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Citizens' Advisory Committee for Special Education

www.smccacse.org and Facebook @ CACSE – St Mary's County MD

Elizabeth Snyder, Chairperson

Leslie Popielarcheck, Vice-Chair

June Nicholas, Secretary

Meeting Minutes for July 13, 2015

Meeting held at:

St. Mary's County Public Schools – Board of Education Meeting Room
23160 Moakley Street, Leonardtown, MD, 20650

1. Call to Order at 6:30 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 of Special Education
 - iii. Joe Schlereth, SMCPs Board-Certified Behavior Analyst
 - iv. Charles Slade, Park Hall Elementary School
 - v. Franchescka Kephart, Exceptional Family Member Program Liaison, NAS Patuxent River
3. Review and Approve Minutes – April and May meeting minutes were approved with corrections. The meeting of June 8, 2015, was cancelled.
4. Committee Reports
 - a. Outreach
 - i. Rise Up Award
 1. The press release prepared for local media appeared in the Enterprise (St. Mary's County newspaper).
 2. Recipients were able to select and order items for their classrooms. They were very appreciative of the honor.
 3. Planning for the 2016 Rise Up Award will begin this winter. No tasks are pending at this time.
 - ii. "Family Toolbox"
 1. Fourteen bags have been assembled and are ready for checkout by families; they have been forward to St. Mary's County Library

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for distribution among the three branches. A fifteenth bag has been partially completed.

2. Each bag contains a laminated card listing all contents as well as the CACSE website, and a CACSE brochure is included. A master inventory was developed and provided to the library as well.
3. CACSE is soliciting for suggestions for items to procure aimed at older children and teens. This will be pursued over the next year.
4. Advertising of the Family Toolbox is underway; the County Library included an announcement in their summer newsletter. CACSE will also advertise the bags online, and Franchescka Kephart said she will advertise the bags on base.

iii. Promotional materials

1. One thousand brochures have been ordered from the SMCPs Print Shop for the new school year.
2. Representatives should check with their schools to see what is currently displayed or still needed.

iv. Social media

1. Website - Work on the website is continuing as time permits. Meeting minutes and current announcements are being updated.

b. Education

- i. Southern Maryland Collaborative for Families of Children with Disabilities - The SMCFCFCD Fall Conference for 2015 will feature Carol Kranowitz and will be held Friday November 13, 2015 at the Holiday Inn in Solomons, MD. Registration will be \$45.00 through September 1, then \$55.00 through October 29. All registration will be in advance.

5. Updates from Partners for Success

- a. There was no update provided at this time. A fall calendar of events typically comes out in September.

6. Updates from Affiliated Agencies and Organizations

a. Southern Maryland Collaborative for Families of Children with Disabilities

- i. Flyers were distributed electronically and registration is underway via the website of the Autism Spectrum Support Group of Southern Maryland.
- ii. The link for registration is <http://autismsupport-somd.org/>, click on "Carol Kranowitz Conference 2015."

b. Autism Spectrum Support Group of Southern Maryland

- i. ASSG will award several scholarships to help families of children with autism pay for summer camps.

c. Southern Maryland Community Resources

- i. SMCR announces Inclusive Bowling at Esperanza Bowling Lanes in California MD for teens and adults with disabilities on July 17. Contact

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Bonnie Elward, 301-997-8143 or belward@somdcr.org , or visit the website <http://somdcr.org/>

