

**Arlington Special Education Advisory Committee
Minutes
May 28, 2019**

Members Present:

Wendy Pizer (Chair), Nadia Facey (Vice-Chair), Nick Walkosak (Co-Secretary), Margy Dunn (Co-Secretary), Amber Baum, John Best, Michelle Best, Leila Carney, Keith Channon, Caitlin Davies, Kristin Gillig, Jay Hamon, Kay Luzius, David Rosenblatt, Kurt Schuler, Tauna Szymanski, Cristina Yacobucci

Members Absent:

Alison Acker, Alison Dough, Jennifer Johnson, Sarah Jane Owens, Minerva Trudo

Staff:

Paul Jamelske (Director of Special Education)
Kathleen Donovan (Parent Resource Center)
Kelly Mountain (Parent Resource Center)
Elaine Perkins (Early Childhood Coordinator)
Catherine Thompson (Lead SLP)
Karen Agate (Child Find Coordinator)

Guests:

Matt Leland, Kim Leland, Sonia Rosen, Kimiko Lighty

AGENDA:

Agenda Items	Discussion/Decisions	What to do/who/when
Welcome		
7:00PM Wendy Pizer	Welcome and introductions	
Public Comments		
Matt Leland	The public comment was about accountability, specifically central office accountability. How can we avoid problems with this in the future? He was disappointed in the response to their public comments this year – it was a non-response. They wanted to raise the issue of accountability and not discuss details of their case. What are they supposed to do? How do others avoid situations getting to the point that theirs did? He referenced Dr. Patrick Murphy’s letter to principles – there was only one general bullet regarding accountability. He has been thinking a lot since the December 2018 meeting – what IS accountability? He had asked Patrick Murphy during the December 2018 ASEAC meeting what measures APS takes to ensure accountability among personnel at the central office, as well as at the school level, when APS has failed to comply with laws protecting individuals with disabilities. He, Tara Natrass, and Paul Jamelske did not identify any measures concerning accountability of central office personnel, and, so far, APS has been unwilling to respond. This is surprising in light of the fact	

	<p>that the Public Consulting Group identified accountability among APS personnel as a “high priority area” in its January 2013 report (“Evaluation of APS Services for Students with Special Needs”).</p> <p>He set forth the following questions during his remarks at the May 28 ASEAC meeting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First, what, if anything, does APS do to identify failures by its personnel before a parent complains about a problem? If there are procedures, please identify them. • Second, does APS respond to reports of failures by its own personnel? If the answer is yes, how is that information documented? • Third, how does APS ensure that failures are abated? How is that information documented? • Fourth, how does APS hold personnel accountable for any failures in the delivery of services to students? How is that information documented? • Fifth, are parents made aware when there are actions to hold personnel accountable for failures in the delivery of services to their children? How? • Sixth, if APS is found in violation of the law, who monitors the remedy for that violation besides an enforcement authority? • Seventh, what information is APS willing to provide ASEAC and parents concerning the frequency of parent and personnel complaints, the nature of the complaints, responses to and follow-up on those complaints, and the outcome of those complaints? Please note that a response regarding each category of information does not require APS to provide personally identifiable information. 	
<p>Paul Jamelske - Office of Special Education (OSE) Updates and Response to Past Public Comments</p>		
<p>7:08PM</p>	<p>Paul Jamelske OSE update:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Believes a new name for the Stratford Program has been pushed forward. • Staffing – hired/adding SLPs, PT, transition coordinator, special education coordinator, vision teacher, deaf/hard of hearing teacher. There are still positions open and need well-rounded candidates for TVI with experience including CVI (cortical visual impairment). 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Invited guests tonight to share ideas of a new way to address the needs of early identification: Catherine Thompson, Elaine Perkins, and Karen Agate. • Elaine Perkins spoke about exciting new expansion of services offered to our Pre-K population in Arlington County. 1) there will be a pilot program in 7 locations: a preschool program that has ½ kids with disabilities and ½ without. 2) Looking to centralize speech services for children only needing speech intervention – will have 3 locations (north, central and south). 3) Child Find is sponsoring playgroups. 	
<p>ASEAC Committee Business and Updates</p>		
<p>7:16PM</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approval of April Meeting Minutes – 12 approved and 0 voted against. • Presentation of ASEACs Non-Recommendation Year Report to ACI – Wendy and Nadia presented on May 1. There was a lot of interest in the 90-day plans, accountability, and consistency. It was suggested schools should publish 90-day plans. Additionally there were comments on Dr. Murphy’s letter not doing enough. • Program evaluation – PCG will be coming later because they will be coming to a School Board work session (November 14). • APS Student Support Manual – Kelly Krug is the lead for APS. We have 10 parents on the working group to go through and give comments. The target release date to the community is 7/1/19. Kelly will continue to gather feedback throughout the year. It will be an evolving document. • ASEAC website update – the website was rearranged to make it easier to use and more engaging. They focused on the architecture and management of the website, not re-writing content. We need visual imagery and a logo and will reconvene at a point in the future. It is shorter and better now, and it was recommended the committee look at it. The flow chart was added. The best way to give comments/feedback is to send it to Kathleen Donovan. • June meeting – will have a vote on the logo, have prospective members introduce themselves. We continue to have trouble with receiving member applications – the system is faulty, so word of mouth is the only way we know someone applied. It is an online form that seems to disappear. If you know of anyone applying, also send ASEAC an email letting us know so 	

