

SPECIAL EDUCATION ADVISORY COUNCIL
AGENDA
NOVEMBER 14, 2008

5:30-7:00

Members Present: Cathy Evans; Connie Loventhal; Dylan Paul; Elise Kalika; Katy Poole; Leisa Pickering; Patti Parsons; Reba Johnson

- I. Call to Order 5:45
- II. Introductions: Janet Kalika, Melanie Tyner-Wilson, Wendy Wheeler-Mullins
- III. Approval of Agenda: Agenda approved
- IV. Approval of Consent Items
 - a. Review minutes—approve or amend: Patti Parsons recommended addition to section V item D mentor
- V. Old Business (45 minutes)
 - a. Update on Ad-hoc committees; copies of reports will be made and emailed to Council members. Kathy reviewed brief description of RTI. Kathy discussed having a member of the NCCREST committee to come and review their work with the council.

Education: Connie Loventhal provided a written report. The information will be emailed to council members.

Communication: Katy Poole reported that committee will provide an email to council members next week reviewing their work.

Transition: Dylan Paul reported the committee took a generic FCPS transition agenda, and began to rework the agenda to reflect recommendations. They will meet with Facilitators to see where they are, and will then move forward to make decisions to create a “book”.

Vocational/post secondary: Leisa Pickering reviewed work with Kevin Fleming and the Jefferson County Transition Fair scheduled for tomorrow. Committee met and reviewed issues. Ms. Kalika asked how FCPS would let parents and students know about the transition fair to be held at UK in March. Kathy reviewed that the transportation can only be scheduled between 9:30 and 1:30. Kathy discussed that Rachel Baker and a group from FCPS will be in attendance at the Jefferson county fair.

Placement/Services; Reba discussed how their ad hoc committee will review the data available to review issues within the district.

Ms. Dykes discussed that a committee for capacity has been developed, to address special programs within the schools that will look at space and timelines. Mr. Paul discussed Highly Structured Classrooms and the idea that severe needs of students are met in 5 classrooms across the district.

- b. Peer Mentoring—scheduled for January meeting Sally Miracle will attend the January meeting to discuss Peer Mentoring

VI. New Business

- a. Present names from nominating committee; Written summary provided to members, and reviewed.

Ms. Kalika suggested the nominating committee meet and discuss nominations. She suggested the process needs to begin earlier next year. Ms. Parsons agreed, and commented the process needs to be more structured. Ms. Dykes suggested that the way the nominations came out did show equal representation, and Mr. Paul suggested it reflected a united voice. Ms. Poole stated that in reviewing the nominations it ended up being more equal with all areas represented.

Ms. Parsons discussed that 6 of the members on the committee are to be parents. Ms. Kalika did not feel free to discuss individuals in email, and felt more time would have allowed discussion. Kathy can redact the names of individuals on the nominations forms for the next cycle.

Ms. Parsons discussed that she felt the council compromised on 6. Mr. Paul discussed that the by-laws may need to be reviewed to define the word “parent”. Council motioned to accept the recommended members to be seated in January.
- b. Discuss request to have Mr. Silberman to attend. Kathy will speak with Mr. Silberman tomorrow regarding attendance at the January meeting. Ms. Kalika suggested each committee could ask a question.
- c. Helping Parents Understand Alternate Assessment-Reba
Reba reviewed the question and answer certificate of attainment and alternate assessment document given to her in November by the district. She has worked on a document to shorten the information and guide parents through the process of determining alternate assessment. Ms. Dykes asked what the intention was regarding sending home the information. Ms. Poole suggested that the parent and teacher review this information during a parent teacher contact. Ms. Parsons asked about the signature on the sheet. She had concerns regarding the 3rd bold area regarding accommodations and modifications. Council discussed data and

how that was provided to parents at grading periods and ARC meetings. Kathy reviewed the district's new monitoring form that is now being used for all students in special education. Wendy Wheeler-Mullins asked about item C regarding information on the parents sheet and she inquired about communication disorder or difficulties not being on the sheet – Ms. Johnson stated that she lifted the information directly from the forms – Ms. Dykes will check the information to be sure it is complete and accurate. Kathy discussed that there may have been cases when the issue of Alternate Assessment was not clearly explained or discussed with the parents, and they did not realize that their student was placed on the alternate assessment. Patti asked if the number of 1% is representative of the entire district, or the students identified as needing special education services. Patti asked what the group would do if the parent disagreed with the decision of the ARC to make a decision to pursue Alternate Assessment. Kathy explained that the parents could go through the mediation process, or pursue due process. Ms Poole stated that this type of format would be useful for all disability areas. Parents could use a tool that explains ARC meetings, and process to them. Ms. Pickering discuss that parents are overwhelmed with information, and a resource manual would be helpful.

- d. Meeting frequency and parent resource manual will be discussed in the January meeting.

VII. Open Chair:

- a. Public comments; Wendy discussed the way parents are treated in ARC meetings. Parents are a member of the team, and some feel they don't know enough to make suggestions, or they are afraid to rock the boat. She feels there is a problem with the way some parents are treated. They are met with resistive behavior from school staff, and the suggestions are annoying or a waste of time. An administrator asked if they were going to go through each area of the plep that way, and she felt this was not an appropriate response. Another concern was language that their input was not equal to the suggestion of school employee – “according to the parent”, and this minimizes the information. Parents are the schools customers, and feels that a consumer satisfaction survey can be used and provided to parents after each ARC. Ms. Pickering discussed her own experience, and stated she never felt that way – she felt that her comments were equal, and when stating “according to parent”, it reflected things the parent may see but the school may not. In her experience she felt differently. Wendy stated she had the experience repeatedly. She questioned whether it was the category of disability, and whether educators may have difficulty with someone with an equivalent level of knowledge sitting

at the table with them. Ms. Poole discussed her responses to “according to the parent”, and Mr. Paul discussed that with negative interaction, this would have a much different connotation. Wendy discussed that we also have parents who are not comfortable to participate and are intimidated by the language used. Ms. Poole discussed communication issues regarding notification, and the forms function is not parent friendly. Ms. Tyner Wilson discussed the issue regarding cultural responsiveness, and the districts approach in the ARC’s. Ms. Tyner Wilson shared information regarding targets and the large gaps for students with disabilities through the site based council.

b. Individual comments from council

VIII. Adjournment of meeting

7:29