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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 November 9, 2015

Meeting held at:

St. Mary's County Public Schools – Special Education Meeting Room (2nd Floor)
23160 Moakley Street, Leonardtown, MD, 20650

NOTE: This Meeting allowed for Conference Call-in; persons wishing to participate by Conference Call should contact Elizabeth Snyder at smccacse@yahoo.com.

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. Chuck Slade, Park Hall Elementary School
 - iv. Lisa Wade-Young, Hollywood Elementary School
 - v. Laura Schultz, Leonardtown Middle School, Decoding Dyslexia MD
 - vi. Mandy Greer, Capt. Walter F. Duke Elementary School, via phone
 - vii. Brad Searle, Green Holly Elementary School, via phone
3. Review and Approve Minutes – October meeting minutes were approved with corrections.
4. Updates from Partners for Success
 - a. “How to Know if Your Child is Making Progress” will be held Wednesday December 2 in the BOE Meeting Room. Missy Alexander, of Parents' Place of Maryland, is the presenter. Details are posted on the CACSE website.
5. Committee Reports
 - a. Outreach
 - i. “Rise Up Award”
 1. CACSE will begin planning for the 2016 award in January.

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- ii. "Family Toolbox"
 - 1. Chuck Slade continues to work with St. Mary's County Library on logistics for bag placement, advertising, and feedback. Shelf space to store the bags is at a premium.
 - b. Education
 - i. Southern Maryland Collaborative for Families of Children with Disabilities
 - 1. Susan Shannon hosted a "bag stuffing day" on November 6 at the PFS office at Green Holly ES in preparation for the Conference. A pre-event walk-through will be held on November 12 for final planning.
 - 2. CACSE will award eight scholarships for parents to attend.
 - 3. Planning is underway for the 2016 Fall Conference which may feature Rick Lavoie, a popular speaker on learning disabilities, at the Southern Maryland Higher Education Center.
 - c. Communication Committee
 - i. Mandy Greer and Leslie Popielarcheck are requesting and compiling feedback and suggestions for frequently asked questions that CACSE can provide answers to on our website.
 - ii. Debbie Crosby asked that the invitation to add questions to the website FAQ list be forwarded to Infants and Toddlers.
 - d. Membership Committee
 - i. Melissa Charbonnet will ask IEP Chairs to identify additional representatives for the 2015-2016 school year. CACSE is drafting a welcome letter and will step up retention efforts.
 - e. Advisement to the Board of Education
 - i. No action is currently pending.
6. CACSE Budget Report
- a. CACSE received an allotment of \$2500.00 in Federal funds for FY 2016.
 - b. CACSE spending to date includes about \$500 for Family Toolbox items and \$790.70 for business cards and promotional brochures and items.
 - c. CACSE will be receiving an invoice of \$360 for eight parent scholarships to the 2015 SMCFCFCD Fall Conference.
 - d. Approximately \$930 remains in the FY 2016 budget. Additional earmarks should include the 2016 Rise Up Award "Teacher Toolbox." Leslie Popielarcheck and Mandy Greer will examine funding from past years and make a proposal.
7. Director's Report
- a. Budget planning for SMCPS is underway for the FY 2017 school year. Special education will be "flat funded" this year.
 - b. There is a large gap in mental health coverage in Southern Maryland, with the largest need for children from birth to about 8 years of age. We need more contracted providers for therapeutic services but the county is having a difficult

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time recruiting them. Thirty students were placed in nonpublic schools for mental health reasons; this is apparently not a large number in comparison to other counties. Most of the students were placed in-county. Approximately two thirds were placed by the court system with the remainder placed by SMCPs. The county is looking at the possibility of providing a Type 5 [sic] nonpublic school but is trying to determine how to pay for it. Information about Maryland nonpublic schools can be found at <http://mansef.org/> and <http://www.marylandpublicschools.org/msde/nonpublicschools/>

- c. SMCPs is searching for a speech pathologist for Benjamin Banneker Elementary School and hopes to fill a vacancy at Dynard Elementary School soon.
- d. SMCPs received a Title I Focus Grant (Title I, Part A School Improvement Grant Funds Section 1003(a) Approaching Targets LEA Application) which will allow the hiring of two more teachers for Park Hall and Carver Elementary Schools. This annual grant application that is intended for School Year 2016-2017. The short-term grant has been approved by the Commissioners of St. Mary's County. Other funding sources may be sought once this funding expires. State information about the Focus Grants can be found at <http://marylandpublicschools.org/MSDE/programs/title/t/XI.html>
- e. The Board of Education has accepted applications from about thirty persons interested in filling a vacancy on the Board due to the resignation of Marilyn Crosby; the Board is interviewing candidates now.

