



Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC)

ANNUAL REPORT

Systemic Special Education Needs and Recommendations

2017-2018

Prepared for:
The LCPS School Board
November 2018

Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC)

ANNUAL REPORT

Systemic Special Education Needs and Recommendations 2017-2018

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	2
THE ROLE OF SEAC AND VIRGINIA REGULATIONS	2
THE PURPOSE OF SPECIAL EDUCATION	3
SCOPE OF REPORT	3
SUMMARY	4
OVERVIEW	5
GENERAL COMMENDATIONS	5
SPECIFIC COMMENDATIONS RELATING TO THE PRIOR YEAR'S (2016-2017) RECOMMENDATIONS	7
DATA SOURCES	10
ANNUAL SURVEY PROCESS AND REQUEST	10
THIS YEAR'S PRIMARY AREAS OF NEED AND CONCERN (2017-2018)	12
SEAC 2018 ANNUAL SURVEY AND DATA SUMMARIES	15
SATISFACTION SUMMARIES	16
THEMES	23
RECOMMENDATIONS	32
Area of Need/Concern 1: Policies, Practices and Procedures	32
Area of Need/Concern 2: Executive Functioning and Social-Emotional Learning	33
Area of Need/Concern 3: Specialized Programs and Services	35
Area of Need/Concern 4: Culture and Climate	39
Area of Need/Concern 5: Compliance	41
SEAC STRUCTURE	44
SEAC COMPOSITION	44
PTA/PTO REPRESENTATIVES	46
BUSINESS MEETINGS	49
PRIOR YEAR'S PUBLIC COMMENT THEMES (2016-2017)	50
PRIOR YEAR'S PROGRAMMING (2017-2018)	54
CURRENT YEAR'S MEETING SCHEDULE (2018-2019)	56
ANNUAL EXCELLENCE IN SPECIAL EDUCATION AWARDS	58
APPENDICES	60

INTRODUCTION

The Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC) appreciates the opportunity to work collaboratively with parents, staff, students and the school board to identify needs, suggest improvements, and advance the interests of students receiving special education services in Loudoun County Public Schools (LCPS). SEAC typically presents an annual report to the school board each fall to highlight newly identified vulnerabilities, ongoing concerns and widespread gaps in meeting the needs of special education students. Addressing these issues will enable special education (SPED) students to actively and fully participate in an educational environment that provides appropriate opportunities and the support necessary to reach their academic potential.

SEAC plans to provide periodic updates to the School Board this year to supplement the annual report and to bring emergent issues to the attention of the School Board in a timely manner, as well as provide updates on progress in a timelier manner.

THE ROLE OF SEAC AND VIRGINIA REGULATIONS

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. The regulations outline the functions of the SEAC, as specified by Section 8VAC20-81-230 D.2, and 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 as set forth by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and the Regulations Governing Special Education Programs for Children with Disabilities in Virginia.

THE PURPOSE OF SPECIAL EDUCATION

The purpose of special education is to provide a free and appropriate public education (FAPE) that prepares students for a secure and meaningful future as productive and independent citizens. For students with disabilities, the quality of their educational experience -- including academic, social and emotional development -- affects their ability to develop the tools and acquire the knowledge needed for a successful life after high school based on their capabilities and aspirations. The supports and services provided in K-12 public education for students with disabilities are vitally important in creating a safe learning environment that provides a strong foundation of success and establishes a clear path for self-efficacy and life-long accomplishments.

SCOPE OF REPORT

This report identifies areas of need in the education of students with disabilities in LCPS and outlines recommendations for both the provision and ongoing improvement of special education and related services. SEAC strongly urges the school board, staff and others to review last year's (2016-2017) full report and the specific recommendations that were outlined to provide context for the information contained in this report.

SEAC has made a deliberate effort in this year's report to limit the length and primarily focus on SEAC's observations and perspectives related to:

1. Commendations for progress made in areas of need and concern identified last year.
2. Issues that continue to be of concern.
3. New and additional areas of need that pertain to issues originally identified last year and in prior years.
4. Recommendations to address needs and concerns that SEAC deems as priorities.

In past reports, SEAC attempted to obtain progress updates for all areas of need and concern for the immediate past year, as well as issues that spanned several years. This year, SEAC has determined that it is beyond the scope and capacity of the volunteers who serve SEAC to comprehensively track and follow-up with systematic updates on all of the

cumulative issues that have been identified, along with the many proposed solutions and requests in past reports that were carefully prepared. These past issues and recommendations still stand, even if they have remained unaddressed or only partially addressed. They were originally included because they were deemed by SEAC to be important systemic needs and actionable recommendations.

SEAC urges the school board to institute a process whereby SEAC's reports are further deliberated and issues are delegated to the appropriate parties within LCPS for follow-up and reporting on outcomes. SEAC members devote a significant amount of time and thought to the work of advising the school board. We respectfully ask that our reports and work be seriously considered, even if our recommendations are not implemented.

SUMMARY

LCPS has a reputation as an exceptional public school system. Students are well-rounded, well-prepared and highly-competitive in the college and job markets. SEAC would like to ensure that all students have access to the same opportunities and benefits derived from obtaining an education in LCPS. With appropriate individualized accommodations, supports and services, students with disabilities can thrive alongside their general and gifted education peers and make meaningful contributions to the world. The LCPS core belief that an inclusive, safe, caring and challenging learning environment is the foundation for student growth is exactly the kind of atmosphere in which students with disabilities best learn and succeed.

As a state-mandated advisory committee to the school board, SEAC exists to help the school division identify systemic areas of need in educating students with disabilities, and works diligently to provide thoughtful input into policies, procedures, and plans to improve and deliver high-quality special education in LCPS that complies with state and federal regulations. SEAC recognizes and appreciates LCPS's commitment to providing an excellent educational experience for students with disabilities and we look forward to our continued collaborative work with the special education community and LCPS staff.

SEAC is grateful to the many parents who courageously provided public comment and who thoughtfully completed the annual SEAC parent survey. SEAC also appreciates the LCPS Research Office, and especially to Dr. Amy Elledge, SEAC Vice Chair of Communications, for helping the SEAC Chair with this year's survey and this report. On behalf of SEAC, thank you for considering the issues and recommendations in this report.

Dr. Carol Williams-Nickelson, SEAC Chair (2017-2019)

OVERVIEW

GENERAL COMMENDATIONS

SEAC appreciates and supports LCPS in its efforts to recognize the needs and the value of students with disabilities in our educational community. Providing proper supports, services, and opportunities for special education students, and actively involving them in all aspects of the LCPS curriculum and school setting prepares every LCPS student with the strong foundation they deserve to be self-sufficient within their capabilities, a good citizen, and a contributing member of society.

SEAC is grateful for the staff support provided by the Department of Pupil Services and the Office of Special Education in helping SEAC carry out our important work. In particular, SEAC welcomes Dr. Asia Jones as the new Assistant Superintendent of Pupil Services and we are excited to work with her this school year. SEAC is optimistic about Dr. Jones' intentions to enhance transparency, improve communication, and ensure that every special education student has a truly individualized education plan (IEP) with access to the supports and services needed to meet their unique learning needs. Likewise, SEAC appreciates the positive and cooperative relationship with Dr. Suzanne Jimenez, Director of Special Education, and her many staff members to help provide SEAC with access to information and expertise to inform SEAC's work.

SEAC commends LCPS for its inclusive mission and many of the division's guiding principles that specifically impact students with disabilities, including:

1. Developing the whole child.

The mission of the Department of Pupil Services "to educate the whole child by providing supports and services to meet the academic, social, emotional, behavioral and health needs of all students so they may enjoy a successful school experience" is key to the success of students with disabilities. Many factors affect a student's ability and motivation to learn. Learning can be hindered without attention to how the child is experiencing his internal and external environment and developmental challenges.

2. Promoting school/family partnerships.

The quality and strength of partnerships can have a profound impact on the daily life of the student and his/her entire family. Many LCPS parents of students with disabilities have faced heartache, frustration and significant personal and financial stress from trying to effectively navigate the school system to obtain the support and services their

child needs to learn, grow, develop, and lead a meaningful and fulfilling life. Creating a welcoming, respectful and transparent experience for families of students with disabilities who want to be supportive and involved in their child's education, serves the best academic interests of the whole child.

3. Creating an inclusive school environment.

A fundamental human need is a sense of BELONGING. Students with disabilities and their parents want to feel like they genuinely belong to the school community. LCPS's strategic action plan details that all schools will implement effective inclusive practices to increase participation of students with disabilities in the general education environment and their access to the general education curriculum. The prioritization and maintenance of small class sizes within all of LCPS is an important aspect of helping special education students function more effectively. Inclusion reduces disparities, allow students to experience more frequent success, and benefit academically, socially and emotionally from feeling a part of the daily life of the school.

