Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC)

ANNUAL REPORT

Systemic Special Education Needs and Recommended Actions

2023-2024 School Year

Prepared for:
The LCPS School Board
November 2024

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INTRODUCTION

The Regulations Governing Special Education Programs for Children with Disabilities in Virginia reflect the state and federal requirements for the provision of special education and related services. Section 8VAC20-81-230 D.2 of the Virginia regulations mandate that an active SEAC exists, specifies membership that requires that a majority of members be individuals with disabilities or parents of children with disabilities as well as defines specific functions of the SEAC, which are as follows:

1. Advise the local school division of needs in the education of students with disabilities;

2. Participate in the development of priorities and strategies for meeting the identified needs of students with disabilities;

3. Submit periodic reports and recommendations regarding the education of students with disabilities to the division superintendent for transmission to the local school board;

4. Assist the local school division in interpreting plans to the community for meeting the special needs of students with disabilities for educational services;

5. Review the policies and procedures for the provision of special education and related services prior to submission to the local school board; and

6. Participate in the review of the local school division's annual plan.

This annual report satisfies requirements 1, 2 and 3 above and serves to confirm that the SEAC membership for the 2023-2024 operational year satisfied the requirements of the above-referenced regulations.

COMMITTEE ORGANIZATION

The SEAC year commences on September 1 and ends on May 30 of the following calendar year. During the 2023-2024 school year SEAC had 21 voting members (out of 21 possible members) and 71 PTA/PTO Representatives. SEAC strives to have one PTA/PTO Representative from each school to report activities important to the special education community to each school.

SEAC STANDING COMMITTEES

Five standing subcommittees are used to conduct much of the work of the SEAC. The

five subcommittees are necessary for the functioning of the committee. SEAC members are required to identify a subcommittee based upon each member's expertise, interests, and concerns. Subcommittees make recommendations to the full committee based on issues identified in the Annual Report, Annual Survey, and Public Comments. Such recommendations may result in further study with additional information from the Office of Special Education. Additionally, the Director of Special Education and one school board member serve as liaisons to SEAC. LCPS special education staff are assigned to consult with each of the subcommittees, providing technical assistance, clarification of LCPS policies and procedures, and additional information. The five subcommittees and their function follow.

1. **Executive -** The Executive Subcommittee includes the Chair, Immediate Past Chair, Vice Chair of Planning, Vice Chair of Membership, Vice Chair Communications, and Secretary. The committee establishes priorities for meeting agendas and provides overall direction to the SEAC.

2. **Meaningful Inclusion –** Examines current practices within our school division and identifies exemplar practices/programs as well as looking for areas of need to expand inclusion for students with disabilities in their school communities both during and after school.

3. **Nominating -** The Nominating Subcommittee is charged with establishing a slate of nominees to fill Executive Subcommittee vacancies.

4. **Policy and Compliance –** Reviewing policies and procedures as they pertain to students with disabilities is a core function of SEAC. SEAC works diligently to be properly included in the workflow for all relevant reviews and to be afforded the opportunity and time for due diligence in formulating input on behalf of SEAC prior to policies being submitted to the school board.

5. **Specialized Programs and Services -** Providing speech therapy, occupational therapy, assistive technology, music therapy, career and transition services, twice exceptional programs, specialized reading instruction, and intensive autism and behavior programs are critical to the success of large cohorts of special education students. Currently they focus on Specialized Math and Reading and Transition.

MEETINGS and PRESENTATIONS

The full committee is required by VA Regulations to meet at least 4 times annually, the Loudoun SEAC typically meets the first Wednesday of every month beginning in September and concluding in May (8 times). Subcommittees meet monthly as necessary to fulfill their responsibilities to the SEAC. All meetings and work sessions are open to the public. During the 2023-2024 school year, SEAC completed:

- SEAC membership reviewed and provided feedback on 18 School Board Policies;
- Hosted the SEAC Annual Awards in June 2024 with an Awards Ceremony;
- Specialized Literacy and Math Subcommittee work sessions continued to dive deeply into specialized literacy and math topics.
- The Transition Subcomittee held their first work sessions to discuss topics such as the new School Links software, Independent Living Labs, and the need for a Transition Center.

During the 2023-2024 school year, business meetings and presentations were held in-person, live streamed, and broadcasted on the following dates:

September 6, 2023: Welcome and School Year Kick-Off

Dr. Aaron Spence, LCPS Superintendent
Ms. Tedra Richardson, LCPS Assistant Superintendent, Department of Student Services

Meet and Greet with the Office of Special Education
Dr. Paige Carter, LCPS Director of Special Education, Specialized Instruction

October 4, 2023:

Presentation: Specialized Reading Instruction Updates in LCPS and Identifying Struggling Readers
Presenters: Margaret Ausberry, Special Education Supervisor for Specialized Instruction and other Specialized Instructional Facilitators - Reading (SIF-Rs)

November 1, 2023:

Presentation: SEAC Annual Report, 2021-2022
Presenter: SEAC Chair

December 6, 2023:

Presentation: Understanding Transition Planning within the IEP
Presenter: Jenna Arndt, Special Education Supervisor, Suzanne Burch, Transition Specialist, and Sarah Hendricks, Transition Specialist

January 10, 2024:

Presentation: Role of SEAC

Presenter: Chiquita Seaborne, Ph.D., Family Engagement Specialist/Special Projects Coordinator, Office of Special Education Family Support and Special Facilities, Virginia Department of Education

February 14, 2024:

Presentation: Inclusive Practices and Meaningful Inclusion

Presenter: Chris Bugaj, Assistive Technology Specialist

March 6, 2024:

Presentation: Executive Functioning

Presenter: Dr. Rachna Varia, MindWell Psychology

April 3, 2024: SEAC Annual Report, 2022-2023

May 1, 2024: **SEAC Business Meeting**

June 5, 2024: Annual Excellence in Special Education Awards Ceremony

2022-2023 PRIOR AREAS OF CONCERN

Equity

Educational equity means that each child receives what they need to develop to their full academic and social potential. To address and achieve equity, LCPS policies and procedures must be aligned, and barriers identified and addressed. There are many wonderful initiatives within our schools, but there is still inconsistency and some basic practices within LCPS schools that do not live up to our school district's ideals.

SEAC encouraged the School Board to:

- Build special education staffing proposals from identified student and teacher needs rather than based upon administrative ratios applied to projections from the Department of Budget and Financial Services.
- Support the training for substitute teachers and teaching assistants in Special Education topics before working with students.
- Continue to fund the Continuum of Special Education by offering a virtual option of schooling for K-12 students.
- Work with the Department of Instruction, Department of Student Services, and the Office of Special Education to support the efficacy of IEP Services delivery for high school and middle school special education students. Particular focus on effective co-teaching models and incorporating Tier 1 accommodations (i.e. pre-printed notes, study guides, accessibility software, etc.) into instruction for all students.
- Work with DDI and Department of Student Services to make sure our students are

included on the general education roster for their grade in Phoenix/ParentVue.