8. Old Business

- a. Sensitivity Training Class
 - i. Leslie is working with Missy Alexander to develop a caregiver sensitivity training class that will address parental concerns.
- b. Bus Driver Aide Training
 - i. Brad Searle talked to Jeff Thompson, the Director of Transportation, about concerns related to proper restraint of wheelchairs, as chair styles and bus restraining systems vary. Mr. Thompson went over the training that is typically provided to drivers and aides.
 - ii. Training is mandatory for all drivers and aides, and DVDs are available to view as part of training procedures; in addition, there is a training "mockup." Information on specific training related to wheelchair restraint and whether unannounced spot-checks were conducted was not clear.
 - iii. Additional points raised were that parent training should be considered; is there a written training manual for parent and public review; parents should color the tie-down points on wheelchairs for quick identification; should a "meet the bus" activity be planned; physical therapists could be involved with parent training; whether specific requirements should be drafted for parents regarding assistive technology.
 - iv. CACSE may invite a representative from Transportation to a future CACSE meeting to learn how drivers and aides are trained. Ms. Charbonnet suggested that CACSE determine a list of questions and concerns prior to requesting a meeting.

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- v. Brad Searle and Chuck Slade will continue to work on this effort as a potential Transportation Committee.
- c. Implementation of IRLA (Independent Reading Level Assessment)
 - i. Chuck asked how IRLA is implemented in the context of special education. IRLA provides support for decoding and phonics but not reading comprehension. IRLA is currently being used at Park Hall ES and Carver ES but is not utilized system-wide.
 - ii. Ms. Charbonnet explained that IRLA is a Tier 2 intervention for individual or small group instruction in specific areas on a short-term basis (for some students with IEPs it is a Tier 3 intervention for intensive intervention on a one-on-one basis for students at risk of failure because skills are markedly deficient compared to peers). It is a framework that teachers use to assess student strength. More information on IRLA can be found at <http://www.americanreading.com/leveling/> Information on reading interventions can be found at interventioncentral.org. Information on tiered instruction can be found at <http://www.rtinetwork.org/essential/tieredinstruction/tiered-instruction-and-intervention-rti-model>
- 9. New Business and Additional Concerns
 - a. There were no new items of business or concerns raised at this time.
- 10. Updates from Affiliated Agencies and Organizations
 - a. CACSE decided to move agency updates to the end of meetings so that regular order of business can be conducted first. Reports can be filed electronically. Agency presenters should contact Elizabeth to get updates listed on the agenda.
 - b. Special Olympics
 - i. The St. Mary's Sheriff's Office will hold a St. Mary's Splash to support Special Olympics in Maryland will be held on December 12 at Point Lookout State Park. Elizabeth Snyder reports that her husband Matt Snyder will be participating in the Maryland State Police Polar Bear Plunge at Sandy Point State Park; there are several events across the state. Local event details are at www.stmaryssplash.com
 - c. Joint Activities
 - i. Learning Disabilities Association of St. Mary's County (Idasmc.org), Autism Spectrum Support Group of Southern Maryland (autismsupport-somd.org), and Parents' Place of Maryland (ppmd.org) offer a new session of monthly book discussions of "From Emotions to Advocacy" by Pam and Pete Wright. It is being held the third Saturday of every month in Hughesville, MD, and will run through June 2016. Full details are at the CACSE, ASSG, and PPMD websites. Book scholarships are available.
- 11. Comments and Questions from Callers
 - a. CACSE asked for questions and concerns from the representatives attending by phone conference. No additional questions or concerns were raised.
- 12. Adjournment
 - a. Adjournment was at 7:56 pm.

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- b. The next CACSE Meeting shall be held on Monday, December 14 at 6:30 pm in the Special Education Conference Room, and will include Conference Call dial-in. Contact smccacse@yahoo.com for access.
- 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.