4. Providing differential resources to close achievement gaps.

Resources that are allocated to schools based on need to address socioeconomically disadvantaged students, English learners, and students with disabilities will provide a tailored learning environment that will help close achievement gaps. Every school has a unique culture that may amplify or impede opportunities for students with disabilities to feel accepted and able to learn. School-based administrators vary in their understanding, sensitivity and level of commitment to the needs of special education students and have the power to create a hospitable or inhospitable climate for students with disabilities and their families. Attitudes towards students with a wide range of disabilities has a profound impact on a student's mental health, self-esteem, and performance. As soon as district-wide expectations are met, individual considerations and differentiated resources should be available to different schools in the same manner that Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) are customized to the individual needs of students with disabilities.

5. Access to gifted education curriculum.

Students with disabilities may also have advanced academic abilities. Commonly referred to as "twice exceptional," these students should receive curriculum and instruction that is commensurate with their abilities along with the supports and services needed to accommodate for their disabilities.

6. Providing a healthy learning environment.

Suicide prevention, bullying awareness and prevention, restorative practices, positive behavioral supports and interventions, threat assessment protocols, and crisis intervention and response programs promote a safe, positive, supportive and healthy learning environment. Students with disabilities are especially susceptible to the negative consequences of an unsafe learning environment, both emotionally and physically, which affects their availability for learning, mental health, and overall success.

7. Eliminating discipline disproportionality.

Educating staff to understand and appropriately respond to the different manifestations of a student's disability, rather than assume unsubstantiated motivations or nefarious intentions, contributes to the de-escalation of behavioral issues and disciplinary actions that do not promote insight and behavior change.

8. Maintaining and bolstering special education funding.

Providing funding to sustain and grow the necessary staff expertise to support the specialized learning needs of students with disabilities is critical for student progress and well-being.

9. Parent Resource Services (PRS) and PRS Programming

SEAC's ability to deliver comprehensive presentations to the special education community on a multitude of topics of interest is limited. SEAC is able to share programming ideas and needs with PRS staff who have the resources to develop timely community education opportunities. Providing parents with access to LCPS PRS staff who can advise about options and opportunities that may help their children is a valuable service.

SPECIFIC COMMENDATIONS RELATING TO THE PRIOR YEAR'S (2016-2017) RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Daily communication notebook for students in intensive programs.

In an effort to respond to requests for more communication from school to home regarding the daily activities of students with higher-level needs, which may include children who are nonverbal, the Office of Special Education introduced a very helpful daily communication log that provides key information about the student's day. Feedback on this new tool has been very positive from both parents and staff, and SEAC appreciates the thought and effort that staff put into developing and putting this new tool in circulation.

2. Career and transition pilot program.

SEAC recommended continued expansion of work experience programs for IEP students aged 18-22 years old who need job skills but do not need certification or licensure. LCPS initiated a pilot “Career and Transition” program at John Champe High School at the beginning of the 2018-2019 school year that is identical to the CAST program, except that the Career and Transition program is based in a high school and the CAST programs are based in the community. The curriculum is an all-day immersion program (with more time in the community and using public transportation or LCPS vehicles) for work and life skills versus just one or two blocks.

3. Middle school career and transition services.

LCPS received a technical assistance grant from Virginia Commonwealth University for a middle school pilot program focusing on supported employment and training with the goal to build stronger career exploration/Community Independence Instruction (CII) for middle school students working towards an applied studies diploma. This program will build on self and career awareness that begins in elementary school by providing middle school students with lessons adapted from the CTE Career Investigations course.

4. Return-to-Learn initiative.

The Return-to-Learn Initiative was brought to LCPS and has been in place since last February. It was a much-needed step in the right direction to get students that have been absent for an extended period of time back on track with support and a reduction of stress.

5. Mental health training.

In 2017-2018, there was a focus on developing a training program to help staff gain a better understanding of mental health issues, including autism.

6. Building-up and assessing autism programming.

With support from Virginia Commonwealth University, LCPS has been trying to evaluate the level and effectiveness of the current programs at various schools throughout the division. The lack of consistency in programs and services across schools has an especially detrimental impact on students with autism, given the range of mild to severe symptomatology of a child’s autism and the variability in how autism is expressed. This contributes to a lack of understanding or misunderstanding of children with autism and their behaviors, as well as the interventions -- including restraint and seclusion -- that may be used by staff to manage behaviors.

7. Implementation of a universal screening tool for early identification of dyslexia.

SEAC applauds LCPS for implementing a screening process as previously recommended and is using Phonological Awareness Literacy Screening (PALS) to identify students who are not mastering the specific skills that correlate with broader reading achievement. In addition:

- i. NWEA's Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) has been selected by the division's MTSS-RTI Committee as the universal screener for RTI schools.
- ii. FastBridge Assessment suite has been selected as the division-wide tool for progress monitoring specialized reading at Tiers 2 and 3.
- iii. Guidance documents for RTI teams have been developed and distributed to building administrators to guide schools through the screening to intervention process.

(Note: The Dyslexia subcommittee has yet to receive information on how this has been distributed and put into place.)

8. Professional development and training for dyslexia.

SEAC generated a comprehensive list of well-researched recommendations based on evidence-based practices for staff training and professional development in dyslexia. In response to those recommendations, LCPS provided a table to demonstrate how the training has been implemented (See Appendix 1).

9. Delivery of appropriate interventions for dyslexia.

LCPS has developed a division-wide Response to Intervention Digital Implementation Guide which includes tier definitions for reading and instructional match guidance for choosing an appropriate intervention based on student need. This includes an instructional matrix specific to students with dyslexia. Currently, 48 schools are actively participating in a cohort for Response to Intervention.

10. Improvements to fidelity of specialized reading instruction.

LCPS has developed a team to promote the fidelity of structured literacy instruction (specialized reading) through a coaching model, which also includes progress monitoring using FastBridge. This team is composed of:

- a. 10 Specialized Reading Instructional Facilitators to oversee 92 schools in LCPS.
- b. 1 Supervisor of Specialized Reading Instructional Facilitators (SIF-Rs).
- c. 2 staff members as Dyslexia Advisors through VDOE.
- d. 7 of the 10 SIFR staff are supporting all elementary schools.
- e. 3 of the 10 SIFR staff are supporting all secondary schools.
- f. 48 schools are actively participating in a cohort for Response to Intervention.

11. Use of assistive technology to remediate dyslexia.

Per the Assistive Technology Specialist, SIF-ATs are now housed in schools and working in clusters. SIF-ATs each have a designated focus of either communication or Universal Design for Learning (UDL) for academic curriculum and executive functioning. Each school has a point of contact for each of these areas. The AT Team is currently exploring the resource of Snap & Read, which is very promising to the SIF-R Team, as well. In the past school year, the AT Team has progressed in using data driven tools for their assessments, including but not limited to, uPAR.

DATA SOURCES

SEAC uses multiple sources of data throughout the year to identify areas of need and concerns. These include:

1. Formal public comment presented at SEAC meetings
2. SEAC subcommittee work and reports
3. Discussions, comments, and information shared at SEAC meetings
4. Discussions, comments, and information shared during SEAC-hosted presentations
5. Information shared with SEAC officers and members by PTA/PTO Representatives
6. Parent outreach directly to SEAC
7. Informational meetings with staff
8. The annual SEAC Parent Survey

ANNUAL SURVEY PROCESS AND REQUEST

SEAC is very pleased with the content and response rate of this year's (2018) annual parent survey. The response rate increased dramatically from approximately 115 in prior years to 568 this year. The content was updated, expanded and designed to gather information about general satisfaction in key areas of special education, as well as elicit responses to gain a deeper understanding of concerns commonly expressed within the special education community.

The survey was developed by the SEAC Chair, Dr. Carol Williams-Nickelson and SEAC's Vice Chair of Communications, Dr. Amy Elledge, both of whom have a background in research methodologies, survey development, and social science data analysis. The initial, high-level data analysis was completed by the LCPS Research Office and presented to Dr. Williams-Nickelson and Dr. Elledge in August 2018. The LCPS presented the quantitative data and broad themes from a cursory narrative analysis. However, a comprehensive qualitative analysis was not

conducted by the LCPS Research Office. As such, the survey authors conducted an in-depth qualitative analysis of the short answer responses to gain a deeper understanding of respondent's rationale for their satisfaction ratings. This analysis was not accomplished with a qualitative data analysis or statistical program, but it is still deemed to be a reliable interpretation of the data, as cross-checked by independent members of SEAC.

SEAC requests that the School Board consider engaging an independent research firm to help SEAC develop, implement and analyze the SEAC Annual Parent Survey, beginning in Spring 2019. An expertly designed and analyzed survey will yield more reliable and generalizable results, as well as lessen the demand on SEAC volunteers to conduct a survey of this magnitude.

THIS YEAR'S PRIMARY AREAS OF NEED AND CONCERN (2017-2018)

This year, SEAC has defined priority issue constellations, with specific areas of focus, rather than organizing priorities and SEAC's work by the narrow labels that are ascribed to students with disabilities or a particular service and support provided. Accordingly, SEAC's 2017-2018 identified needs and concerns are as follows (not in a prioritized order):

1. Policies, Practices and Procedures

One of SEAC's mandated roles per the Regulations Governing Special Education Programs for Children with Disabilities in Virginia (#5) is to *"review the policies and procedures for the provision of special education and related services prior to submission to the local school board."* However, SEAC has not been provided with the opportunity to either proactively or retroactively review any proposed or ongoing special education policies or practices until recently (September 2018) when SEAC asked to review the same policies, practices, and regulations that were provided to the Ad Hoc Committee on Special Education for their review. Given that policy/practice review is a core function of SEAC, SEAC asks to be included in the workflow for all relevant reviews moving forward.