- Encourage the Department of Instruction and Department of Student Services to provide recovery services to students who experienced learning loss or persistent low scores on standardized testing but were not included in recovery/compensatory services.
- At the secondary level, design a course curriculum that can be used to establish Peer Groups as a credit-bearing elective. Students that participate in the Peer Groups course would partner with students with disabilities to enable them to participate in more general education environments (i.e. after-school activities, lunch, study halls, academic and elective courses) to facilitate more meaningful inclusion in our schools.
- Provide notification to parents on school flyers about who to reach out to if there is a need for support for a student due to a disability to participate.
- Create pathways for students with disabilities in all CTE offerings.

Transition

SEAC encouraged the Office of Special Education to:

- Create a systematic way to track Life Skills and Workplace Readiness Skills.
- Create a blueprint of what equipment and materials should be in every independent living lab. Identify and prioritize building needs based on school programs. Capital Improvement Budget impact.
- Remove the Algebra I SOL and PSAT admission barriers to MATA unless applicable for coursework.
- Consider creating Transition Training Centers to support a variety of transition training at key locations across the county.
- Create a Community Independence Instruction (CII) Framework and provide funding to encourage full elementary and middle school participation.
- Additional Transition Teachers to support middle school to high school transition and all students at the high school and a full time Transition Supervisor. Currently transition teachers are spread too thin to provide consistent interaction and support to students with disabilities throughout high school.

Accessibility

SEAC encouraged:

- The Department of Student Services to partner with the Department of Teaching and Learning to create procedures and training for ensuring accessible instructional materials are available across all LCPS classrooms.
- The Department of Student Services to provide regular training to teachers, parents, and students on Tier 1 accessibility tools such as Google Read/Write, Equatio, Google Keep, etc.
- The Department of Instruction to provide training to all General Education teachers on how to include all students in the planning process for lessons and utilizing inclusive design practices such as Universal Design for Learning (UDL) in every class and at every grade level.
- The School Board to allocate funds and direct the Department of Support Services to make our school playgrounds accessible and inclusive to all students by

providing fencing around all first through fifth grade playground area and structures. Create a standard buildout for Preschool through Kindergarten that includes accessible, durable, commercial grade equipment. See our SEAC Inclusive Playground Recommendations for more detail.

Literacy and Math Instruction (reading, writing, spelling, handwriting, and math):

SEAC encouraged the School Board to:

- Utilize TNTP K-3 Curriculum Review Recommendations to update LCPS practices.
- Clearly define the implementation of Policy 5350, Parent Notification for Screening and Assessment and define remediation framework for students not meeting benchmarks. Parent notifications remain inconsistent and all requirements of Policy 5350 are not being followed (i.e. providing notification of intervention plan particularly at secondary levels, clear explanation of scores). SEAC recommends revisiting Policy 5350-REG.
- Ongoing concern that appropriate literacy services are not being provided to high school students who do not meet 'literacy screening' expectations such as iReady reading & FAST.
- For the Reading SOL, LCPS is using an outdated, predetermined score (SS≤77) that inhibits the IEP team and/or Section 504 team from making decisions on the need for the read aloud accommodation based on the student's individual, unique needs.
- Increase training on teaching morphology.
- For Preschool, develop comprehensive developmental monitoring tool, that includes pre-academic standards and report progress at least three times a year to the parents.
- Develop a decision Matrix to assist and provide transparency and guidance to IEP teams.
- Increase Specialized Instructional Facilitator to provide one per cluster.

PUBLIC COMMENT

The public comment process is an important mechanism for obtaining feedback from the SEAC community in identifying widespread special education needs. The following themes were identified through the 2023-2024 public comment process and contributed to the development of the current year's recommended actions outlined in this report.

October 2023:

- Anonymous: Equitable Access to Playgrounds
  - Concern: All schools should provide adequate play areas for all students regardless of abilities. Students have been denied access to playgrounds that are utilized by general education students. If students with special needs need to have a separate playground then LCPS should provide an equitable area for these students.
  -

December 2023:

- Erin Burns: Special Education Staffing
  - Concern: Countryside Elementary only 3 of 7 special education teachers on staff. This is impacting services provided to students as well as putting undo stress on the current staff.

- Anonymous: Full Day ECSE Pre-K
  - Concern: Extend ESCE Pre-kindergarten Reverse Inclusion classrooms from ½ day (4 hours) to full days (6-7 hours). Increase the number of these classrooms throughout the county (due to the increased demand). There is research that indicates the benefits of these changes.

February 2024

- Anonymous: Access to Raw Data without In Person Meeting
  - Concern: Request for raw data required an in person meeting. This is unfair to caregivers who may be unable to take time off during the school day.

- Mary McClintock: Virtual Distance Learning Elementary
  - Virtual Distance Learning Program SEAC Representative. Thank you for your great leadership and compassion for adding elementary virtual learning back into LCPS.

- Karlee Copeland: Policy 8420 for Self-Carry of Medications
  - Concern: The request is to add/include digestive enzymes. This policy change would align with Fairfax County. This change would provide freedom to eat snacks and lunch without the need to visit the nurse's office each time. Offers a more inclusive approach and ensures the students with medical needs enjoy a more seamless school

experience.

- Rachel Perrott: SEAC Awards Suggestion
    - Suggestion to provide outstanding teachers that are recognized by SEAC Annually be provided paid time off for their outstanding achievements. This practice is being exercised in neighboring counties. As stated, nothing says “Thank You” like a day off for your hard work. This would be leave that would not impact their personal leave and could be used at the teacher’s discretion.

March 2024

- Lisa J. Williams**:** IEP Teams and Literacy Supports
    - Concern: Frustrations with IEP team and literacy supports. Teams should focus on strengths and understanding how child learns. Suggests that eligibility should be part of the Office of Special Education.

- Rock Ridge Performing Arts: Upcoming performance of *Frozen*
    - There will be nine performances including a relaxed performance on April 27 @ 11am.

April 2024:

- Kyle Boardman & Amy Stone: A Place to Be touring productions, *Pathfinders*
    - New program is *Pathfinders* trying to get local businesses and special educators who want to be our voices. Providing a window into their lives. Videos of what their lives are actually like not just a stage production. Creating a world where everyone is heard and understood. Production is April 19, 2024.

- Mary McClintock: Policy 6640 and Diabetes
    - Concern: Please continue to provide policy updates to 6640 as it will keep Type 1 Diabetic students safe and healthy. Parent shared concerns about safety of her child with diabetes while at school due to not having her daughter’s glucose levels being continuously monitored via a CGM (continuous glucose monitor) by school personnel.

- Lesley Durden: Related Services and Holidays
    - Concern: Parent was told by IEP team that if a holiday falls on the day when the service provider is scheduled to work with your child, that time is forfeited. For instance, during the first two quarters alone, there are 7 holidays that fall on a Monday. This translates to 38% of the time during which our children will not receive services.

