

June 22, 2015

Agenda Item Summary

To: Dr. Bobbi Johnson, Superintendent

From: Angela Neely, Executive Director of Special Education

RE: Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC) Annual Report

Area of Responsibility/Oversight: Office of Special Education

Background Information: Local school divisions in Virginia are required by Virginia regulations to have a Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC). The SEAC functions are established in Virginia regulations. One of the functions of the local advisory committee includes submitting periodic reports and recommendations regarding the education of children with disabilities to the division superintendent for transmission to the local school board.

Current Considerations: N/A

Budget Category/Acct. No: N/A

Timeline for Action(s): N/A

Legal/Policy Reference: *Regulations Governing Special Education Programs for Children with Disabilities in Virginia, July 7, 2009*

Attachment: 2015 SEAC Annual Report

Culpeper County Special Education Advisory Committee
Annual Report
School Year 2014-2015

Respectfully Submitted by Karen Terry
June 2015

1. ACCOMPLISHMENTS

The Culpeper SEAC held 5 meetings during the 2014-15 school year. We met in the conference room of the school administration central office. We were pleased to see new parents participate in every meeting this year and we continue to seek new ways to boost attendance and participation in the SEAC.

This year the SEAC and Parent Teacher Resource Center (PTRC) worked together to increase awareness of each group within the Culpeper schools special needs community. Strengthening our special needs community through education, awareness and feedback has been a constant theme during SEAC meetings this year.

The PTRC began regularly publishing and updating an on-line blog with important dates, reminders and information for parents and teachers. The blog link can be found on the Culpeper County Public Schools website and interested parties can then sign up to receive the blog updates automatically through their email.

In April 2015, the SEAC and PTRC joined forces to bring the “Abilities in Action!” Special Needs EXPO to Culpeper. Interested parties could attend the free event and visit with representatives of community service organization and pertinent private businesses to learn more about resources available within the Culpeper area. Three workshops were offered during the day, with topics chosen based on past and present parent questions: Medicaid Waivers, Friendship Building Strategies, and Journey to Adulthood: Puberty and Sexuality (PEATC workshop). A Transition Panel was also held for parents of children transitioning from pre-school to elementary school; elementary to middle school, and middle to high school. The panel was moderated by Mrs. Susan Hauman of the CCPS Special Education Department, and parents had the chance to ask teachers, other parents and students how to better navigate the school transitions students encounter during their school career. The EXPO was very successful and there are plans to make it an annual event beginning October 2015. This EXPO will be combined with an “I’m Determined” event.

2. PRIORITIES FOR UPCOMING SCHOOL YEAR

Bullying continues to be a priority topic with parents. Parents have concerns that their child is, or will be, bullied. SEAC/PTRC will include the topics of bully awareness and prevention in their community outreach training during the 2015-16 school year.

A “Transition Bootcamp” is being designed to assist parents and students facing a programed school transition either to a new school (elementary to middle school, for instance) or as part of graduation. The Bootcamp will be designed to educate parents on transition IEPs, working with the teachers and schools to create a smooth transition, and calming the parents’ concerns so they can best enable their student.

The SEAC and PTRC will host a second EXPO, moving timing from April to October and positioning the EXPO to become an annual event the community can anticipate each year.

SEAC will continue to reach out to parents at school events to make them aware of the role SEAC plays in their child’s education and how they can participate.

SEAC and PTRC plans to host “brown bag dinner” discussions on SEAC meeting nights to give parents a chance to learn and discuss important topics. The primary goal of these meetings will be to offer parents support within targeted areas of concern. The secondary goal will be to encourage SEAC attendance and participation.

3. CURRENT SEAC MEMBERS

Karen Terry, Chairperson

Casey Shelton, Vice Chairperson

Ellen Vaught, Special Education Teacher

Belinda Gishnock, member

Petrina Thomas, member

Warren Thomas, Student member

Tammy Potts, PTRC Representative