

Prince William County
Special Education Advisory Committee
2020-2021
October 20, 2020 7pm
Virtual meeting
bit.ly/PWCS-SEAC

I. **Opening of meeting:** 1906 hours

Call to Order: Jaime Van Echo

Approval of September Minutes: motion to approve by Beverly Hicks, seconded by Yukiko Dove, minutes approved

II. **Citizen Time:**

Sandra Kern, Potomac District states she was able to attend a meeting about dyslexia and happy to bring about awareness

At every meeting of the SEAC, an opportunity is provided for visitors to make public comment. It is received without SEAC comment. The public comment is summarized in the SEAC meeting minutes. The SEAC is always looking for ideas and suggestions from students, parents and teachers that will improve the education of children with disabilities. The SEAC requests that any concerns expressed include general comments dealing with global issues rather than a specific comment dealing with a personal matter or situation. The Committee suggests that you address concerns about personal situations directly to the Office of Special Education. In accordance with HIPAA regulations, please refrain from using the names of students, teachers, or schools.

Please use the comment box in the virtual meeting to identify your first and last name and magisterial district for the minutes.

III. **Office of Special Education:** Dr. Roper presenting SMORE news from around the division.

Dr. Roper discusses sunrise program, and it is referenced in Monthly Magic Newsletter, <https://www.smores.com/57skm-monthly-magic> She continues by sharing amazing pictures of opening of schools/parent's days where parents/families were able to pick up SPIRE kits and other supplies to make virtual school successful. They were excited to have Project Search come to Prince

William this year as well. She suggests we make Woodbine center a place for all ages//playground for all ages and adapted for special needs. They have a ton of materials to distribute to PK and K students and teachers and parents. October is Disability Awareness Month and Dyslexia Awareness Month and AAC Awareness Month.

- IV. **Office of the Ombudsman** Sarah Miller Espinosa, J.D., is privileged to serve as PWCS's first Ombudsman. She joined the school division in August 2019. Prior to joining PWCS, Sarah established the Office of the Ombuds at Montgomery College, a multi-campus community college in Montgomery County, Maryland. Over the past twenty years, she has overseen labor and employee relations programs in the public sector, mediated workplace, and regulatory disputes, and served as an arbitrator, conducting hearings and issuing decisions.
Ombudsman flyer

She joined about 15 months ago. Any member who has a division related concern can confidentially come and talk about that concern. A member is any student, teacher, parent, or anyone related in any way to the school division. She is impartial. She does not get involved in formal complaints and makes sure everyone has all the information about how to do a formal complaint if you need that. She is an attorney but does not practice law in this role. She is an obligated reporter so if the complaint or concern is about potential child abuse then she does have to report that. She collects data and presents reports to the school board. ombuds@pwcs.edu is her email address and that is the easiest way to contact her.

V. **Business:**

- Introduction of new Gainesville Committee Member, Deborah Tekampe ... Goes by Debi
- Motion to approve minutes from January 2020. During February meeting, a motion to postpone approval of the minutes was passed and the March meeting was cancelled due to Governor State of Emergency. Please review minutes and motion to approve January Minutes.
... In review of January minutes, we remembered that we wanted to make a handbook
www.doe.virginia.gov/boe/committees_advisory/special_ed/local_sped_advisory_committees/index.shtml
for new members and also need to be working on a slideshow for the end of year presentation
Shelly Witte motion to approve, Seconded by Kristie Bowie-Young

- Subcommittee to Review and update By-Laws: Jaime Van Echo, Shelly Witte, Kristie Bowie-Young, Rhonda Tabor, discussion and needs.
Working Document

... Committee will email between themselves the working document with the goal to review articles 1 and 2 for submittal to full SEAC for review/approval by full committee

- Subcommittee for SEAC Outreach and membership: Jaime Van Echo, Brandi Workman, Beverly Hicks discussion and updates. Need to contact Occoquan school board member, Lillie Jessie to inform her of the need for a new SEAC representative.

... Debi is joining subcommittee for SEAC Outreach and membership. We have an opening in Occoquan. Agreed to contact Lillie Jessie through Bee Simpson to ask for assistance in finding a parent representative.

- Discussion regarding Facebook page considerations for SEAC: Denise Huebner reporting on information regarding Facebook page for SEAC related to PWCS rules and regulations.

Ms. Huebner says there is a committee in PWCS to review social media for PWCS as a whole but PWCS likes to use one Facebook page to put out all information. Multiple members were concerned about the legal ramifications about having a Facebook page.

Discussion ensues, Ms. Huebner is happy to work on sharing information about meetings with PWCS social media. Also, SEPTA say they will gladly share information about our meetings as well.

1. Yea:

- a) Facebook would be a way to improve visibility for SEAC
- b) Families could share info easier
- c) Would be linked to the PWCS webpage
- d) No comment accounts

2. Nay:

- a) SEAC is a function of the PWCS Office of Special Education required by law. SEAC members are representatives of the school board members and Superintendent and do not operate as a separate public group
- b) Who would own/monitor the Facebook account?
- c) What process would be in place to monitor and update the account?

d) Can we use related parent groups with Facebook accounts to help share SEAC information? SEPTA, PTA, Special Education groups at individual schools, etc.

- New business?

NO

- SEPTA update

J. Sullivan, still up and running, having zoom meetings, awards ceremony last spring funded through virtual gala, they will have a dance-a-thon leading to a virtual gala, save the date, November 27-december 4 dance-a-thon leading up to virtual gala live through you-tube, working with adapted PE teachers for simplified electric slide/hand jive... working on mod pizza and spirit nights, hoping to also grow membership as well

- Parent Resource Center: Rhonda Tabor

Have at least 10 workshops scheduled through December, have some during the day and some during evening hours

https://www.pwcs.edu/academics_programs/special_education/parent_resource_center

Have over 300 books to check out at this time on dyslexia and please check out her website

Yukiko, are interpreters available? Click “for accommodations please fill out this form” and they will have access to an interpreter in the zoom session

VI. Member Time:

- Kristie Bowie-Young: Superintendent Representative
Facilitating support group, Thursday at noon and at 6pm at ARC of Greater PW
- Yukiko Dove- At-Large
No business
- Beverly Hicks-Brentsville District
Stepped away
- Sarah Pitkin- Coles District
Stepped away
- Deborah Tekempe-Gainesville District
A student wrote an entire robotics program, all autism students were able to work in robotics
- Angela Comisky- Neabsco District
No business
- Brandi Workman-Potomac District

- absent
- Shelly Witte-Woodbridge District
No business
- Consultant-Rhonda Tabor
No business
- Consultant-Joi Funches
No business
- Jaime Van Echo-Superintendent Representative
Watching a lot of school board meetings and parents at home are content
and parents whose kids are in school are content
- Vacant-Occoquan District (Justin Caron fill-in)
Absent
- Vacant- Teacher Representative
Vacant
- Vacant-Superintendent Representative
Vacant
- Vacant-Superintendent Representative
Vacant

VII. Closing

- Motion to adjourn by Kristie, seconded by Yukiko closed at 2036 hours
- The SEAC is organized and functions in accordance with state and federal requirements. The Committee's functions include the following: monthly meetings with Director of the Office of Special Education; determining needs of children with disabilities within the county; developing priorities and strategies for meeting identified needs of children with disabilities; preparing and submitting an annual report to the Prince William County School Board.