May 2023

- Natasha Paquette: Updates to Policies and Practices Related to Data Review
    - Concern: Frustration with data practices and how that equates to being equitable members of the IEP team. Grateful that Dr. Carter informed

school staff that Data Review Meetings will no longer be required as a prerequisite for parents getting copies of their child's records and data, LCPS policies and practices need to be revised and brought into compliance with the law, and the rights under the law should be made transparent to parents/guardians.

ANNUAL SURVEY

The *Special Education Advisory Committee Annual Parent Survey (2023-2024) Data Analysis* was completed Dr. Adam Winsler of Child Research, Evaluation, Data, and Information Technology Services (CREDITS, LC) and George Mason University. Dr. Winsler also completed the 2019-2020, 2020-2021, 2021-2022, and 2022-2023 SEAC survey analysis. Please see document 2023-2024 SEAC Survey Analysis for the full report. The 2023-2024 analysis document summarizes the following:

1) Overall parental satisfaction for the county;
2) Whether parental satisfaction varies according to students' school district, disability category, and school level/type;
3) Notable changes in parental satisfaction from academic years 2022-2023 to 2023-2024; and
4) Results from a qualitative analysis of parents' open-ended responses to the survey.

Historical Survey Information

Students with Disabilities in LCPS are a significant minority group with 9,856 students receiving special education services (December 1st Count for the 23-24 SY, VDOE).

History of Responses

- 2017 – 115 Responses
- 2018 – 568 Responses
- 2019 – 822 Responses

Both Spanish and English:

- 2020 – 2953 Total Responses (1844 Complete and 1109 Incomplete)
- 2021 – 1578 Total Responses (1040 Complete and 538 Incomplete)
- 2022 – 612 Total Responses (563 Complete 49 Incomplete)
- 2023 – 801 Total Responses (712 Complete 89 Incomplete)
- 2024 – 766 Total Responses (758 Complete 8 Incomplete)

Breakdown of 2023-2024 Responses by Grade Level

Grade Level	Responses	2024 Percentages
Early Childhood Special Education	89	12.08
Elementary School	360	48.85
Middle School	134	18.18
High School	140	19.00
Returning Graduate (e.g. CAST, Project Search, etc.)	14	1.90%

Responses Compared to 2022-2023 Survey

Grade Level	Responses	2023 Percentages
Early Childhood Special Education	92	12.07
Elementary School	364	47.77
Middle School	152	19.95
High School	154	20.21

Breakdown of 2023-2024 Responses by District

District	2024 Responses	2024 Percentage
Sterling District	74	10.04
Algonkian District	63	8.55
Ashburn District	165	22.39
Little River District	69	9.36
Broad Run District	42	5.70
Catoctin District	84	11.40
Dulles District	122	16.55
Leesburg District	118	16.01

Responses by District Compared to 2022-2023

District	2023 Responses	2023 Percentages
Sterling District	143	17.85
Algonkian District	38	4.74
Ashburn District	184	22.97

District	2023 Responses	2023 Percentages
Blue Ridge District	112	13.98
Broad Run District	41	5.12
Catoctin District	45	5.62
Dulles District	109	13.61
Leesburg District	129	16.10

Comparative Data

In 2023-2024 there were approximately 9,856 students (December 1st SPED Count VDOE) receiving special education services through LCPS. This is approximately 12.02 percent of the entire LCPS student population of 82,028, and under the national average of 15 percent (National Center for Education Statistics) for students receiving special education services.

Disability Designation	Survey Responses	Survey Percentage	LCPS %
Specific Learning Disability (SLD)	**152**	**20.40**	**31.06**
Other Health Impairment (OHI)	**112**	**15.03**	**20.37**
Autism Spectrum Disorder	**224**	**30.07**	**21.06**
Emotional Disability	**56**	**7.52**	**6.56**
Speech or Language Impairment	**68**	**9.13**	**9.1**
Visual Impairment, including blindness	**4**	**0.54**	**0.29**
Deafness	**2**	**0.27**	**0**
Hearing Impairment	**5**	**.67**	**0.95**
Orthopedic Impairment	**5**	**0.67**	**0.27**
Intellectual Disability	**44**	**5.91**	**3.87**
Traumatic Brain Injury	**2**	**.27**	**<**
Multiple Disabilities	**27**	**3.62**	**0.8**
Developmental Delay	**44**	**5.91**	**5.6**

DATA ANALYSES

The 2023-2024 survey was administered in English and Spanish and had 766 Total Responses (758 Complete 8 Incomplete). A further examination of the data led to 8 responses being excluded from analysis due to large amounts of missing information or inconsistent/impossible combinations of responses. The final 758 responses analyzed included cases that had information on the disability category for the student, the school district they attended, their level of schooling (preschool, elementary, middle, high school, returning graduate), and at least one response to a “satisfaction with” or “agreement with” survey question.

Summary of Satisfaction Across the District

Overall, the analysis across the entire school district shows that about 78% (a range of 69-86% depending on the item) of parents are satisfied with the special education services received in 2023-2024 with around 14-31% that are not satisfied.

Overall, County-Wide Satisfaction with LCPS Services – 2023-2024

The survey most notably outlined satisfaction from parents regarding 504 and IEP meetings, ECSE, transition to kindergarten, special education eligibility processes, communication between families and schools, specialized services (Speech, PT, Music Therapy, Assistive Technology), and academic as well as specialized instruction. There was dissatisfaction in transition out of high school, post-graduation programs, resource referrals both internal and external, specialized reading and writing instruction, foreign language instruction, and some specialized therapy services (Occupational Therapy, Vision support). Parents would like to see increased communication and collaboration with parents as partners in the IEP process, and enhanced efforts to ensure that meaningful inclusion takes place both in the classroom and at school events. Transition (from middle to high school and out of high school) continues to be an area of concern and opportunity.

General Trends

A persistent pattern for all LCPS special education services is that the older the child with disabilities, the less satisfied parents are with services received. Those in early childhood and often elementary school are generally satisfied, but parents of students with disabilities in middle school and high school are considerably less satisfied. Additional resources to improve services provided for the older children are recommended. Parents of children with Multiple Disabilities, Emotional Disabilities, and in some cases Intellectual Disabilities were typically the least satisfied and should have increased attention focused on them. The more severe the disability, it also seemed that parents perceived school staff to be less knowledgeable, and additional prioritization of training/coaching may be appropriate.

Summary of Qualitative Responses

Parents and guardians had much to say during the 2023-2024 school year. Parents provided many insights and helpful suggestions. Overall, the most common responses suggested/asked for:

- Better training and more consistency in staff.
- Increased resources.
- A desire for LCPS to more strongly prioritize children with disabilities.
- A desire for more consistency across schools, teachers, and personnel.
- Increased communication and collaboration with parents as partners, especially with respect to the IEP process.
- Better (and earlier) transition planning for after high school.
- Enhanced efforts to ensure that meaningful inclusion takes place both in the classroom and for after and in school events.

