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Citizens' Advisory Committee for Special Education

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Elizabeth Snyder, Chairperson

Leslie Popielarcheck, Vice-Chair

June Nicholas, Secretary

Meeting Minutes for November 10, 2014

Meeting held at:

St. Mary's County Public Schools - Special Education Conference Room
23160 Moakley Street, Leonardtown, MD, 20650

1. Call to Order at 6:31 pm.
2. Introduction of Members and Parents/Community
 - a. All Officers were present; additional persons present this evening were:
 - i. Melissa Charbonnet, Director of Special Education
 - ii. Debbie Crosby, Coordinator, Department of Special Education
 - iii. Charles Slade, Park Hall Elementary School Representative
 - iv. Heather Guthrie, Leonardtown Middle School
 - v. Carman Wilson, Spring Ridge Middle School
3. Review and Approve Minutes – September minutes were seconded and approved. October minutes were seconded and approved with corrections clarifying the name of Captain Walter Francis Duke Elementary School. May and June meeting minutes were tabled until the next meeting.
4. Committee Reports
 - a. Outreach
 - i. Rise Up Award for 2014 – 2015 school year – Planning to develop the rules and procedures will begin in December. The cost of preparing certificates of appreciation will be approximately \$200.00.
 - ii. Promotional materials – New posters and brochures have been designed by Elizabeth Snyder and printed at Staples (VERIFY), and both will be on display at the SMCFCFCD Fall Conference. Magnet design is still underway. Posters and brochures will be distributed to all schools via PFS/Metro. In all, 50 posters, 500 brochures, and 500 magnets are being ordered.
 - iii. Social media – Work on the website is continuing, including insertion of a new Google calendar and a draft of frequently asked questions.

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- b. Education
 - i. The Fall Conference, held by the Southern Maryland Collaborative for Families of Children with Disabilities (SMCFCD), will be held on November 12.
 - ii. Over 200 people have already registered for the event, exceeding the expectations of the Collaborative. Registration is still available; go to <http://autismsupport-somd.org/jedbaker/>
 - iii. Leslie Popielarcheck and June Nicholas will represent CACSE at the Conference.
5. Updates from Partners for Success
 - a. The next workshop to be held will be one hosted by the SMCPS COMPASS Team (**C**ommunity **P**romoting **A**cademic and **S**ocial **S**uccess). It will take place on Wednesday December 3 from 6:30 to 8:30 pm in the BOE Meeting Room, and it is entitled “Increasing Social Flexibility, Part 1.”
6. Updates from Affiliated Agencies and Organizations
 - a. Autism Support Group of Southern Maryland (ASG) – ASG is handling registration for the Fall Conference. The next Support Group meeting will be Wednesday November 19.
 - b. Calvert Marine Museum is hosting a day for individuals with special needs this Friday, November 14. For more information, call 410-326-2042.
 - c. The next business and parent support meetings for Decoding Dyslexia – Maryland will be held November 17 at the Patuxent Presbyterian Church in California. For more information, see <http://decodingdyslexiamd.weebly.com/>
7. Director’s Report
 - a. Melissa Charbonnet, Director of Special Education for SMCPS, filed this report.
 - b. Ms. Charbonnet reports that Lisa Dean and Chrystal Johnson successfully competed in the “10K Across the Bay,” and intend to compete again in April 2015 on behalf of autism awareness.
 - c. Ms. Charbonnet announced that Tammy McCourt, SMCPS Chief Financial Officer, presented a report to staff regarding the FY 2015 – 2016 budget, which is due on December 1. Ms. McCourt has agreed to present the information to CACSE at the December Meeting.
 - d. Ms. Charbonnet is attending the MSDE Leadership Conference in Ocean City this week, and will present about a pilot transition program for at-risk youth, which includes emotional, mental health, dropout prevention support and work readiness skills. The program is an extension of the Maryland Seamless Transition Collaborative (“MSTC”), which is a partnership between MSDE and DORS. The presentation included how SMCPS utilized restricted funding and medical assistance funding to successfully implement the pilot program. The program is offered in partnership with the College of Southern Maryland; students attend college on weekend and get credit. The pilot program is in its fourth year, and students recently attended an October 18 luncheon to “graduate” and share the event with their adult mentors. About 7 – 10 students are chosen each year and are identified by Dottie Powell, and several will continue to work