2. Executive Functioning and Social-Emotional Learning

Direct instruction and support for developing social skills, mental health awareness and integrative supports, appropriate use of reinforcement and discipline, organization and time management skills, self-advocacy coaching, developing strong work and study habits, and test preparation are consistently high areas of need within the special education population.

3. 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. Concerns are consistently expressed regarding the availability and access, frequency, regularity and fidelity in which these programs and services are delivered.

4. Culture and Climate

A pervasive concern relates to a lack of transparency, trust, empowering IEP teams to make decisions, and communication. These fundamental principles should be the uncompromising expectation for productive relationships between LCPS and parents/students receiving special education students.

5. Compliance

Issues related to compliance with the IEP, consistency across the school division, and the implementation of supports and services continue to impact the performance, inclusion and achievement of students with disabilities.

Exhibit 1: LAST YEAR'S AREAS OF NEED AND CONCERN FOR REFERENCE (2016-2017)

The following areas of need were determined to be the top six priorities for SEAC last year. Readers will see that these issues are integrated into the primary categories of need (above) for the current school year.

1. Mental Health Awareness and Integrative Supports

Create policies and implement consistent practices to recognize, monitor and support students at risk or experiencing mental health concerns and provide appropriate staff training, resources and in-school programs that enable inclusion and eliminate discipline disproportionality while utilizing appropriately trained and licensed mental health professionals to integrate services for the whole student.

2. Consistency in Programs and Services

Provide clear, consistent, and understood practices and policies to ensure that students are receiving services that are available, appropriate and delivered in a timely manner.

3. Quality Inclusion

Provide an inclusive educational, social and extracurricular experience at each LCPS school.

4. Transition Services

Continue efforts to provide effective transition services and programs that prepare LCPS students with disabilities for life after high school.

5. Dyslexia Services & Supports

Provide early identification, appropriate teacher training, supports and services for students with the Specific Learning Disability of Dyslexia.

6. Autism Programs and Supports

Enhance efforts to provide effective autism programs and services and implement current and long-term planning to address the growing population and changing needs of students with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) and similar education needs.

Ongoing Concerns (from 2016-2017 Annual Report)

1. Budget

Maintain funding for existing SPED services and supports, and allocate additional funds to address the priorities (above) for meeting the unmet needs of students receiving special education services.

Discipline

2. Eliminate the discipline disproportionality gap for students with disabilities, African-American students and Hispanic/Latino students, including day-to-day in-school disciplinary practices, exclusionary discipline (including those with law enforcement), as well as suspension rates.

3. Differentiated Resources and Supports

Deliver effective and efficient individualized support and resources to close the achievement gap for students with disabilities, socioeconomically disadvantaged students, and English learners.

4. Speech Language Pathology Services

Provide appropriate screenings, assessments, supports and services to identify and remediate SLP issues through coordinated participation and communication with Speech/Language Pathologists to integrate services for the whole student.

5. SPED Expertise

Ensure all SPED-related staff have the appropriate training and expertise that is relevant to all major areas of SPED disability classifications to properly recognize, execute, monitor, modify, report and/or supervise/direct SPED programs, supports, services and staff.

SEAC 2018 ANNUAL SURVEY AND DATA SUMMARIES

The 2017-2018 Annual SEAC Parent Survey was significantly revised from the prior year to obtain more demographic data and offer a wider range of questions to assess satisfaction with current services and supports, as well as areas for improvement through short answer responses. General satisfaction questions were answered using a rating scale; however, open-ended questions that solicited short-answer responses were elicited to supplement the rating scales. The data collected through the 2018 Annual Survey should be used in whole. It can be misleading and lack context to extract individual sections as a representation of overall findings. For instance, the forced choice ratings should be used in tandem with the corresponding narrative comments. The short answer responses offer clarification and provide important context that cannot be ascertained from the ratings scales alone.

The 2017-2018 survey had an unprecedented response rate with a sample size (N) of 568 (compared to N = approximately 100-115 in recent prior years).

In 2017-2018 there were approximately 9,335 students receiving special education services through LCPS. This is 11-12% of the entire LCPS student population, and under the national average for students receiving special education services.

The three largest groups of respondents identified their student with a primary disability of: Specific Learning Disability (26%), Autism (23%), and Other Health Impairment (21%).

SATISFACTION SUMMARIES

SERVICES

Table 1:

Survey Question: Based on your experience with your special education student, during the 2017-18 school year, how satisfied have you been with:

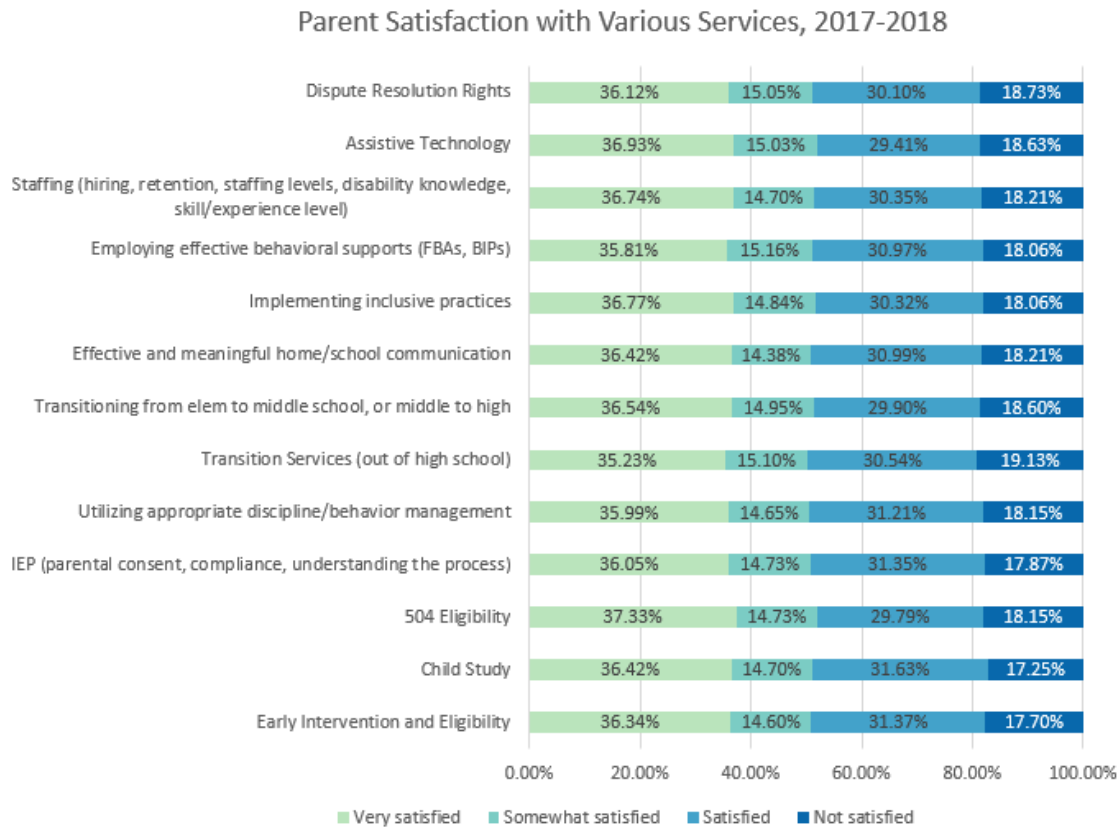


Exhibit reads: 36.12% of respondents indicated being very satisfied with the Dispute Resolution Rights they and/or their student received during the 2017-2018 school year.

Satisfaction ranged from 80-83% "Somewhat Satisfied" to "Very Satisfied" for parents' experience with the services (early intervention and eligibility, child study, 504 eligibility, all parties understanding the IEP process, appropriate discipline/behavior management, transition services out of high school, transition between grade levels, home/school communication practices, inclusive practices, effective behavioral supports/FBAs, staffing, AT, dispute resolution rights).

SCHOOL/CLASSROOM

Table 2:

Survey Question: How satisfied have you been with the school/classroom program your student attended in the 2017-2018 school year?