COMMENDATIONS

SEAC is appreciative of School Board Chair, Melinda Mansfield for appointing School Board Member by Kari LaBell as the SEAC School Board Liaison and for serving as the Alternate Board Liaison to SEAC. SEAC Liaisons regularly attended SEAC meetings, communicated openly and consistently with SEAC, and helped to bring SEAC's voice to School Board deliberations.

SEAC would like to commend Dr. Paige Carter, Director of Special Education and Ms. Tedra Richardson, Assistant Superintendent of Student Services for their unwavering support of the disability community for the 2023-2024 school year. SEAC greatly appreciates the time and attention given to matters that are brought to Dr. Carter and Ms. Richardson and their teams. A collaborative mindset has led to thoughtful discussions, and successful problem-solving. Their leadership has directly impacted these efforts and SEAC looks forward to continued productive collaboration.

SEAC would like to thank the Office of Special Education staff for their enthusiastic support of SEAC. They are generous with their time and guidance, and their contributions have greatly enhanced our work.

This past year many areas of LCPS administration collaborated with the special education community through SEAC. This collaboration led to a greater understanding of processes and barriers as well as provided increased transparency to the community.

ANNUAL EXCELLENCE IN SPECIAL EDUCATION AWARDS

The Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC) recognized educators, staff, programs, a community member and students who were nominated and demonstrated excellence in the LCPS special education community and who inspire others to do the same.

The Recognition of Excellence in Special Education Awards honor those who have gone **above-and-beyond what is typical and what is expected** to include, supporting and creating opportunities for students to shine with various types of visible and invisible disabilities, and celebrates the extraordinary impact these exceptional people have on the personal and academic success, self-esteem, sense of belonging and meaningful inclusion for students with disabilities throughout LCPS. The awards ceremony was held June 5, 2024 at Rock Ridge High School where 118 award recipients received certificates, a small gift, and trophies, and were recognized by Superintendent Dr. Aaron Spence and School Board Chair Melinda Mansfield and School Board Members Lauren Shernoff, Dr. Sumera Rashid, and Deanna Griffiths. See Appendix A.

RECOMMENDATIONS

In comparing the 2022-2023 Areas of Concern to the 2023-2024 survey results, SEAC continues to offer recommendations in many of the same areas as these needs continue to impact LCPS students with disabilities. However, exciting work has begun with the Department of Student Services and the Office of Special Education to develop a comprehensive plan that enhances the supports and opportunities we provide to our students with disabilities to prepare them for a successful transition into adulthood. Providing a continuum of opportunities for our students remains a top priority.

Equity

Educational equity means that each child receives what they need to develop to their full academic and social potential. To address and achieve equity, our ONE LCPS Strategic Plan for Excellence and LCPS policies and procedures must be aligned and barriers identified and addressed. There are many wonderful examples of inclusion taking place in LCPS, but there still exist many systemic needs to increase access to opportunities for our students with disabilities.

SEAC encourages the School Board to:

- Fund special education staffing proposals from identified student and teacher

needs rather than based simply upon administrative ratios applied to projections from the Department of Budget and Financial Services. SEAC supports the partnership that is occurring between the Office of Special Education and the Department of Budget and Financial Services. SEAC supports adding a "plus one" additional special education teacher to each elementary school to provide flexibility to schools so that they can accommodate students who require more intensive support, but do not fit into a program classroom.

- SEAC has long advocated for training for substitute teachers and teaching assistants in Special Education topics before working with students. SEAC strongly supports plans to provide in person training and coaching to our paraprofessionals to ensure that students receive their special education services and have access to meaningful inclusion.
- Continue to fund the Continuum of Special Education by offering a virtual option of schooling for K-12 students. SEAC also supports creating a separate day program for our students who need a higher level of behavioral supports in an alternative setting.
- Work with the Department of Teaching and Learning, Department of Student Services, and the Office of Special Education to support the efficacy of IEP Services delivery for high school and middle school special education students. Particular focus on effective co-teaching models and incorporating Tier 1 accommodations (i.e. pre-printed notes, study guides, accessibility software, etc.) into instruction for all students.
- Ensure that interventions meant to address Covid-19 recovery or address low SOL scores include all students with disabilities where they qualify due to scores and that those students are not being excluded due to services they receive. Tutoring should be an enhancement available to all students who are not meeting benchmarks regardless of disability.
- At the secondary level, design a course curriculum that can be used to establish Peer Groups as a credit-bearing elective. Students that participate in the Peer Groups course would partner with students with disabilities to enable them to participate in more general education environments (i.e. after-school activities, lunch, study halls, academic and elective courses) to facilitate more meaningful inclusion in our schools.

Transition

SEAC encourages the Office of Special Education to:

- Create a systematic way to track Life Skills and Workplace Readiness Skills.
- Create a blueprint of what equipment and materials should be in every independent living lab. Identify and prioritize building needs based on school programs. Capital Improvement Budget impact.
- Continue to support the creation of a Transition Center that will serve as a resource for students with disabilities to provide vocational assessment, specialized instruction in workplace and life skills, and opportunities to prepare our students for lives where they can contribute and be a part of our communities.
- Create Vocational Evaluators to better assess student strengths and identify

career pathways.
- Create a Community Based Instruction (CBI) Framework and provide funding to encourage full elementary and middle school participation.
- Additional Transition Teachers to support middle school to high school transition and all students at the high school. Currently, transition teachers are spread too thin to provide consistent interaction and support to students with disabilities throughout high school.
- Partner with the Department of Teaching and Learning to create pathways for students with disabilities in all CTE offerings. SEAC is eager to see the progress that is forthcoming in this area.

Accessibility

SEAC encourages:

- The Office of Special Education to partner with the Department of Teaching and Learning to provide regular training and coaching to teachers, teacher assistants, parents, and students on Tier 1 accessibility tools such as Google Read/Write, Equatio, Google Keep, etc., as well as AAC devices. Implement a required, formalized process to support teachers, teacher assistants, and parents to learn and use AAC devices effectively through continued training and coaching. Also making sure there are two devices per program classroom so that communication can be modeled continuously and without interruption if a device should break.
- The Department of Teaching and Learning to ensure teachers are notified about existing accessible instructional materials that should be used in all LCPS classrooms.
- The Department of Teaching and Learning to partner with the Office of Special Education to utilize the Instructional Framework to provide training to all General Education teachers on how to include all students in the design of lessons and how to incorporate inclusive design practices such as Universal Design for Learning (UDL) in every class and at every grade level to harness the unique strengths and needs of all students.
- The School Board to allocate funds and direct the Department of Support Services to make our school playgrounds accessible and inclusive to all students. Replace ten playgrounds per year to accelerate bringing all elementary school playgrounds to the LCPS inclusive playground standard. Create a standard buildout for Preschool through Kindergarten that includes accessible, durable, commercial grade equipment. See our SEAC Inclusive Playground Recommendations (May 2024) for more detail.

