

SPECIAL EDUCATION ADVISORY COUNCIL
MINUTES
SEPTEMBER 11, 2008

5:30-7:00

Members Present: Leisa Pickering; Connie Loventhal; Traci Brewer; Dana Landry; Jennifer Lloyd; Kevin Fleming; Heather Dieffenbach; Patti Parsons; Dylan Paul; Cathy Evans; Hazel Forsythe

I. **Call to Order** 5:39

II. **Introductions**

III. **Approval of Agenda:** Kathy requested we move new business to beginning of meeting to allow Melanie Tyner-Wilson to speak to group. Motion to accept agenda

IV. **Approval of Consent Items** (5 minutes)

a. Review minutes—approve or amend – Motion to accept minutes.

V. **Old Business** (45 minutes)

Kathy reviewed packet information.

a. Update on Ad-committees

Education – provided new mission statement. Ms. Loventhal reviewed groups work and plans for the next meeting.

Communication – provided mission statement. Committee has not been able to hold an organizational meeting yet, but one has been scheduled.

Transition – have made initial contacts, and have gotten documents from the district. This committee will contact facilitators for input to develop a handbook for transition.

Vocational/Post Secondary – interested in following up with the Transition Fair issues. Mr. Fleming is still interested in sponsoring a FCPS Transition fair, and committee has discussed peer tutoring.

Placement/services – Committee now only has two members, however they are continuing to work on mission statement. They are seeking clarity about programs in FCPS regarding Autism, Behavior, Significant Cognitive Disabilities, etc.

b. **Youth Employment/Transition Conference**-Kevin reported on the Jefferson County Transition Fair – continue to meet with P&A, and Jefferson County Schools, Voc Rehab, and other knowledgeable individuals. The Fair scheduled for November 14, at the Galt House from 9:30 – 1:30. Tracks of 30 minute sessions are being scheduled to address employment, employment skills, and post-

secondary education. This is also focused on parents and educators assisting with the transition process. Members of the council were invited to participate as a learning experience for the development of a transition fair for FCPS. 250 participants are expected – including parents and teachers. Members of the vocational committee will work with Kevin to attend meetings and participate with the JCS Fair

- c. **Transition Fair-Voc/Post-Secondary group** – update provided.
- d. **Peer Mentoring**-Patty reviewed information she has regarding various programs. She reviewed programs schools offered. She spoke with BSHS and HCHS counselors, and special education teachers. Mentors are recommended by teachers. In peer tutoring, students take a class with a special education teacher, and then participate in the classroom with the students, and then later into the general education setting. At the middle school level, Morton Middle has a program. Ms. Parsons spoke with LHS, and was told that there did not appear to be interest in the program there. The program does not exist at PLD either. Committee discussed how this could occur at the elementary level.
- e. **Selection of new members:** Ms. Dykes reviewed forms, informational papers provided to committee members regarding requests for information/recommendations. Ms. Dykes also reviewed an ad run in the newspaper, which included mission statement and information on how to apply to participate on the committee. The PRC and Facilitators have the information. Therapists and general education teachers are also welcome to participate. Applications are due September 30. Mr. Paul expressed that we need representation from multiple areas. Ms. Dykes reviewed bylaws regarding council members and the nominating committee. Ms. Dykes recommended one person from each ad hoc committee to participate on the nominating committee. Ms. Dykes reviewed concerns regarding term lengths. There are currently 2 members with 1 year term lengths. Council discussed multiple options to address term lengths. Traci Brewer volunteered to participate for an additional year. Mr. Paul discussed participating as a community volunteer and working on his committee, while reducing his term to 1 year. Heather Dieffenbach will also increase to 3 years. Patti Parsons discussed the liaison from the Equity council not being counted as a member with term limits, and not having the liaison as a voting member. This opens up another position.

VI. New Business (15 minutes)

- a. **School within a school concept-Melanie Tyner-Wilson-guest speaker.**

Melanie Tyner-Wilson presented information to group regarding State Parent Advisory Council, and welcomes questions, input and/or concerns to be provided to her for address in that committee.

Ms. Tyner-Wilson presented on the “school within a school” concept. She reviewed various learning communities available within FCPS. She discussed how we could implement these programs for students with disabilities. She presented the question, “Would it be possible to look at the disability on the front end, and develop a program around that”. An area would be chosen, and the program designed to consider how to include students with disabilities. This concept would include children with and without disabilities. Ms. Tyner-Wilson is seeking information to determine if this is a possibility with the grant provided for “Smaller Learning Communities”. All high schools in FCPS received funding to implement specific programs. Ms. Tyner-Wilson suggested more intentional planning to develop a smaller learning community program with a starting point to consider students with disabilities. It was suggested that perhaps you could look for a sponsor and begin with a class level program, which incorporates multiple inputs and utilizes Universal Design. Peer tutoring was also discussed as a way to begin to incorporate this concept. Ms. Dykes has contacted the CKSEC Coop, and Sally Miracle will assist, and attend the next Parent Advisory Council meeting. Ms. Dykes will provide contact information for Ms. Miracle.

VII.

Open Chair (15 minutes)

- a. **Public comments** – the information regarding peer mentoring was exciting, and useful. Another guest stated that she too was pleased with the peer tutoring information, and Leestown Middle also has a peer tutoring program.
- b. **Individual comments from council** – Heather provided brochures regarding the Library and the new opening of the Northside Branch. Patti discussed emailing information regarding her discussion at the last meeting concerning math requirements.

VIII. **Adjournment of meeting:** Motion to adjourn