Channel: <https://www.youtube.com/c/FCPSParentResourceCenter>

*****New video technology:** The PRC is now able to take a webinar that has had an interpretation room and dub in that audio recording over the actual presentation. New videos in Spanish on our YouTube Channel!

Register for webinars: <https://www.fcps.edu/resources/family-engagement/parent-resource-center/register-free-workshops-parent-resource-center>

February 2023

2/9 – 7:00 pm – **Meet the Author Series #3 – All Cats Are On the Autism Spectrum with Kathy Hoopman**

2/10 – 10 am – **Neurodiversity: Collaboration Strategies for Elementary School families**

2/17 – 10 am - **Supporting EC Mental Health through Play - Part I**

2/24 – 10 am - **Supporting EC Mental Health through Play - Part 2**

March 2023

3/6 – 6:30 pm – **IEP Updates**

3/7 – 10 am – **IEP Updates**

3/10 – 10 am – **Neurodiversity in Middle School**

3/14 – 10 am – **Sleep- Part 1**

3/21 – 10 am – **Preparing Families for Difficult Conversations about Alcohol and Drugs**

3/24 – 10 am – **Suicide Prevention**

3/28 – 10 am – **Sleep – Part 2**

Special Education Conference - April 29, 2023 - 9 am-12:30 pm