Literacy (reading, writing, spelling, and handwriting) & *Math Instruction:*

SEAC encourages the School Board to:

- Clearly define the implementation of Policy 5350, Parent Notification for Screening

and Assessment and define remediation framework for students not meeting benchmarks. Parent notifications remain inconsistent and all requirements of Policy 5350 are not being followed (i.e. providing notification of intervention plan particularly at secondary levels, clear explanation of scores). SEAC recommends revisiting Policy 5350-REG to ensure it captures the spirit behind the policy.

- Ongoing concern that appropriate literacy services are not being provided to high school students who do not meet 'literacy screening' expectations such as iReady reading & FAST.
- For Preschool, develop comprehensive developmental monitoring tool, that includes pre-academic standards and report progress at least three times a year to the parents.
- Follow evidence-based literacy practices in all program classes.

CONCLUSION

SEAC appreciates the opportunity to report our efforts and recommendations to the LCPS School Board. We maintain that students with disabilities should be prioritized by considering and implementing the recommendations identified in this report. We appreciate the opportunity to work in partnership with the Department of Student Services, the Office of Special Education, LCPS staff, and the LCPS School Board.

2023-2024 SEAC Award Recipients

(Following page)

** Congratulations to Our Outstanding Award Winners **

2024 Recognition of Excellence in Supporting Special Education Awards

Awards Ceremony, June 5, 2024, in the Rock Ridge High School Auditorium at 6:30 p.m.

Honoring exceptional educators, programs, parents, and students who go above and beyond what is typical and expected to positively impact and set a standard of excellence for the success of students with disabilities.

Outstanding Inclusive Educators

Addison Bender, Kenneth W. Culbert ES
Ashley Dundas, Stone Bridge HS
Ashley Lutz, Ball's Bluff ES
Camryn Shendow, Riverside HS
Chelsea Kowall, Smart's Mill MS
Danielle Sullivan, Countryside ES
Donna King, Park View HS
Emily Dodge, Independence HS
Emily Parker, Round Hill ES
Hannah Small, Leesburg ES
Heidi Terrett, J. L. Simpson MS
Jennifer Canales, John W. Tolbert, Jr. ES
Jennifer Mitkowski, Little River ES
Jennifer Tully, Kenneth W. Culbert ES
Jessica Hopson, Potomac Falls HS
Jessica Houck, Liberty ES
Julie Pearson-Weese, Blue Ridge MS
Kathleen Hudson, Broad Run HS
Kelly Hoag, Trailside MS
Kelsey Hazzard, Stone Hill MS
Kelsey Speer, Liberty ES
Kirsten Klingenberg, Liberty ES
Kristina Crowder, Evergreen Mill ES
Linda Knapp, Farmwell Station MS
Marisa Chazarreta, Mill Run ES
Marissa Jones, Stone Bridge HS
MaryAnn Chinemilly, Mountain View ES
Megan Cassasa, Sycolin Creek ES
Megan Smith, Discovery ES
Melissa Dulansey, Hillside ES
Melissa Maxwell , Independence HS
Miranda Campbell, Waxpool ES
Nilly Rofail, Freedom HS
Olivia Schaffer, Algonkian ES
Padmaja Undandro, Creighton's Corner ES
Paula Hermens, Sycolin Creek ES
Rachel Dudley, Kenneth W. Culbert ES
Rheannon Akers, Emerick ES
Robin Vander-Voort, Hillside ES
Shana Watson, Loudoun Valley HS
Shaun Rohde, Hamilton ES
Sherry Beverly, Legacy ES
Stacey Anderson, Waxpool ES
Stacey Privman, Discovery ES
Taylor Newland, Hutchison Farm ES

** Congratulations to Our Outstanding Award Winners **

Outstanding Inclusive Peer

Aiden Howard, Stone Bridge HS
Alexander McClellan, Woodgrove HS
Bradley Dunham, Sanders Corner ES
Claire Freilich, Freedom HS
Decker deFelice, Sycolin Creek ES
Evan Roemersma, Stone Bridge HS
Grace Lipple, Madison's Trust ES
Hannah Laney, Madison's Trust ES
Hudson Fernandez, Arcola ES
Isaiah Murray, Stone Bridge HS
Jessica Holleran, Stone Bridge HS
Josie Rafferty, Blue Ridge MS
Katie Wallner, Stone Bridge HS
Kayla Taeschner, Stone Bridge HS
Klaudia Alzamora, Loudoun Valley HS
Krish Putrevu, Arcola ES
Lennox Manfredi, Madison's Trust ES
Meadow Guzzetta, Madison's Trust ES
Melanie Marcial, Waxpool ES
Mishal Khan, Stone Bridge HS
Nicole Jenkins, Stone Bridge HS
Reeves Kennedy, Sycolin Creek ES
Rose Quinn, Stone Bridge HS
Scarlett Schlabach, Lowes Island ES
Sidney Latta, Independence HS
Zachary Sapp, Waxpool ES
Zoe Elmore, Sycolin Creek ES

Outstanding Inclusive Administrator

Jesse Aycock, Smart's Mill MS
Kelley Hines, Broad Run HS
Kimberly Dempsey, Little River ES
Timothy Sparbanie, Elaine Thompson ES

Outstanding Inclusive Support Staff

Alex Cadang, Seneca Ridge MS
Carrie Chada, Legacy ES
Felicia Brewer, Seneca Ridge MS
Jessica Russell, Catoctin ES
Margaret Lindsay-Sangster, Hovatter ES
Mary Hope, Tuscarora HS
Mia Howard, Seneca Ridge MS
Noora Al Naqqash, Hovatter ES
Parul Shroff, Hillside ES
Robin Clark, Sycolin Creek ES
Ruben Rodriguez Alcantara, Elaine Thompson ES
Sadia Karim, Sycolin Creek ES
Sheila Sanderson, Sanders Corner ES
Shirley Sweeney, Sycolin Creek ES
Soonkyu Conaway, Discovery ES
Joelynn “Wai” Cadang, Seneca Ridge MS

** Congratulations to Our Outstanding Award Winners **

Outstanding Inclusive Peer Group

Adapted Physical Education (APE) Peer Buddies, Eagle Ridge MS
Arjun Palati
Ava Miles
Evan Siegel
Grady Buffalo
Jon Joe
Julia Porada
Madison Allen
Niah Williams
Tim Al-Hafidh

Student Inclusion Team, Hutchison Farm ES
Abhishek Anand
Aubrey Davis
Declan O'Hearn
Sloane Lopez
Zahnye Casimir

Outstanding Inclusive School Clubs

Falcon Pals, Farmwell Station MS

Peer Program, Tuscarora HS
Jennifer Reed
Valeria Austin

Outstanding Inclusive Club Sponsor

Athlete 2 Athlete Club
Erin Barrett, Woodgrove HS
Karen Yurish, Woodgrove HS

Outstanding Inclusive Sports Team

Unified Sports, Briar Woods HS
Emily Freda
Teresa Wilburn

Outstanding Inclusive Program

Robots for Everyone, Legacy ES

Outstanding Community Member

Wendy Melcher,
Dulles Little League Challenger Program

10/3/2023

Good evening,

Thank you SEAC for taking time to consider an issue that has been commonly overlooked in Loudoun County. It has come to my attention that multiple public schools within Loudoun have incomparable playgrounds for our students, especially those with special needs in Autism specific classrooms. At first glance some of these schools present with phenomenal equipment in plain sight, which many would then make the assumption that the equipment is accessible to all students. However, I urge you to dig deeper in your investigation of playground equality by asking the question: "Do general education children and children with special needs (to include Autism specific classrooms) utilize the same playground equipment?" --It may sound like a silly question, but unfortunately at Little River Elementary and John Tolbert Elementary, it's a necessary question to ask.

