

**Alexandria City Public Schools
Special Education Advisory Committee Meetings
Safeway – 3526 King St.**

**Wednesday October 3, 2018
11:45 a.m. – 1:15 pm**

MINUTES

- 1) Call to Order – Janet Eissenstat
- 2) Introductions – Coral Childs, Courtney Davis, Janet Eissenstat, Cindy Hart, Margaret Lorber, Deanne McNulty, Crystal Prall, Janet Reese, Sandra Strachan Vieira, and Terry Werner
- 3) Public Comment – none
- 4) Art on the Avenue and Disability Awareness Month– Deanne McNulty

The T.C. Williams Art Department is helping with a mural for Art on the Avenue. A grant paid for supplies and they should arrive tomorrow. The booth has 2 tables and 4 chairs and must be staffed with 4 volunteers at all times. There will be informational handouts and balloons to distribute. Officially the event is from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., but it normally ends early. Attendees will create a mural and it will travel from school to school during the academic year. A student report and videographer will be there to record the event. Contact Deanne if you can help.

According to Terry Werner, the supplies were not ordered in a timely fashion. She has made alternate arrangements and will deliver the supplies on site Saturday morning. She also ordered balloons.

Janet Eissenstat has another commitment and cannot attend the event, but attendees are welcome to park at her home.

- 5) Committee Membership and Recruitment – Janet Eissenstat

The SEAC committee may have up to 18 members. At the moment, it officially has 5 members. There are 2 applicants in process. Janet has asked each school principal to nominate 3 potential members. Can the

school board also nominate members? Sandra Strachan Vieira agreed with this idea. She also commented that the online application was difficult to find.

Margaret Lorber did not know if the school board could nominate committee members. She suggested Janet speak with the school board clerk. Margaret will also look into moving the application to join the committee.

Janet would like SEAC to create a 1 page informational flyer. Terry offered to distribute it.

Sandra asked if meeting during the day would discourage members. Working parents shouldn't have to take leave to attend a daytime SEAC meeting. Janet countered that parents shouldn't have to get a babysitter to attend an evening SEAC meeting. Sandra asked if attendees could call in for meetings. According to Janet, they may, however, when an issue requires a vote, they must attend in person to participate in the vote. Sandra would like to revisit this requirement.

Janet postponed nominations and officer elections until the November meeting or as a special meeting. She does not plan to run for committee chair. The committee also needs a vice chair. Coral Childs agreed to remain secretary.

6) Report from the Director of Specialized Instruction – Terry Werner

The timeline for the special education evaluation went to the school board. The final report from PCG was received in September.

The first draft (received in June and presented to the school board) resulted in the creation of a steering committee to draft an implementation plan. The draft had recommendations in 10 categories, which ACPS consolidated into 4 categories. A subcommittee was created for each of the 4 categories with 9 members each. Each subcommittee drafted a 3 year implementation plan. Janet Eissenstat co-chaired the Culture and Climate subcommittee.

The draft implementation plan is 90 pages long and is being reviewed by ACPS senior leadership. PCG is drafting an executive summary. PCG

will also be at the October 25 school board meeting to present their results. All documents related to the study will go public October 19, including the 200+ page report.

The school board will finalize the draft implementation plan at its November 8 meeting. The draft implementation plan will go public November 2. The public will have 30 days to comment on the draft plan. There will be a meeting with SEAC to discuss its comments on November 13. The comment period closes December 5 and comments will go to ACPS December 7.

ACPS has until December 12 to make changes. The school board will vote on the final plan at its December 20 meeting. Terry will be the lead for implementing the recommendations.

Janet would like SEAC to respond during the comment period. Terry suggested SEAC send comments to Margaret Lorber before the October school board meeting. Terry would also like to see any SEAC comments so she can relay them to PCG.

Margaret would like to see the report go public sooner and wants more SEAC involvement in the implementation plan. She has contacted Dr. Hutchings, the ACPS Superintendent, regarding this. Janet will also contact Clint Page, Chief Accountability Officer, about this.

Sandra Strachan Vieira believes SEAC should provide comments throughout the process, not just during the comment period. Margaret suggests a special joint meeting of SEAC and the school board to discuss the report and implementation plan. She also noted that the date for the November 8 school board meeting may change.

Sandra also asked if school principals would receive copies of the draft implementation plan. Terry said yes, and emphasized that she wanted feedback on the draft implementation plan, not the report. Sandra commented that the implementation plan would only be as good as the report and Janet commented that the draft implementation plan needed to go public ASAP so there was time for good feedback.

7) Standing Committee Appointments – Janet Eissenstat

Appointments are on hold until committee membership increases.

8) Report from the Parent Resource Committee – Terry Werner

It is budget time. Her office will need funding to implement to PCG report recommendations. She will also need additional staff. The budget process is complicated this year due to the new Superintendent and an acting Chief Financial Officer.

9) New Business -

Janet Eissenstat noted that ACPS is seeking comments on the high school capacity issue. Comments go to the school board December 7. Special Education needs to be included in those comments.

Janet reminded committee members that Alexandria is asking for feedback on its therapeutic recreation program October 17 and 18. Margaret Lorber is opposed to a fee increase for therapeutic recreation and recommends a sliding scale.

Janet asked for a volunteer to represent SEAC at Parent Teacher Association Council (PTAC). The Alexandria PTAC advocates for all children - not just one grade, one school, or one side of town. It works closely with the superintendent and school board and focuses on education policy. She will also begin asking for volunteers to attend school board meetings.

Sandra Strachan Vieira noted that Canvas does not allow tutoring below grade level and that the tutoring available is not as robust as in the past. Terry Werner will look into this.

10) Adjournment – Cindy Hart proposed a motion to adjourn. Sandra Strachan Vieira seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.