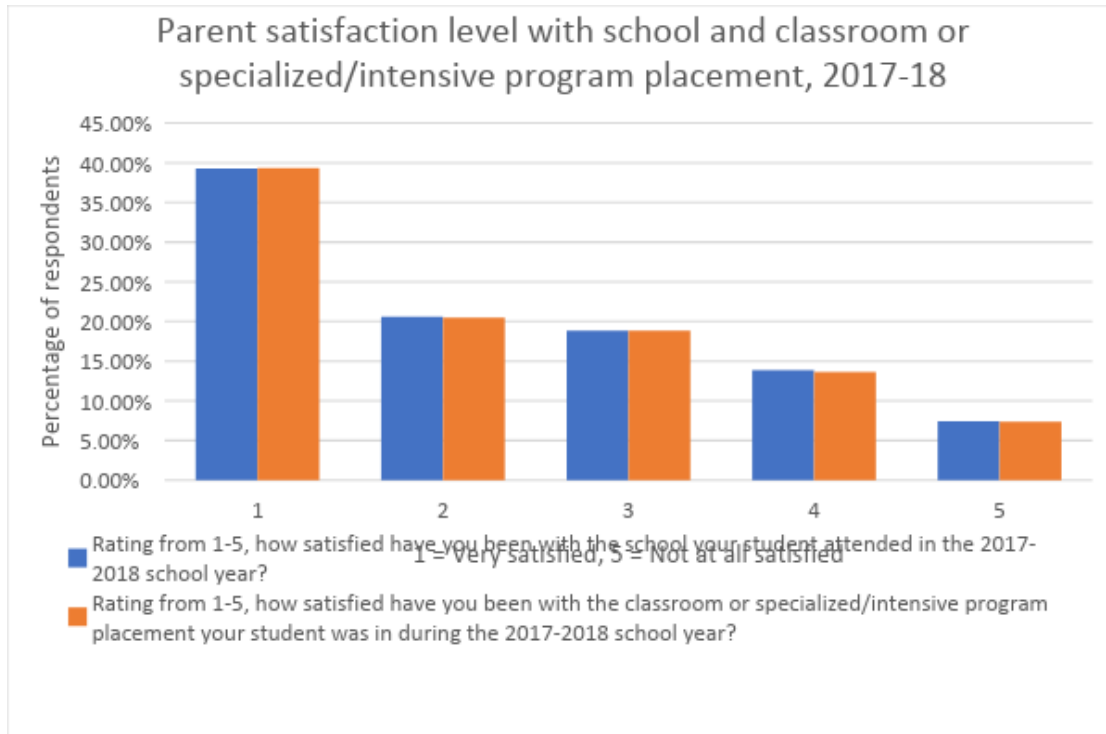


Exhibit reads: 39.25% of respondents indicated being very satisfied with the school their student attended in the 2017-2018 school year.

Approximately 79% of parents rated from neutral to very satisfied with the school and classroom program their child attended.

INSTRUCTION

Table 3:

Survey Question: During the 2017-18 school year, how satisfied have you been with the instruction your student has received in:

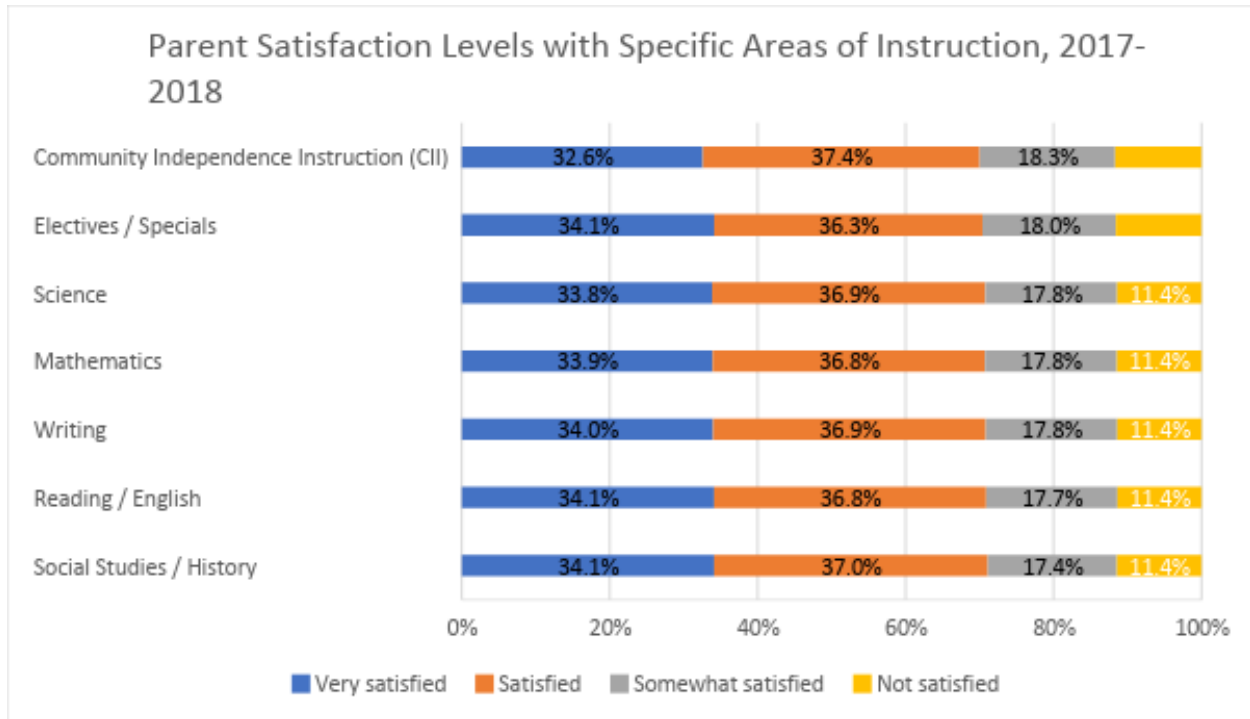


Exhibit reads: 32.6% of respondents indicated being very satisfied with the Community Independence Instruction (CII) their student received during the 2017-2018 school year.

88-89% of parents were "Somewhat Satisfied" to "Very Satisfied" with the instruction their student received (in: reading/English, math, writing, social studies/history, science, electives/specials, and community independence instruction).

INFORMS/INVOLVES PARENTS

Table 4:

Survey Question: My school keeps me informed and/or helps me have an active role in my child's education in the following ways.

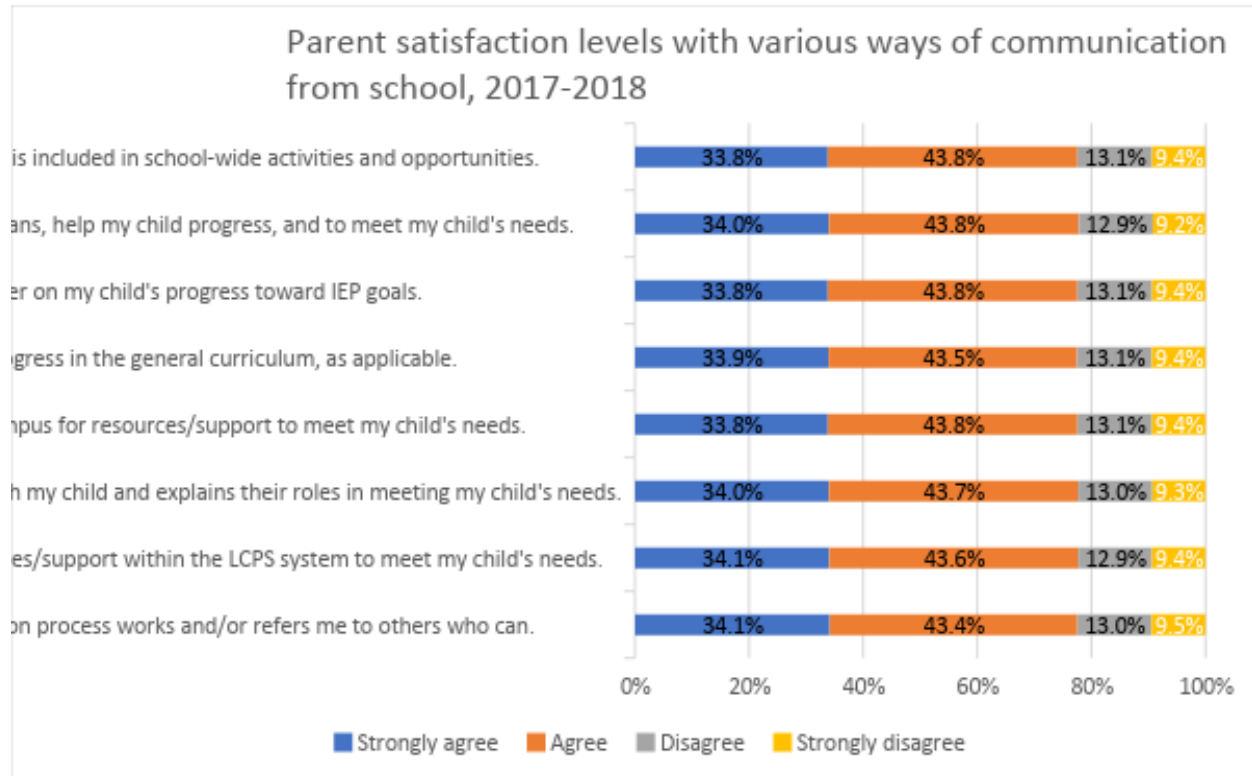


Exhibit reads: 33.8% of respondents strongly agreed that their child's school keeps them informed of ways in which their child is included in school-wide activities and opportunities.