I have spoken with many fellow parents of children with special needs enrolled at the above listed schools, and have been extremely disappointed to learn the answer to my proposed investigative question is "no". Instead these schools have been denying children with special needs access to their main playgrounds. The most common excuse I have heard justifying this behavior is access is not granted to children with special needs due to "safety issues". However, the alternative area where children with special needs spend their recess is in a significantly smaller enclosed "courtyard". These courtyards do not have specialized equipment installed for children with special needs to use; specifically due to the layout of their courtyards, with trees (that are not to be climbed), picnic tables, dead grass, and poorly maintenanced shrubbery. The limited toys made available in the "special education playground" are overused, dirty, and lack consideration of children's age and weight capacity (including toddler aged toys). It concerns me that these "safety issues" are not of the schools' concern.

I have an extremely energetic child with special needs who needs a safe, appealing, and comparable space in order to release energy, just like many other children. The blatant discrimination of children with special needs at these schools is sickening, and extremely unfortunate. I hear the words "inclusion" pushed only when it is convenient to the entity. The truth is my child and many other children with special needs are being excluded from the same opportunity that general education children have access to. The courageous actions that occured in 1955 sparking the civil rights movement are not to be overlooked nor underappreciated. Many sacrifices were made in an effort to shed light on discrimination. It is extremely upsetting in this day and age to witness acts of this nature within our public schools. Today, I am requesting that with this knowledge, the SEAC act swiftly to defend and support our children with special needs from interpreting the unspoken (and untrue) message that they are "less than" any of their peers.

I thank you for your time, and appreciate the sincere attention and care the SEAC has placed on this matter.

Sincerely,
Concerned Parent

LCPS SEAC PUBLIC COMMENT FORM

The LCPS Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC) welcomes ideas, comments, or concerns from the public following its Public Comment Guidelines. Please express any concerns in general terms with the aim to help SEAC find **systemic special education issues within LCPS**. Any comments pertaining to personal matters or situations are considered off-topic and will be re-directed. SEAC suggests that you address personal situations privately and directly with the Department of Special Education or with the Parent Resource Center staff.

***** PLEASE SUBMIT YOUR COMPLETED PUBLIC COMMENT FORM WITH A COPY OF YOUR STATEMENT TO THE SEAC SECRETARY AT THE CONCLUSION OF YOUR COMMENT.***

Name: Erin Burns

Email Address: burnserin84@gmail.com

Mailing Address: 10 Bickel Court Sterling, VA 20165

Please summarize your concern in the space below or attach your own document.

Currently Countryside Elementary has 3 out of the 7 special education teachers/case managers positions filled. 3 teachers are trying to do the work of 7 teachers! Students are not receiving all supports outlined in their IEPs. Progress reports have not been completed due to data not being taken or not available. Classroom teachers are unable to collect data as they have not been trained to do so. Parents are seeking compensatory services. The lack of staffing support for Countryside Elementary for the special education students is putting further strain on good educators and leaving children even further behind. LCPS needs to figure out how to better support their special education teachers while staffing is being addressed.

For SEAC Use Only

Date Received:
Name of individual who received form (LCPS Staff, SEAC Officer, etc.):
Date when public comment presented at SEAC meeting:
Date Director of Special Education Responded (mail or verbally at meeting):

Dear SEAC and Loudoun County School Board,

As a devoted mother of a special-needs student that attends LCPS, an engaged member of the community, and a taxpayer within Loudoun County, I am writing to gather your support to strongly advocate for two policies:

1. **Extend LCPS ECSE Pre-Kindergarten Reverse Inclusion classrooms from half-days (4 hours) to full-days (6-7 hours)**
2. **Increase the number of these classrooms throughout the county (due to increased demand)**

In regard to the request of full-day special education for preschoolers in reverse inclusion classrooms, the extension is paramount and impactful. It is particularly important for the development and growth of our special needs students, who benefit significantly from increased special education hours, extended socialization, peer-modeling opportunities, and improved chances for kindergarten readiness, including acclimation to longer learning environments until 3 pm, like kindergarteners.

Recent research, highlighted in the National Center for Biotechnology Information (NCBI) article titled "Early childhood inclusion: A decade of research from the National Early Childhood Technical Assistance Center (NECTAC)" [Article Link: https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4505551/], underscores the immense value of full-day preschool participation for students with diverse learning needs.

I would like to list the many benefits of a full-day ECSE pre-school classrooms:

1. **Enhanced Special Education Hours:** Special needs students require more specialized attention and focused education to foster their growth. Extending the school day provides invaluable additional hours dedicated to tailored interventions and targeted support that are instrumental in their progress.
2. **Socialization and Peer Modeling:** Longer school hours facilitate extended periods for social interaction and engagement among students. This extended time together creates a rich environment for special needs children to learn from their peers, model behaviors, and develop crucial social skills.
3. **Improved Kindergarten Readiness:** Full-day participation significantly enhances readiness for kindergarten by fostering better learning behaviors, improving cognitive development, and strengthening foundational skills. This preparation not only benefits the students but also supports the readiness of the broader LCPS system for incoming students.
4. **Preparation for Longer Learning Environments:** Extending the pre-school to full-day helps students, especially those with special needs, adjust to longer periods in a learning environment, aligning their experience with the duration of a typical kindergarten day. This adjustment prepares them for the transition to kindergarten and the longer learning hours that come with it.

5. **Benefits to special-needs families and caregivers:** A full-day preschool for our special-needs students will not only extend learning time for educational enrichment but also reduce stress on families and caregivers. It will allow families more time for special-needs parenting work (such as coordination of appointments, therapies, paperwork, IEP meetings and advocating for their children.)

Currently, there are only a handful of ECSE reverse inclusion pre-K classrooms in Loudoun County. With the growing population, and growing number of students with special-needs, we absolutely need to add more full-day ECSE Reverse Inclusion classrooms in all elementary schools.