- d. Decoding Dyslexia – Maryland
 - i. There was no update at this time.
 - e. Exceptional Family Member Program at NAS Patuxent River
 - i. Franchescka Kephart will provide information about program services at the August meeting.
7. Director's Report
- a. Melissa Charbonnet, Director of Special Education for SMCPs, announced that the final budget for FY 2016 (2015-2016 school year) has been approved by the Board of Education and the Commissioners of St. Mary's County.
 - b. A draft of the FY 2016 Staffing Plan is now available. One physical therapist assistant position was cut from last year's staff allotment; there are not enough funds to provide for this position.
 - c. Ms. Charbonnet requested assistance in seeking public comment for the SMCPs Staffing Plan. Feedback is desired. She will send CACSE a PDF copy of the Plan to post on the website. CACSE will also help publicize the plan via Facebook and through through CACSE and PFS email distribution lists.
 - d. CACSE will set up a means for receiving public comment through the website posting, and comments are requested via the website or via email to Ms. Charbonnet by July 21.
 - e. The MSDE parent survey has gone out, boosted with a SMCPs "robocall." As of June 5th, preschool parent responses are at 35 %, the highest in the state. School-age parent responses are at 21 %, also the best in the state. Responses were offered both via mail and online. Results will be tabulated and given back to the school districts in October. CACSE will try to increase parent participation.
 - f. "Part C (Infants and Toddlers)" budget has been approved for supplemental funding, and that the "Part B (ages 3 – 21)" budget is being developed now.
8. Budget Report
- a. Ms. Charbonnet announced that there is approximately \$18 remaining in funds from the FY 2015 grant, which may be made available for document duplication.
 - b. Rise Up Awardees have gratefully ordered their Family Toolbox items, which are being funded by CACSE in recognition for the award honors.
 - c. New promotional items will be funded using FY 2016 funds, including brochures. Budget discussions will commence in August.
9. Old Business
- a. Advisement to the Board of Education
 - i. CACSE will develop a working group to provide regular, structured briefings to the Board ("Board Updates"). No action is currently pending.

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- b. Support for SMCFCFD (the “Collaborative”)
 - i. 2015 Fall Conference – A discussion on funding parent scholarships was tabled until August.
 - ii. 2016 Fall Conference – A working group shall be set up with Partners for Success. CACSE needs to determine what can be contributed from the 2016-2017 budget.
 - c. High School Assessments
 - i. June attended the public meeting of the State Board of Education on May 19; the SBOE approved the proposed changes on high school assessments to the COMAR offered by the State Superintendent without further revision.
 - ii. Standard setting for PARCC will be conducted late July through late August, and cut scores will be determined. SBOE will decide this summer whether PARCC tests will be administered in English 9, English 11, and Geometry in SY 2016. No comments were made on how scores between the High School Assessments and PARCC would be combined, or about the Alternate Assessments, which are to be changed next year.
10. New Business and Additional Concerns
- a. Calendar for 2015-2016
 - i. The meeting calendar for the new school year was approved, and the new schedule will be posted on the CACSE website.
 - ii. If the January or February meetings are cancelled because of snow, an attempt will be made to reschedule the meeting on the next available Monday; if not possible, a meeting will be conducted by the Executive Committee at an appropriate time and place with public notice. The summer meetings of June through September will be kept on the schedule with the intent of meeting as a full Committee.
 - b. Extended School Year Services
 - i. Some concerns were expressed about ESY this summer, including start dates and locations, implementation, and providing a welcome setting for the students. Parental guidelines could be issued to give more clarity.
 - ii. CACSE will examine how information on ESY services could be streamlined to ease parental concerns, including how students are selected for ESY (criteria), what services are offered and how they are administered, how to obtain appropriate and quick transportation, and when and where services are offered besides school buildings.
 - c. Back-to-School and Open House Ideas
 - i. Some discussion commenced about what parents experience when they try to prepare their child with special needs for a new school year or for attendance for the first time, including determining an effective transportation route, familiarization with a specially equipped bus, touring the schools with minimal crowds, meeting teachers or case workers or therapists in advance, etc. CACSE will develop information for parents on

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these topics that could be posted in a brochure or online. Parents were also advised to contact their school's administration or IEP Chair for help.

- d. Promote CACSE and the Fall Conference – June asked for approval to duplicate and distribute CACSE brochures and Fall Conference flyers to families and staff at Camp Inspire and Camp New Horizons. CACSE granted approval.
- e. Calls for Action - A call was made for project ideas for the upcoming school year. Ideas include:
 - i. CACSE should be more proactive in contacting school representatives to attend CACSE meetings or provide input
 - ii. Improving school-home communication to reduce parent anxiety, including developing standardized methods system-wide and a rapid response system regarding parent concerns in moments of crisis.
 - iii. Developing a program similar to the Transition Luncheon, aimed at families of children entering the system, with involvement from nonprofit organizations and service providers in the community, that could be offered on a yearly basis in September or October.

11. Adjournment

- a. Adjournment was at 8:10 pm.
- b. The next CACSE Meeting shall be held on Monday, August 10, 2015 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.