About 75% of parents felt their school keeps them informed and helps them to play an active role in their child's education (introduction to personnel and roles for those working with the student, helps parents know where to go on campus for resources/needs, identifies/directs to LCPS for additional resources/needs, helps parent understand how the special education process works, keeps parents updated in timely manner regarding IEP progress, regularly solicits and uses parent input to craft IEPs, keeps parents informed of ways student is involved in school-wide activities, and keeps parents updated of child's progress in the general curriculum).

COMMUNICATION

Table 5:

Survey Question: With regard to communication and/or support at the division level, please indicate the extent to which you agree with each of the following:

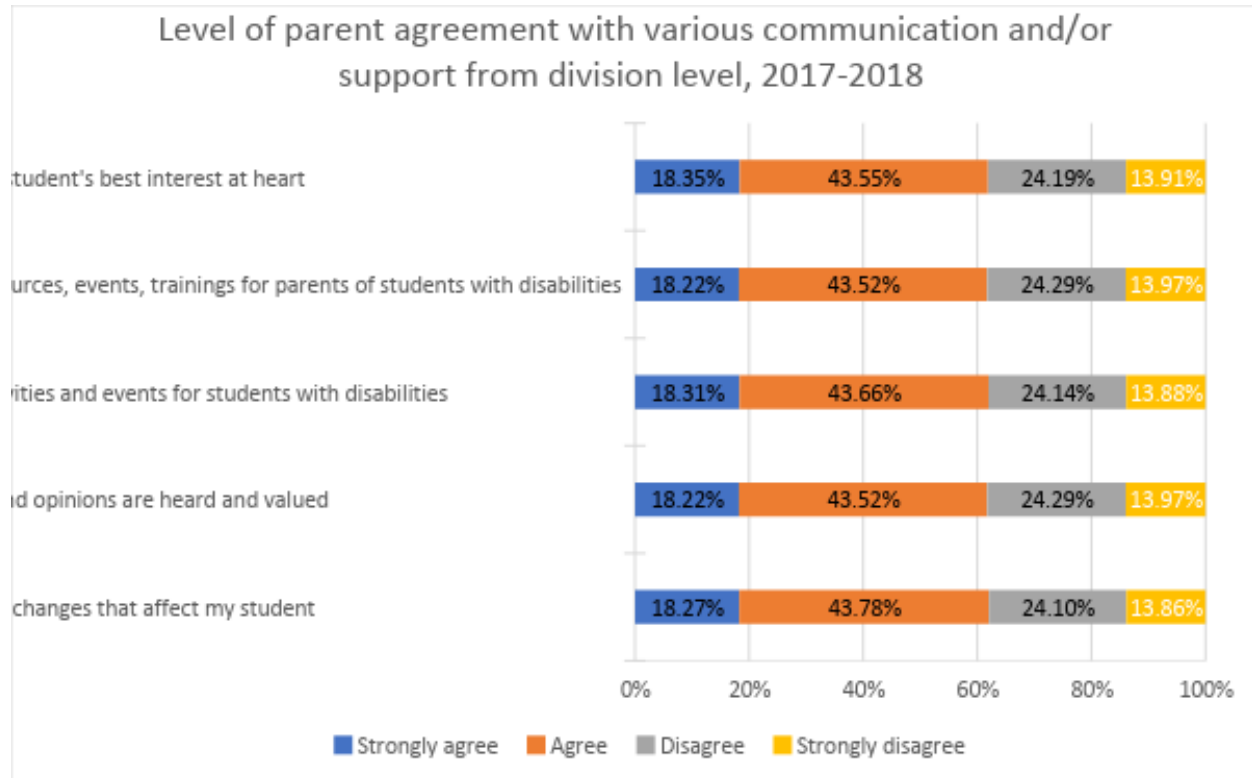


Exhibit reads: 18.35% of parents strongly agreed that the administration of LCPS has their student's best interest at heart.

Only about 60% of parents agreed that communication and support from the district met their needs (keeps me informed of policy/program changes that affect their student, makes parent feel as though concerns/opinions are heard and valued, keeps parents informed of division-wide events/activities for SPED students, keeps parents informed of division-wide events/resources/training for parents of SPED students, and that the administration and LCPS has their student's best interest at heart.)

THERAPIES/RELATED SERVICES

Table 6:

Survey Question: In the 2017-2018 school year, how satisfied were you with the related services your student received in:

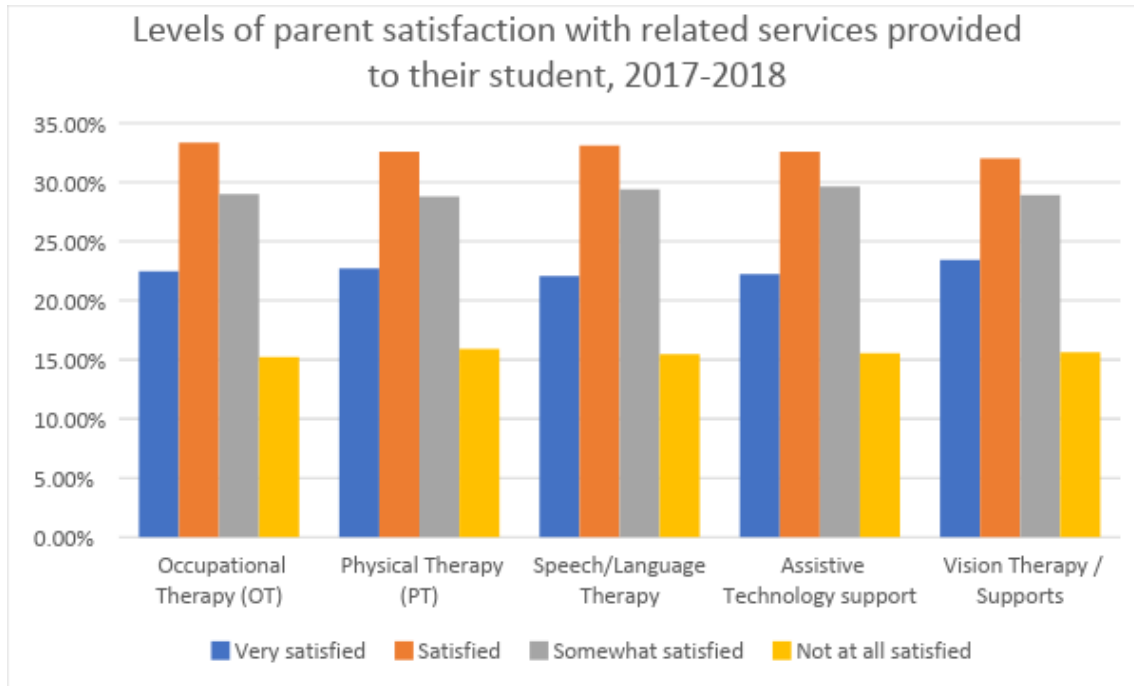


Exhibit reads: 22% of parents reported being very satisfied with the occupational therapy related services their student received in the 2017-18 school year.

About 85% of parents were "Somewhat Satisfied" to "Very Satisfied" with the therapy services their child received (OT, PT, Speech/Language, AT, and Vision).

ACCESS TO RESOURCES

Table 7:

Survey Question: As a parent, do you feel that you have access to resources that help you navigate the school system and support your student?

As a parent, do you feel that you have access to resources that help you navigate the school system and support your student?		
Row Labels	Resources that help	Count
Yes	57.40%	318
No	36.64%	203
Access to teachers; not to outside or county wide programs or referrals	0.18%	1
At this point, I am not sure yet. More inclined to say no.	0.18%	1
I am moving my child to a private school so she can get the help she needs. Isn't that what you w	0.18%	1
I can and do, but I am often left wondering where to start and who to talk to.	0.18%	1
I don't feel the school system has what it needs to provide the support.	0.18%	1
I don't know what resources would help navigate the system. I'm sure there are other people who a	0.18%	1
I feel like there could be more.	0.18%	1
I found things outside of lcps	0.18%	1
I HAVE AN ADVOCATE.	0.18%	1
I have been fortunate enough to work with an advocate and she has helped us navigate this proces	0.18%	1
I used to via the Parent Resource Services Department, but unfortunately, this year the new educa	0.18%	1
If it suits them to provide	0.18%	1
I'm not sure.	0.18%	1
In a way- I can look it up online	0.18%	1
Information is not readily available. The parent must do a lot of investigating to obtain info about pr	0.18%	1
It's not always clear what those are	0.18%	1
Kind of. Not yes or no	0.18%	1
Not always sure what to ask for. So probably missing out on services.	0.18%	1
Not many resources available for transition	0.18%	1
Not really, the basic referral to the school website.	0.18%	1
Not really. The child Study team does an excellent job of explaining each step, but when your chi	0.18%	1
Now I do. It took two years, but Leesburg Elementary School has made a HUGE difference in our	0.18%	1
Only when I ask	0.18%	1
Only when I ask for help. These are not always easy to find.	0.18%	1
Sometimes	0.18%	1
Sometimes you have to work harder than you should go get info	0.18%	1
Somewhat	0.36%	2
sort of	0.18%	1
Sort of. The school has been helpful but it would be nice to have more online resources.	0.18%	1
websites need to provide direct information instead of redirecting one in the hopes that eventually y	0.18%	1
Yes, but only because I am familiar with the Admin staff. A parent who didn't know anyone outside	0.18%	1
You register for a school but are not informed what resources you have access to especially with a	0.18%	1
(blank)	0.00%	14
Grand Total	100.00%	568

Only about 60% of parents felt they had access to resources that helped them to navigate the system to support their student.