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with Pathways once they exit the program to continue getting mental health services. The presentation will be uploaded to Maryland Learning Links, <http://marylandlearninglinks.org>. Additional information can be found at:

<http://www.seamlesstransition.org>

<http://www.ncwd-youth.info/innovative-strategies/state-perspectives/maryland>

http://www.nsttac.org/sites/default/files/assets/pdf/CBI_handouts/Maryland_Healthy_Trans/MSTC_Model_Desc.pdf

- e. Ms. Charbonnet indicated that there were some areas of priority in her perspective: the federal priority to close the achievement gap, major expenses related to non-public placement (residential or day, with SMCPs funding educational placement and certain family needs such as specialized wheelchairs), and the large influx of families needing infant and toddler services, including extending services for accommodation to children of increasingly younger ages, including prenatal support.
- f. A question was raised as to how the Department of Special Education is impacted by redistricting; planning and public commentary is underway with the development of Captain Walter Francis Duke Elementary School in Leonardtown. Ms. Charbonnet said that she is on the Redistricting Committee for SMCPs, and though redistricting can be a challenge, children under her purview fall into a different category as they are placed according to their needs independently of a designated home school.

8. Budget Report

- a. CACSE has \$460.00 remaining in the FY 2014 budget.
- b. Funding this summer and fall was utilized to pay for items for the Family Toolbox and for the development and printing of the posters, brochures and other materials. Final costs for printing need to be determined.
- c. CACSE spent about \$75.00 for Avery name badge holders for the Fall Conference in November.
- d. Items for the Family Toolbox continue to arrive and be procured.
- e. After discussion, it was determined that further funding may be available to help pay for costs related to the Fall Conference. CACSE approved utilizing up to \$250.00 to pay for the sound system if the vendor (dbF Media, La Plata, MD) is one on the approved vendor list for SMCPs.

9. Advisement to the Board of Education

- a. The next BOE Meeting is December 10, and will be the first with the new Board. It was felt that CACSE should wait until January or February to seek a formal introduction and to request a date for Rise Up Award recognitions.
- b. A working group will be formed to frame a formal statement of introduction; Chuck Slade will coordinate efforts. It was felt that CACSE should concentrate on one to three issues of major concern for presentation later in the spring.

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10. Old Business
 - a. Training and Workshop Scholarships and Reimbursement
 - i. CACSE will offer up to five scholarships to offset costs for attending the Fall Conference. Three have already been requested; the deadline to request one is December 1.
 - ii. Funding is available for families wishing to attend other training and workshops. Attendees can seek reimbursement but must complete documentation to do so, including preparing a short presentation on what was learned in the training.
 - iii. Interested families should contact CACSE for the appropriate documents.
 - b. "Family Toolbox"
 - i. Items purchased continue to arrive and soon will require inventory. Volunteers are requested to assist with cataloguing and distribution.
 - ii. St. Mary's Library will need to know some logistical information, including how large the grab bags are and whether CACSE will reimburse the Library for lost or stolen items. Other questions need resolution, including how patrons will be expected to find them (put into COSMOS catalog?), listing the items on the CACSE website and/or the PFS lending library, offering an information session or professional development to families and teachers. It was suggested that CACSE offer a presentation at an upcoming SMCPS professional development day.
 - c. Representatives – Ms. Charbonnet will send out another questionnaire to seek representatives for this school year. Once received, CACSE can set up an email distribution list and update contact information on the website. CACSE will seek to reach out to schools who do not suggest representatives.
11. New Business and Additional Concerns
 - a. No new items were offered this evening.
12. Adjournment
 - a. Adjournment was at 7:58 pm.
 - b. The next CACSE Meeting shall be held on Monday, December 8, 2014 at 6:30 pm at the same location.
 - c. The next CACSE Support Group Meeting shall be held at 5:45 pm at the same day and location, just prior to the regular Meeting.