As a member of this community and a taxpayer invested in the well-being and success of all our students, I would appreciate your support in urging the LCPS board to prioritize this matter. These changes would be pivotal for our special needs students' holistic development, kindergarten readiness, and acclimation to longer learning environments, resulting in significant advantages for the broader LCPS system and its educators.

Your support in extending the pre-school reverse inclusion classrooms to full-day sessions and creating more ECSE reverse inclusion classrooms county-wide will not only foster individual growth but also positively impact the readiness and success of our school system.

Thank you for your steadfast dedication to our students' success. Your advocacy and support in this endeavor will undoubtedly make a substantial difference in the lives of our special needs students and the efficiency of the entire school system.

Sincerely,

A special needs-parent

I am the parent of a child with a disability that attends elementary school in Loudoun County, VA.

Caregivers are supposed to be equitable members of the IEP team but often it doesn't feel this way. Since 2019, when my child was initially identified for evaluation as part of the IEP process, I've been told, and/or provided, incorrect and misleading information many times. This caused delays in my child having an appropriate IEP and receiving the help needed to access the curriculum.

Most recently, I requested raw data to be electronically sent to me in order to prepare for an upcoming FBA/IEP meeting. My initial request received no response. I made a second request and was informed LCPS policy requires that raw data be reviewed in person with a member of the administrative team. I requested the policy be provided for my review and was sent misleading information that does not pertain to my FOIA request. As a result of the delayed response, and LCPS practices, I was forced to reschedule the FBA/IEP meeting. This has caused delay in helping my child.

The LCPS practice requiring caregivers to take time off work in order to access information regarding their child is both inequitable, harmful, and in violation of new changes in Virginia FOIA pertaining to obtaining scholastic records. It also assumes caregivers have the flexibility to be available during school hours. It assumes all caregivers have jobs that provide paid time off, or easily allow time off. This is not the reality for a lot of people in our community. For many, taking time off work means loss of wages. A practice that forces caregivers to choose between the ability to fully advocate for their child, or provide for the family, is not fair. It ultimately hurts children who are already statistically at risk. This practice needs to stop.

Re: [EXTERNAL] Upcoming SEAC meeting Public comment

Mary McClintock <marymcclintock@hotmail.com>

I am the Virtual Distance Learning SEAC Representative. I would like to thank SEAC, LCPS Administration and the school board for hearing and acting on a community need.

You have shown great leadership and compassion for the students who need the virtual distance elementary program, and I respect and thank you for standing up for them and their education.

Thank you for giving these kids a voice.

Sent from my iPhone

Dear Special Education Advisory Committee,

I hope this message finds you well. I am writing to bring to your attention a modification request for the existing School Board Policy 8420, specifically regarding the administration of medications by students within the school premises.

Policy 8420 currently allows students to carry and self-administer rescue inhalers, epinephrine, insulin, and glucagon with proper authorization from a licensed prescriber and parental consent. However, it does not include provisions for the self-carry and self-administration of other medications. We are seeking your consideration to add "digestive enzymes" to the approved list of medications, in alignment with the policy implemented by Fairfax County Public Schools (FCPS).

In accordance with FCPS Policy (Health and Welfare Policy 2102.17, 12/01/2022), students are permitted to carry and self-administer medication such as insulin, inhalers, epinephrine, and digestive enzymes. This request is particularly pertinent to my son, , who lives with cystic fibrosis and requires digestive enzymes (Creon) when consuming foods containing fat.

We recently conducted 's annual Individualized Education Program (IEP) meeting, during which we discussed the possibility of him "self-carrying and self-administering" his digestive enzymes. s physician has expressed his support for this request and is willing to include it in 's medical orders.

Allowing students like to manage their digestive enzymes independently would provide them with the freedom to eat snacks and lunch without the need to visit the nurse's office each time. This modification aligns with the inclusive approach adopted by neighboring jurisdictions and ensures that students with medical needs, like , can enjoy a more seamless school experience.

I kindly request your careful consideration of this modification to Policy 8420, recognizing the importance of accommodating the unique medical needs of students like . Thank you for your time and dedication to ensuring the well-being of all students within our school district.

Sincerely,

Karlee Copeland

karlee.copeland@yahoo.com

[EXTERNAL] Public Comment

Perrott, Rachael C <Rachael.Perrott@fairfaxcounty.gov>

Mon 2/5/2024 7:44 PM

To:SEAC Chair <SEACChair@lcps.org>

Good Evening,
I am not 100% sure I can make the next SEAC meeting in person, so I thought I would email you my public comment. It is just a suggestion for the SEAC AWARDS.

“Good Evening,
I have attended several SEAC Award ceremonies in the last few years and often wondered why the outstanding teachers and staff do not (in addition to the wonderful thank you bags and gift cards) receive time off. I work for Fairfax County Government, and I wanted to take a moment to share the way Fairfax awards outstanding employees. In Fairfax, when an outstanding employee is recognized, this employee is always awarded with a certificate of appreciation and a separate certificate of administrative leave. Administrative leave is leave granted to an employee by the County and paid for by the County. To use this leave, employees, enter a code for administrative leave into their time, and they are awarded time off, which does not come from their earned leave bank. Depending on the award, administrative leave will vary from ½ day off up to 2 full days of administrative leave. Additionally, individual Departments and Agencies in Fairfax also have the option to grant this type of leave during Departmental Level Annual Awards. Therefore, I am hopeful that SEAC might also be able to inquire about and hopefully add Administrative Leave to the Thank You bags for our upcoming and future SEAC Award Ceremonies. Nothing says thank you more than granting employees a mental health day to spend with their own families. Please contact me if you need me to inquire with Fairfax County Payroll further to understand more about how this leave is set up internally. Thank you!”

Thanks,
Rachael

I have come tonight to share our final experiences of Elementary school in hopes to effectively name the systemic breakdowns that have plagued our family and demonstrated very real systemic inequities. As we end 5th grade, our daughter is functionally illiterate. She has been at her elementary school for 7 years — since 2017 when she started in KG, repeated 1st grade, and will graduate in June reading at the 1st-grade level, physically writing at a 2nd-grade level, and does not know her Math facts with automaticity. LCPS continues to point towards the fact that with her technology, she is at a Tier 1 & Tier 2 level in Math and Reading. They continue to claim they are delivering FAPE through this narrative that they have created, ignoring the real child in front of them. The passionate, smart, interested-in-learning child who now asks, "Why won't you teach me the way I need, and if not, why won't you let the teacher who can, do it?"

No answers as we leave 5th grade. So tonight, here are my 4 takeaways on how the system continues to be broken:

1st - Not being held accountable to deliver analyzed, assessment data that shows progress and aligns with the functional skills of the child. We have been asking for meaningful, structured assessments due to our daughter's needs, and LCPS refuses to provide data for the last 4 years. Their offer is for me to take more pictures of pieces of paper. As our case manager shared with me last week, "we are not required to provide our logic, just the data."