	<p>we can follow up on it. We are also looking for student members for next year (2 slots open for APS students).</p> <p style="text-align: center;">▪</p>	
Mental Health Working Group Recommendations		
733PM	<p>There was a slide show and a handout. The committee has 6 recommendations, which came about from interactions with community members, parents of students in crisis, SSAC, conversations in Arlington Education Matters, and Special Education professionals. The recommendations are as follows:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Continue the previously approved roll out of School Psychologists and Social Workers. Assess to determine if the approved roll out is sufficient given increasing enrollment. 2. Provide student access to trauma informed counselors via Counseling as a Related Service (CARS) at all schools serving students in grades K-12. 3. Continue and strengthen the Interlude Programs. Ensure these programs are available to students identified with an emotional disability. Provide appropriate alternatives to support students with high behavioral needs. 4. Develop a matrix so APS staff are fully aware of current and future placement possibilities when a parent calls to report a child in crisis. Provide this matrix to families so they can understand what APS offers, even if it is not (yet) relevant to their child. 5. Research need and consider creating a classroom within APS to address the needs of students with both Autism and an Emotional Disability (ED). It is the perception of the working group that a significant percentage of out students in private placement have both Autism and ED. A least restrictive environment (LRE) placement would allow these students to remain in Arlington and, as they are able, to access the same curriculum as their non-disabled peers. 6. Based on IEP team recommendation, allow students to take an online Health and Physical Education class via Virtual Virginia or other VDOE approved program. 	
End of Year Report		
803PM	<p>Poll identified top 6 potential recommendations. Had an overview of the process and poll results. Then member discussion, followed by a member vote for prioritizing recommendations (everyone got to vote twice, choosing 2 top priorities) and deciding if we want 2 or 3 top recommendations.</p>	

	<p>Discussion ensued and then a vote was taken on the following six recommendations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accountability: Utilize 90 day plans to improve Special Education by requiring all schools to include a Special Education goal. Publicize the results of the 90 day plans (8 votes); • Accountability: Include Special Education metrics in performance reviews for teachers and administrators (4 votes); • Professional Development: Require all Special Education assistants to take training and develop course offerings tailored to their needs (e.g., behavior regulation, communications devices, etc.). Give incentives for hourly wage earners (1 vote); • Re-consider APS organizational structure (“org chart”) to achieve better accountability (2 votes); • Develop a Restraint & Seclusion policy (5 votes); • Appoint a Special Education ombudsman (12 votes). <p>A vote was also taken on whether to have 2 or 3 top recommendations in the EOY report. We voted to have 3.</p>	
Vote on Next Year’s Leadership		
849PM	Nadia Facey received 17 of 17 votes for Chair; Nick Walkosak received 17 of 17 votes for Vice Chair; Margy Dunn received 17 of 17 votes for Co-Secretary; and David Rosenblatt received 17 of 17 votes for Co-Secretary.	
Meeting Adjourned	Meeting Adjourned at 855PM	

NEXT MEETING: Tuesday, June 18th, 2019 from 7:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m.
 Syphax Education Center, 2110 Washington Blvd, Room 456, Arlington, VA 22204