

SPECIAL EDUCATION ADVISORY COUNCIL  
MINUTES  
MARCH 11, 2009

Members present: Reba Johnson, Kevin Fleming, Sheldia Sparks, Amy Stults, Heather Dieffenbach, Rick Christman, Katy Poole, Stella Smith, Cathy Evans, Scott Ferguson, Janice Horohov, Patty Parsons, Leisa Pickering, Connie Loventhal. Guests: Karen Sheetz, Wendy Wheeler-Mullins, Keyshawn Douglas, Sherri Williams, Rachel Baker

- I. Call to Order Meeting began at 5:35. Meeting called to order by Sherri Williams, Spec. Ed. Administrator.
- II. Introductions (5 minutes)

Sherri Williams explained that Kathy Dykes was in a directors meeting in Louisville, but would be joining the meeting shortly. (Ms. Dykes joined at 5:52)
- III. Approval of Agenda

Ms. Parsons expressed a need to talk about funding from the stimulus package at some point.
- IV. Approval of Consent Items
  - a. Review minutes—approve or amend. A motion was made by Stella Smith to approve and seconded by others.
- V. Old Business (25 minutes)
  - a. Update from Ad-hoc committees
    1. Ms. Pickering and Ms. Parsons reported about the Individual Learning Plans (ILPs). Mr. Christman joined their team and met with the pair at his worksite. It was discussed about how ILPs can be made more meaningful for students with disabilities. Ms. Parsons spoke about her proposal for the Smaller Learning Community grant; however, the grant was not set up for combining classes as she suggested. The Lafayette principal did offer to bring the idea of peer tutoring to the SBDM as a pilot program. Ms. Pickering suggested that this might be written as a proposal from the committee for implementation other schools.
    2. Communication-Ms. Evans reported a need to meet with the PRC to see if their document is similar.
    3. Education-A document for written expression was sent to Kathy, but they are continuing to work on researching scientific research based instruction.

4. Placement and services- Ms. Johnson reported a need for assistance with this committee for membership.
5. Transition committee not present.

Transition Fair update: Ms. Baker reported FCPS buses will be tied up on the day of the fair. Employment trainers will provide some of the transportation. Some buses will be chartered. 56 students have signed up to go, but did not all have their permission forms in. Ms. Pickering reported that 8-9 UK students who will be assisting with our students at arrival and with various activities throughout the day. There will be 2 contests: one for best resume and one for best interview.

- b. Update regarding transportation related to transition fair at UK

## VI. New Business

- a. Discuss Ad-hoc assignments: Kathy will review requests for committee and report back.
- b. Discuss recommended parent seat. Kathy has results and will report information to the nominating committee.
- c. Update on Parent Resource Center and what they have to offer. Stella Smith reported about parent surveys. Parents expressed a need for more information, suggesting they still do not know about the PRC. Ms. Smith passed out a newsletter to the group. E-News is also a resource and the need to continue to add parents to the list. Tammy Lane will be doing an article on the PRC for the FCPS website. The link to the website has been made more efficient. A pilot project is being held at Millcreek for special needs kids and their families as a "fun night." Ms. Sheetz asks how the parents might be able to access the parent survey outside of annual reviews and the results of the survey.
- d. Complaint filed with the State: Kathy Dykes reported that the complaint has confidential information. Most every complaint attacks child find and FAPE. The first part of this one addresses child find and FAPE for students at middle and high school who have mental health and behavioral issues. Common threads for the district have noted students who are truant. Kathy responded that there were about 6 students who did not have IEPs at the time the suit was filed. Various questions were asked about issues related to the complaint. Kathy reported that the state is allowing the district to investigate itself first. Mr. Christman asked if the complaint was related to instruction at MLK. Kathy reported that not all students were at MLK. Ms. Parsons asked about the committee's role related to the complaint. Ms. Dykes reported that the work has to remain within the dept. due to confidentiality. Ms. Smith explained attendance requirements and tracking. The

information is recorded in the student handbook that is given to parents at the first of each year. Ms. Parsons asked that the committee continue to be updated about the complaint. Ms. Dykes agreed to do so to the point at which it will not breach confidentiality.

- e. Discuss meeting every month compared to every other month. Discussion held regarding the pros of meeting more regularly (organization, focus, rate of progress). A vote was taken by silent ballot. Results were 9 for changing the meeting to monthly, 4 for every other, and one who did not care. The committee will now meet every month.
- f. Kathy reported on issue from past meeting about norms for a test that was used at a school. That was corrected at the school level.

## VII. Open Chair

- a. Public comments: Ms. Wheeler-Mullins shared concern about her daughter with a disability being removed from competitive chorus events. She shared a hand-out with detailed accounts. She expressed concern that the actions taken were examples of bigotry and prejudice toward students with disabilities. She would like to ask the district to provide training for staff for behaving respectfully toward students with disabilities and their families. Ms. Pickering suggested a need to work with the school teams on things that might be exceptions. Ms. Parsons shared her experience which she felt was similar and the district had to supply a para-educator for a trip. It was further noted that teacher training was an initial concern for the committee in its early development. Ms. Sheetz reported a continued need to train staff on manifestations of disabilities. Ms. Wheeler-Mullins posed the question of how FCPS is addressing the need to include children with spec. needs in extracurricular activities.
- b. Individual comments from council: Ms. Diefenbach handed out a flyer for dates Sensory-time for special needs kids at the library.

Ms. Dykes reported that the committee might need to discuss time limits for open chair comments.

## VIII. Adjournment of meeting at 7:35.