2nd - Student and diagnosis blaming, and a lack of teacher training resulting in a culture of bias. A belief that neurodivergent students cannot learn. This is represented in LCPS's own writing in the IEP, stating, "the general consensus of the team agreed that the child has processing deficits in phonological processing, rapid naming, meaningful, and orthographic processing. These processing deficits are related to the pattern of underachievement." No focus at all on her strengths and truly understanding how she learns.

3rd - System failure in not having formal goals to support a structured approach to remediating phonetic awareness. In our IEP meeting, the reading teacher stated that she doesn't believe in having a goal because of the amount of time it takes to record progress; she would rather be teaching. I don't believe that should be her choice — and yet, our daughter's recommended IEP has no phonetic awareness goal. In the same category of system failure, there are no documented goals or methodologies captured to recognize, remediate, and/or accommodate dysgraphia. Circling back to item #2 — the audacity of the system to blame the child when they don't even provide documented tools/methodologies to support it.

4th - A top-heavy command and control power structure with fractured cultures across Eligibility and SpEd teams. This creates an environment of mistrust and hostility and is a traumatic experience that feels purposeful for those of us who go through it. It does not foster collaboration and creates a terrible experience. This includes everything from small administrative items to the extreme, where the IEP teams don't know, read, or review the suggestions of the specialists who perform the formal evaluations and recommendations.

The system is not for the child; it is to protect LCPS. While there are many more, if any of these were addressed, our SpEd system would be better for it.

Outlook

[EXTERNAL] Public comment for 4/3/24 SEAC Meeting in support of Policy 6640 updates regarding Type 1 Diabetes

From Mary McClintock <marymcclintock@hotmail.com>
Date Tue 4/2/2024 12:38 PM
To SEAC Chair <SEACChair@lcps.org>

Hi Liz,

Below is my public comment for the 4/3/24 meeting in support of Policy 6640 updates - Thank you:

Please continue to provide policy updates to 6640 as it will keep Type 1 Diabetic students safe and healthy.

This year due to concerns for our third grade daughters' safety we withdrew her from her elementary school. After multiple 504 meetings, school administration and student health services would not agree to follow VDOE Guidance, Doctor's orders and ADA recommendations. She is a Brittle Asymptomatic Type 1 Diabetic, meaning she can not feel her highs and lows, does not show symptoms, and her levels can change unpredictably and quickly. As per doctor's orders she must be continuously monitored through a device called a CGM including when she is in the play ground or in a noisy environment where the alarms would not be audible to a nearby adult. To ensure continuous monitoring the CGM would have to be monitored on a remote device, however the Supervisor of Student Health Services told us that LCPS would not do this. In our final meeting we requested the CGM policy and were advised there was no policy, only a practice as the school board had not voted on this. We have since verified with the IT department that it is possible to use outside apps through a simple vetting process where they would evaluate it for use on LCPS equipment.

When we asked questions concerning the level of diabetes training in the school, we received no response, and even submitted a Fouia multiple times to find the answer, but our queries came back with no information.

When we withdrew her we included a comment about our reasons for doing so. We received an email rebutting our reasons, and we responded with a detailed email clarifying our reasons and requesting a response to our concerns. We have yet to receive a reply. All through the process we documented via email and worked with an advocate.

In our case we were denied an Individual Health Care Plan, an escort to the nurse's office when she goes low, the ability as parents to come in to render care and many more accommodations. Simply treating each child as if they have a low if they show symptoms without reading CGM data is a dangerous practice as the symptoms for highs and lows are interchangeable.

Please continue to provide policy updates to 6640 as it will keep children safe. Simply hearing a beep, looking at numbers, and training personnel properly can advert an emergency situation.

Outlook

[EXTERNAL] Statement to Read at SEAC Meeting

From Lesley Durden <lesley.a.herring@gmail.com>
Date Wed 4/3/2024 5:48 AM
To SEAC Chair <SEACChair@lcps.org>

According to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), schools are legally obligated to adhere to the provisions outlined in a student's Individualized Education Program (IEP). The IEP serves as a legally binding document, delineating the specialized educational services and accommodations a student with disabilities is entitled to receive.

In the case of my child, his IEP stipulates that he will receive services once a week for 30 minutes, totaling 1080 minutes over the course of 36 weeks. However, LCPS is utilizing holidays as a means to evade this commitment. They assert that if a holiday falls on the day when the service provider is scheduled to work with your child, that time is forfeited. For instance, during the first two quarters alone, there are 7 holidays that fall on a Monday. Consequently, this translates to 38% of the time during which our children will not receive services.

During a recent data review meeting regarding my child's IEP goals, it came to light that the therapist missed 7 sessions within the first two quarters. Shockingly, they are asserting that they are under no obligation to make up for this lost time unless it coincided with their own absence. Can we reasonably expect our children to make meaningful progress with such a significant amount of missed time?

It is imperative to emphasize that my child's IEP does not dictate a specific day for services; rather, it specifies that he should receive services once a week for 30 minutes. Therefore, it is incumbent upon LCPS to ensure they fulfill their legal obligation by providing the designated services in accordance with the IEP. If necessary, they should consider hiring outside providers to ensure that this commitment is met.

I am the parent of a child with a disability that attends an LCPS elementary school.

Parents/guardians are supposed to be equitable members of the IEP team but often it doesn't feel this way. Since 2019 I've been told, and/or provided, incorrect and misleading information many times. This caused delays in my child having an appropriate IEP and receiving the help needed to access the curriculum.

December 2023 I requested raw FBA data to be sent electronically so I could prepare for an upcoming FBA/IEP meeting. My first request received no response. My second request I was informed LCPS practice requires that data be reviewed in person with a member of the administrative team. I wasn't able to get to my child's school for a document review. As a result of the delayed response, and LCPS practices, I was forced to reschedule the FBA/IEP meeting right before winter break. This caused delay in helping my child who was in crisis. Even come January 2024, LCPS was still insisting on a document review, despite my attorney making multiple requests to various LCPS staff to intervene in and follow the law. And in the end, once we saw the data, it was agreed it would need to be redone. So November 2023 through January 2024 was just wasted time. Time my child couldn't afford to lose.

The amount of time, effort, and cost me to enforce my rights under VFOIA can't be quantified. I did in fact prevail in my legal case in Loudoun County Circuit Court. LCPS was ordered to pay $7500 of my legal bills, in addition to paying for a law firm to represent LCPS in court against a parent who's rights were violated while trying to help her child.

What became clear to me during this nightmare is that LCPS policies and practices do not comply with the law. While I'm grateful Dr. Carter informed school staff that Data Review Meetings will no longer be required as a prerequisite for parents getting copies of their children's records and data, LCPS policies and practices need to be revised and brought into compliance with the law and right's under the law should be made transparent to parents\guardians.

SEAC will be voting tonight on recommendations from the Policy Subcommittee to amend LCPS's policies regarding student records. I hope you will all support their efforts.

I am the parent of a child with a disability that attends an LCPS elementary school.

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