

**Special Education Advisory Council
Norfolk Public Schools
Approved Minutes 2/21/2019**

Meeting location, time and date: 8th Floor Conference Room, 800 E. City Hall Avenue
Norfolk, VA 23510, 6:00pm, Thursday, February 21, 2019

Attendance:

Members present:	Katie McCurdy, Shirley Confino-Rehder, Ellen Fitzenrider, C.J. Frank, Vicky Greco, Matthew Moynihan, Seraphine Nyuydine, Diane Outlaw
Members absent:	Vashti Washington, Betty Boone, Vaughan Frederick, Teresa Gordon, Tonya Shell, Tasha Washington, Shirley Wilson
Consultants present:	Joy Richardson
School Board Liaison:	Adale Martin
Guests:	Helen Brown, Jackie Chavis

Welcome/Introductions: Vice Chair Katie McCurdy chaired the meeting in the absence of Vashti Washington. Ms. McCurdy called the meeting to order at 6:03 pm by welcoming everyone present and asking attendees to introduce themselves. The Committee welcomed its newest members in attendance: Ellen Fitzenrider, Matthew Moynihan, and Seraphine Nyuydine. Ms. Greco acted as recording secretary for this meeting in the absence of interim secretary Tasha Washington.

Approval of Minutes: January 20, 2019 minutes were distributed to members for review. Diane Outlaw moved to accept the minutes as corrected and minutes were approved unanimously.

Public Comment: Dr. Fitzenrider read a statement by NPS parent Carter Melin, who was unable to attend the meeting due to a work commitment. *Please see the attached copy of Mr. Melin’s statement.* Mr. Melin made public comment regarding his disagreement with a statement included on page 3 of the SEAC’s 2017-18 Annual Report: “IEP teams must be aware and knowledgeable about alternative testing for Students with Disabilities when they do not pass the SOL.” Mr. Melin asserts that “Yes, all IEP teams should be aware of alternative testing, and should fully comprehend that is a worst case scenario that should be reserved only for the children who have exhausted their capabilities to pass the SOL tests.” Joy Richardson will respond to Mr. Melin’s public comment.

Discussion: Dr. Fitzenrider led discussion relative to the Virginia Alternate Assessment Program (VAAP), which is designed to evaluate the performance of students with significant cognitive disabilities who are working on aligned Standards of Learning (SOL), but have been reduced in complexity and depth. Dr. Fitzenrider and Ms. Nyuydine both shared their own families’ IEP meeting experiences regarding VAAP, while emphasizing the need for all IEP Committee members to understand fully alternate testing implications. SEAC members discussed the NPS Part B Results-Driven Accountability Matrix for FFY2016 (Compliance) Local Determination Scoring Rubric. Ms. Martin noted that the School Board had adopted its own new Accountability Plan at its meeting last night.

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New Business:

- Election of SEAC Secretary for the remainder of 2018-19: Mr. Frank moved that Ms. Washington continue to serve as recording secretary, a role which she assumed when the position was left vacant with the mid-year retirement of the previous secretary, Cheryl Ward. Following consensus, Ms. McCurdy will contact Ms. Washington to determine her willingness to fill the office vacancy for the rest of the school year.

Work Session: Following committee deliberation, Ms. McCurdy asked for and received consensus in switching the dates for the proposed membership meeting topics for March 14 and April 11 in order to allow for more planning time as well as additional family-friendly communications for the “IEP Meetings Ins and Outs” panel discussion. Ms. Richardson shared a copy of a previous postcard mailer for a parent workshop and will plan to send a similar save-the-date postcard for the April meeting to NPS parents of students with disabilities by early March. The committee discussed use of other communication methods via electronic flyers, social media, etc. to ensure robust promotion of the upcoming meetings.

Ms. Confino-Rehder volunteered to invite presenters for the March 14 “Transitions” and April 11 “IEP Meetings Ins and Outs” workshops. Likewise, Ms. Greco offered to explore potential speakers from the community for the June meeting topic: “Mental Health Awareness/Social-Emotional Needs.”

The Committee reviewed and discussed proposed changes to the SEAC By-Laws. Ms. Greco will continue to work with Martha Rollins, a local Registered Parliamentarian with the National Association of Parliamentarians, to finalize the By-Laws. Mr. Moynihan also volunteered to standardize formatting of the Committee’s By-Laws.

The members present reviewed the proposed contents of the SEAC brochure. Mr. Moynihan recommended establishment of an email account for the SEAC Chair, rather than use of Mr. Washington’s personal email account. Following this discussion and the motion by Ms. Confino-Rehder, seconded by Ms. Nyuydine, for the brochure to include an alternative email address for the SEAC Chair, the brochure was approved.

Committee members with Mr. Washington’s leadership are encouraged to continue to submit potential concerns and recommendations for consideration and incorporation in the current school year’s SEAC annual report, which will be finalized and submitted to the School Board by July 2019.

Following deliberation, the Committee asked Ms. Richardson to determine whether Learning Support Senior Director, Dr. Janice James-Mitchell, could meet with SEAC and stakeholders to review the Department’s Annual Plan, as part of its “Coffee with the Director” event on the evening of Thursday, March 21, 2019 at the Rosemont School. The Committee suggested the event location so that a tour of the new NPS Parent Resource Center could also be planned.

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Other Business: Ms. Greco suggested a future agenda item, which would be consideration of the newly established Parent Resource Center as a warehouse of community and published resources for parents of all students, including exceptional students with disabilities and students who are identified as gifted.

Announcements: On the recent recommendation by Martha Rollins, the guest presenter at the January 20 meeting, Ms. Richardson invited interested members to participate in the upcoming Parliamentary Institute scheduled for Saturday, February 23 at the TowneBank located on Mt. Pleasant Road in Chesapeake. Copies of the workshop flyer were included in member folders. Ms. Greco, who has attended the workshop in the past, noted that the training session provided very helpful meeting strategies, as well as copies of Roberts in Brief to all attendees.

Correspondence: No correspondence was reported.

Next meeting date is Thursday, 3/14/19.

Meeting adjourned at 7:45 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Vicky Greco