THEMES

Overarching themes identified as areas of need or concern through the short answer survey responses, are as follows (NOT in prioritized order). Important to note is that the goal of soliciting information was to identify needs, gaps, and areas for improvement. Identifying information from the raw data was redacted to form the following constellations of needs:

A. POST HIGH SCHOOL PREPARATION

1. Improvement needed in setting meaningful post-high school goals, preparation for college, and providing regular progress monitoring
2. Instruct students in real world job skills
3. Communicate with parents early, often, and keep the communications simple/clear
4. Demonstrate genuine concern and care for students
5. Provide instruction in independent living skills
6. Provide regular coaching and programs for social skill development, organization/study skills (executive functioning), and managing anxiety (general, performance and social)
7. Transition services vary widely and some transition teachers are uninvolved
8. Greater support for anxiety management is needed
9. IEP's are not being followed

Review of comments included several specific references to:

- *Case managers need more skill development in preparing students for post-high school*
- *Need for social skills programs to help in this area*
- *Planning beginning too late in high school (should start right away in HS)*
- *More community involvement (CII)*
- *More focus on independent daily living skills*
- *Direct instruction for managing interfering behaviors associated with ADHD*
- *School admin and teachers need to embrace students with disabilities, not view and treat them as a drain, burden and inconvenience*
- *Plan with student and parents for what's next, beginning early in HS*
- *College prep for SPED students who are going to college*
- *In some cases, transition planning is not happening at all or not in earnest*
- *Case managers and teachers need to follow the IEP*
- *Aim for higher – disability does not mean inability*
- *SPED admin and supervisory personnel don't understand IDEA and FAPE, and don't seem to care about SPED students*
- *Have teams and admin that are not trying to "get rid" of students*
- *More help, guidance and communication throughout the whole process*
- *Direct and consistent help/instruct organizational skills and study skills*
- *Every teacher that interacts with SPED child should know needs, issues and accommodations that must be provided per the IEP*
- *Transition planning should include issues related to twice exceptional students*

- *More help with social anxiety, performance anxiety and general anxiety*

B. GENERAL SATISFACTION WITH SPECIAL EDUCATION:

1. Inconsistent or lacking transparency and communication
2. IEPs are not followed; parents must monitor very closely to ensure services are being provided; IEP services are predetermined by staff rather than the full IEP team
3. Inconsistency and widely varying practices and (pejorative) attitudes towards SPED across schools
4. Staff expertise is lacking in IDEA and knowledge of essential baseline areas of SPED varies widely
5. Communication between staff regarding student needs is inconsistent; communication with parents only occurs after issue has escalated into a large problem
6. Child Find does not identify need for IEP in reasonable timeframe
7. Lack of understanding of ADD/ADHD, sensory processing, Autism and interventions
8. Bullying of SPED students is a problem
9. Transitions between schools, levels and back to school are poorly planned and managed, despite parent efforts to facilitate
10. Social/emotional skill development needed
11. General Ed teachers are intolerant of and misinterpret behaviors of SPED students
12. Substitute teachers in SPED do not have SPED expertise
13. The climate of acceptance and inclusion is set at the top – higher expectations and accountability is needed among school-based administrators for SPED
14. FBAs and behavior plans are more punitive than encouraging
15. More inclusive practices –in classes and socially

Review of comments included several specific references to:

- *Assistant Principals need to have experience/expertise in SPED to be effective*
- *Widespread lack of understanding among staff about IDEA and accessibility (e.g. materials)*
- *Lack of understanding among staff about ADD/ADHD, thus staff responses are inappropriate and can exacerbate issues*
- *Sensory processing not recognized or accommodated correctly*
- *504 food allergy students are excluded and socially isolated*
- *Child Find process is very slow and student suffers while waiting*
- *Lack of training and understanding of Autism*
- *SPED services and staff attitudes vary from school to school*
- *Insufficient access to assistive technology*
- *Dyslexia expertise is lacking entirely at some schools*
- *Problems with bullying and how SPED students are brought into remediation with peers who bully them*
- *Unwelcoming climate for students with disabilities at school*

- *Parents must check in regularly to make sure their child is receiving services in IEP; students denied access to tools that are accommodations in their IEP's*
- *Transition between and back to school are not adequately supported*
- *Lack of demonstrable and genuine care/concern for SPED students to exemplary caring attitudes*
- *Gen Ed Teachers don't want to be bothered with SPED students*
- *"...declared war on special education students."*
- *IEP's and services are predetermined by staff without parental input before IEP meetings*
- *FBA and behavior plans assume the child rather than the environment and interventions are the problem*
- *Students are punished for manifestations of their disability*
- *Help with social skills and anxiety is needed*
- *"SPED students are taught by TAs most of the time"*
- *Teachers don't read the IEP*
- *Need substitutes who understand special education*

C. AREAS OF NEED:

1. Inconsistent IEP practices across the district (inadequately covering needs, identifying present levels of functioning, team participation, lack of early identification of needs, all teachers to read/understand IEP before school year starts)
2. Issues with following the established IEP
3. Better written, more accurate BIPs
4. Knowledgeable SPED staff (including administrators and TAs) with appropriate expertise in different disability areas (and subject matters for TA's)
5. More support for executive functioning skills needed (time management, organizational skills, study habits, social skills, test preparation, anxiety reduction, appropriately asking questions and interacting with teachers/staff)
6. Staff need to communicate/plan with each other more often and more effectively
7. Offering and facilitating meaningful inclusive practices in all aspects of school (including buses, social events and clubs, field trips, empathy from non-disabled peers)
8. Thorough orientation for parents of students receiving special education services about what to expect
9. Better communication with parents and involving them appropriately in all processes (IEP, FBA, BIP, etc.)
10. Proper spaces for SPED interventions (e.g. small group testing, sensory spaces, moving to different classrooms for different subjects)
11. Mental health services for identification, prevention, and ongoing support while at school (stop punishment for exhibiting anxiety, depression, etc.)
12. Ongoing, consistent executive functioning skills support for the unique needs of students with disabilities
13. Collaboration with outside professionals hired by parents to help the student

14. Standards and expectations for inclusive practices, from school administration to all staff
15. Student should have a voice in choosing his/her case manager; teach/coach students how to self-advocate
16. Twice exceptional students are not receiving support for both their giftedness and disability
17. More appropriate support and understanding of ADD/ADHD, rather than punishment and humiliation of associated behaviors
18. Greater sensitivity and understanding of emotional disabilities; teacher tone/language is inappropriate and disrespectful of student rights/needs and often causes behavior escalation
19. Better preparation of students and teachers for students moving between grade levels and schools
20. More communication and collaboration with parents on a regular basis

Review of comments included several specific references to:

- *More and regular support in developing executive functioning skills and emotional intelligence*
- *Staff need to have specific SPED expertise and knowledge of evidence-based practices*
- *Criteria for Extended School Year is unclear*
- *ABA certified therapists needed*
- *More behaviorists involved in writing BIP's*
- *Meaningful autism training, to include high-functioning autism*
- *Food allergy policy and practice consistency – lack thereof isolates students with severe allergies*
- *Lack of early identification, consistency and enough training in dyslexia*
- *Consistently following federal law across all schools*
- *Seclusion and restraint problems – failure to communicate to parents about use, inappropriate use*
- *Proper and innovative use of technology (not just assistive technology)*
- *Experiences in specialized programs vary widely from school to school and in families with more than one child in SPED at different schools*
- *Invest in sensory spaces that don't feel like punishment*
- *Instilling expectations and values of inclusion and empathy in non-disabled peers*
- *Another option for better learning support for students who don't need or want self-contained classes*
- *More professional credentials and expertise for TAs*
- *More community business involvement for post-high school transition planning*
- *Better transportation and funding for transportation*
- *Student suicides*
- *Appropriate supports for students with high functioning Autism, including more support for developing executive functioning skills*
- *Disallowing outside professional observations hurts student progress and breeds distrust*
- *School administrators set the tone and need to support and expect inclusive practices*
- *Same caseworker in HS for all 4 years for consistency*
- *All teachers need to read and understand a student's IEP before the school year starts*
- *Students need to be taught and coached in how to self-advocate (can't just expect it to happen)*
- *Lack of basic knowledge of dyslexia*

- *Giftedness and special education needs are often intertwined and can't be addressed as two separate problems; Provide SPED services in gifted programs*
- *Discipline is not used appropriately with SPED students in middle school*
- *Reinstate music therapy*
- *Administrators need a greater understanding of mental health, anxiety and depression and how these diagnoses affect education. They need to know that these students do not benefit from a punitive approach.*
- *Case managers share confidential information with SPED student's peers without permission*
- *Some administrators don't want SPED students at their school*
- *Teachers lack even basic understanding of ADD/ADHD -students with ADHD are punished with ineffective and hurtful practices and are "quick to blame the child for his/her impulsivity, disorganization, and excessive energy"*
- *Case managers don't understand IDEA*
- *Teachers are insensitive to emotional disabilities - their tone and language is often not appropriate and respectful of student rights/needs and is often is the source for escalation of behaviors*
- *Hold administrators and teachers more accountable*
- *Better communication and review of IEP for students moving grade levels within LCPS*
- *Feeling "stuck" with limited therapists/staff and avoids complaining out of fear of retaliation*
- *"We have had the unfortunate experience of being with a teacher who just didn't care about our child. Our family suffered and there was little to no relief provided by the school. It was a miserable experience, one in which we really felt our child's needs were secondary to the teacher's tenure."*
- *General education teachers need to take more responsibility for understanding and working with the IEP needs of students with disabilities*
- *Eliminate seclusion/restraint rooms and the use of the practices*
- *"My child has attended 3 different schools in Loudoun. The quality of the education varies to such a degree, that I think it really matters where a child attends. And it really shouldn't matter."*
- *More information provided on high school diploma options and long-term impact*
- *More funding for curriculum and supplies for SPED classrooms*
- *Schools not up to date or aware of current laws pertaining to IDEA and SPED*

D. INSTRUCTION:

1. Lack of or inconsistent feedback on student's progress
2. Educational and diagnostic testing is inconsistent or inadequate
3. More supports for students with dyslexia
4. More remediation options for students struggling in all subjects (besides private tutoring)
5. Better understanding and teacher training on how to help students with ADD/ADHD stay focused, learn and be successful in school
6. Better management of the whole child (multiple disabilities plus outstanding abilities)
7. Students are not learning because general education teachers don't read, understand, or implement the IEP
8. Special education and self-contained curriculum and class information is not available

9. Daily and continuous support for executive functioning skills in each class (organization, study habits, tracking assignments, time management, planning, test taking skills)
10. Appropriate IEP goals are needed that consider present levels of functioning and support progress
11. CII partners and instruction is repetitive.
12. Dysgraphia is poorly understood and remediated by staff.
13. Better use of speech therapy and integration of speech therapist on the IEP team.
14. Provide support for students with disabilities in taking language classes.

Review of comments included several specific references to:

- *Student's success varies greatly depending on teacher's ability to meet the needs of students with ADHD*
- *More help with organizational skills*
- *Provide early intervention – help for a student before he/she is failing*
- *Provide well-matched reinforcements for task and work completion (some teachers back away at first sign of opposition, without understanding why the child is refusing the task and adjusting accordingly)*
- *Schools have difficulty managing multiple disabilities in the context of some outstanding abilities*
- *Poor testing practices from diagnosticians*
- *General education teachers not following the IEP (some seem not to care that an IEP exists)*
- *Discipline in the classroom without consulting or informing parents*
- *Parent's don't know what their children are learning or expected to do in self-contained or special SPED classes*
- *Not enough is done ensure inclusion, while not modifying the curriculum*
- *More focus on executive functioning in class*
- *Classes such as keyboarding for students with dyslexia and other needs should have the same supports as core classes (especially if students must read articles, conduct research and learn more than how to type)*
- *Lack of understanding about subtypes of dyslexia*
- *"I believe my student has dyslexia, however the school refuses to diagnose or address the issue."*
- *Same CII trips for years; curriculum and classes are repeated with no new content for students transitioning out of high school to work or independent living*
- *Lack of information shared about CII*
- *Dysgraphia is not properly identified or addressed*
- *More speech therapists and services needed*
- *Students with disabilities should be able to access and receive support in foreign language classes*
- *More direct support is needed, but not provided, for students struggling in certain subjects*

E. GENERAL METHODS OF COMMUNICATION:

1. More frequent, meaningful communication about key issues or new developments in different formats to parents (IEP updates, one-on-one meetings, emails, calendars)
2. Regular communication or meetings with team members and parents is needed to ensure shared understanding of IEP interventions and student needs
3. Lack of transparency and genuine care about student needs

4. Ongoing communication so matters can be resolved quickly, not last minute, and before becoming big issues
5. Listen to and use parent feedback; treat parents as equal members of the IEP team
6. Answer emails and phone calls in a timely manner
7. Proactively share information about in-school programs that can benefit the student
8. Discuss communication preferences and needs with parents and agree to a regular schedule for check-in
9. Communicate and agree upon the forms of discipline that are most effective and the circumstances under which when they will and will not be used
10. Recognize the progress of nontraditional learners within their general education cohort (show a greater interest in students who are achieving and NOT gifted)
11. More frequent updates from OT, PT, ST, Social Worker, Psychologist
12. More preparation and discussions when transitioning to middle and high school to communicate differences, expectations, strategies, resources

Review of comments included several specific references to:

- *Daily calendar/communication log is needed for some students with disabilities, with key academic and behavioral information completed*
- *Some parents have limited to no communication whatsoever from the school*
- *Once a year IEP meetings are insufficient for providing information about progress*
- *Lack of transparency is widespread; share information so parents can see evidence of issues, improvements, etc.*
- *Inform parents of matters (like poor grades) rather than at the last minute or before they become big issues*
- *Communications should convey genuine care, understanding and empathy*
- *Nonessential information overload – send relevant communications, not flyers about non-school related events*
- *Ask for and use parent feedback*
- *Answer emails and phone calls in a timely manner (LCPS Admin, school admin and case managers) – staff are reluctant to respond in writing or by phone, when in-person meetings about issues do not always work for working parents*
- *Share opportunities for in-school services, programs, groups, etc. proactively that can help the student*
- *Set expectations for regular communication with parents (e.g. weekly calls, etc.)*
- *Parents learn about discipline after the fact. Discuss discipline approaches with parents to determine what works best for the student*
- *“Show a greater interest in students who are achieving and NOT gifted (recognition of non-traditional learners)”*
- *Parents of nonverbal children have “no idea” what is happening daily with their student*
- *Case managers are unaware of when IEPs expire and parents must contact them about it*
- *Parents would appreciate an “active dialogue vs. defensive/confrontational dialogue” about the student*
- *Parents are “berated” and talked badly about with and among the school staff when parents feel they must be more aggressive to be heard*
- *Provide all information and programs available to provide appropriate education*
- *Communications often feel like an exercise for staff in “checking the box,” rather than authentic discussion about how best to help a student*
- *A standard progress report at regular intervals would be helpful (between report cards and IEP meetings)*

- *Parents do not feel like equal members of the IEP Team or that their voice and opinions are weighted equally with the other members of the team*
- *Better consistency with entering grades and information on a single platform in a timely manner*
- *Send work samples home more in middle and high school*
- *Communicate strengths and weaknesses more frequently*
- *Don't send paperwork home with the student – send electronically*
- *Provide tangible examples of progress*
- *More information about work and issues so that they can be reinforced at home*
- *Frequent input from therapists needed*
- *Transition to middle school and high school needs more communication, preparation and planning for different expectations*
- *Parents who have had excellent experiences often cite those instances as “exceptions” and that they feel lucky to have certain outstanding individuals and administration who have gone above and beyond to support their student*
- *Rarely hear from the case manager, or only quarterly for brief written IEP updates*
- *More communication and collaboration between case managers and guidance counselors*
- *Involve and consult parents in discipline decisions that could have an emotional or social impact on a student who already has emotional/social vulnerabilities*
- *More information about self-contained classrooms – how they are managed, activities, goals*
- *Make an active effort to communicate and involve students with disabilities in any and all school-wide activities and opportunities*

F. SUGGESTED ACTIONS TO IMPROVE COMMUNICATION TO PARENTS AND FAMILIES:

1. More open, transparent information about services, supports, programs and resources that are available through special education and implement them more quickly to benefit students faster
2. Be more transparent, honest and proactive
3. Inform parents and address issues when they occur
4. Use community resources, events and support groups
5. Follow the laws and existing policies
6. Have more frequent forums with parents and respond to questions and recommendations
7. Inform parents of policy changes before they are enacted
8. Establish a paid special education parent liaison or mediator at each cluster or school who is an actual parent of a special education student
9. Provide an annual (or twice yearly) in-depth orientation to special education workshop for all families of students with disabilities
10. Create video trainings for parents on managing the special education process that are easily accessible on the LCPS website
11. Monitor for and prohibit staff retaliation against parents and students if parents (or students) express concerns
12. Improve recognition, communication and protection for students with food allergies
13. Communicate expectations about inclusive practices to demonstrate the value of students with disabilities
14. Create a forum to share novel ideas and best practices across the district

Review of comments included several specific references to:

- *Don't assume parents know what services and resources exist or are available*
- *Do the right thing for the student; not the least expensive or least resource-intense thing*
- *Parents feel like they have to "educate" staff on basic SPED disabilities and laws*
- *Implement services and programs more quickly*
- *Send policy changes to families in a readable, digestible format before they are implemented*
- *Create a special education parent liaison role at each school (or cluster)*
- *Allow for flexibility to be creative and innovative to meet an individual child with a disability's needs*
- *The SPED Rights and Responsibilities handout is a lot for parents to digest – offer a comprehensive orientation on understanding special education in LCPS for all families of students receiving special education services each year*
- *Be more open and admit mistakes so that parents can support LCPS in making improvements*
- *Address parent concerns honestly and openly; hold staff accountable to standards*
- *More parent trainings and information sharing in different formats for greater accessibility*
- *When parents communicate concerns, they should not have to worry about retaliation, but they do*
- *Be collaborative vs. adversarial with parents who have differing views*
- *Parents don't feel their students with disabilities are valued by the administration*
- *Share best practices more regularly and through a formal process*

SPECIALIZED READING INSTRUCTION:

1. Staff are unfamiliar and untrained in specialized reading instruction program, with insufficient supervision
2. Program was started late and taking too long to widely implement
3. Too few Orton Gillingham (OG) trained staff are available; those who supervise are spread too thin

Review of comments included several specific references to:

- *Inadequate supervision and fidelity for OG program*
- *Parents unsure of what reading program is being used with their student*
- *Insufficient progress monitoring*
- *Parents unsure why their child with dyslexia has not been included in OG*

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

Area of Need/Concern 1: Policies, Practices and Procedures

One of SEAC's mandated roles per the Regulations Governing Special Education Programs for Children with Disabilities in Virginia (#5) is to *"review the policies and procedures for the provision of special education and related services prior to submission to the local school board."* However, SEAC has not been provided with the opportunity to either proactively or retroactively review any proposed or ongoing special education policies or practices until recently (September 2018) when SEAC asked to review the same policies, practices, and regulations that were provided to the Ad Hoc Committee on Special Education for their review. Given that policy/practice review is a core function of SEAC, SEAC asks to be included in the workflow for all relevant reviews moving forward.

Recommendation 1A: Establish and use a workflow to introduce and provide SEAC with special education policies, practices, and procedures that are new, require periodic review, or revised to enable SEAC to complete a thorough review in a reasonable timeframe (given that SEAC meets monthly) and provide input prior to submission to the school board.

Recommendation 1B: Restraint and Seclusion – Engage in a comprehensive review of restraint and seclusion policies and practices with LCPS, incident data (that includes antecedents, tracking the duration of restraint and/or seclusion, recovery time and reintegration into the classroom or school setting after each episode for each student), to determine any trends regarding elevated use in particular schools, by particular staff teams, within particular programs, and other data points that can illuminate prevalence (all with identifying information for students and staff concealed).

- i. Provide regular reports to SEAC (that conceal identifying information) regarding restraint and seclusion incidences to allow SEAC to monitor the issue and develop further recommendations throughout the year.

Recommendation 1C: Student Observations – Reexamine the rationale and communication regarding the new practice of disallowing outside professionals to observe students with disabilities in the classroom and school setting, and consider establishing consistent protocol across the division for requesting, approving and

facilitating appropriate observations that can lead to improvements for students with disabilities in accessing the curriculum, developing coping skills to manage behaviors and strengthen the parent/community/school partnership.

Area of Need/Concern 2: Executive Functioning and Social-Emotional Learning

Direct instruction and support for developing social skills, mental health awareness and integrative supports, appropriate use of reinforcement and discipline, organization and time management skills, self-advocacy coaching, developing strong work and study habits, and test preparation are consistently high areas of need within the special education population.

Recommendation 2A: Social Skills - Implement a social skills curriculum that is delivered to identified students with disabilities throughout the duration of the school year to develop self-awareness and competencies in relational skills, increase interpersonal confidence and success, establish and maintain friendships, and learn how to appropriately navigate conflict and interact productively with different personality styles.

Recommendation 2B: Executive Functioning - Provide a comprehensive program to support the age-appropriate development of executive functioning skills for students with disabilities to include (but not be limited to) organizational skills, time management, planning and chunking assignments to meet deadlines, effective work and study habits (i.e. note-taking and techniques for studying), test preparation strategies, and stress management.

Recommendation 2C: Mental Health - Develop accessible and relatable supports for preventing, identifying, managing, and decreasing stressors and the resultant anxiety and depression as it is manifested in students with disabilities.

Recommendation 2D: Mental Health - Develop and provide graduated levels of staff training in the risk factors, warning signs, and appropriate school-based interventions for mental health concerns that are exhibited in K-12 students with disabilities.

- i. All staff who work directly with students with disabilities should be trained to recognize the risk factors and warning signs of mental health concerns, and quickly respond with appropriate interventions to the most prevalent mental

health struggles adolescents experience, such as depression, anxiety, substance abuse, eating disorders, and suicidal ideation

- ii. Provide training to all staff who work with students with disabilities about the different ways common mental health issues can present differently in students with disabilities.
- iii. Report statistics on the percentage of special education teachers, general education staff who teach in inclusive classrooms, school principals, assistant principals, and deans who have completed the baseline mental health training.
- iv. Determine performance standards and measures the impact that mental health staff training has affected or changed the quality of the programs and services offered at all the schools.

Recommendation 2E: Mental Health – Ensure that parents, students and all of the necessary school-based staff are fully aware of the Return-to-Learn initiative and receive training and opportunities for conferencing to confirm their understanding and ability to execute the Return-to-Learn protocol.

Recommendation 2F: Mental Health – Address stigma associated with mental health issues as part of the health curriculum across K-12 and provide contacts and resources for seeking help or reporting when there is concern about a peer.

Recommendation 2G: Mental Health - Increase mental health staff support for K-12 by adding qualified, licensed mental health professionals that meet recommendations from the National Association of School Psychologists (NASP) for a maximum student-to-school psychologist ratio of 1,000 to 1 for the general population, and increase the staffing levels for school psychologists providing comprehensive and preventative services recommended by NASP for a ratio not to exceed 500-700 students per psychologist.

- i. Implement a mental health prevention and intervention program for the elementary schools.

Recommendation 2H: Behavioral and Emotional Support - Providing training for all special and general education staff who work with students with disabilities in de-escalation strategies to manage behavior and provide appropriate emotional support during stressful and tense situations, when students are feeling uncomfortable or withdrawn, or when students are in crisis.

- i. Support staff in contacting parents as soon as possible, and within policy timeframes after an incident occurs, including how to sensitively and compassionately communicate with parents and others (as needed) about the situation.
- ii. Educate staff and the special education community about restorative language and practices, emphasizing the premise that both staff and students can harm the relationship (i.e. to correct the misperception that restorative practices are used when a student only has caused harm, since staff and the approaches they use can also contribute to broken, harmful relationships.)
- iii. Provide teachers with access to behavior specialists to train and guide them on how to address severe student behaviors.

Recommendation 2I: ADD/ADHD - Because ADD and ADHD are common struggles for students across disability categories, the symptoms need to be acknowledged as part of a legitimate health impairment/disability and properly addressed by staff across different campus and classroom settings.

- i. Provide training to staff in recognizing that issues involving discipline, motivation, lack of self control, fidgeting, the need to continuously move one's body, frequent distraction, and an inability to focus (on rote assignments, for example) are not conscious decisions made by students to avoid work or act out, but rather a manifestation of a legitimate health condition.
- ii. Provide training to staff in supporting students by demonstrating understanding and compassion towards the student, helping the student develop strategies to combat the various manifestations of ADD/ADHD, as well as refraining from interacting with or correcting students in a way that contributes to a poor self-image, withdrawal, and peer rejection.

Area of Need/Concern 3: 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 students with disabilities. Concerns are consistently expressed regarding the availability and access, frequency, regularity, and fidelity in/of which these programs and services are delivered.

Recommendation 3A: Career/Transition - Hire one FTE dedicated Transition Supervisor to replace the current model for this position (which is for the employee to serve both as a special education supervisor for a cluster and as the transition supervisor).

- i. Expand transition programs by asking staff to engage in more community outreach to establish new CII programs in more rural areas with employers that are typical for the area (such as wineries) and which parents support.

Recommendation 3B: Career/Transition - Hire 1 FTE Community Independence Instruction (CII) Coordinator to address the longstanding need for more staffing to support student transitions and post-high school career options.

Recommendation 3C: Career/Transition - Provide funding to contract with a transit service provider to use smaller buses or vans to provide more flexible transportation for Community Independence Instruction programs that only allow 6 students at a time.

Recommendation 3D: Job Training –Provide a path through Monroe Advanced Technology Academy in the Academies of Loudoun for students with disabilities to participate and gain skills without the need to obtain licensure or certification.

Recommendation 3E: Job Training - Provide an option to receive specific vocational training (i.e. culinary arts, auto repair) at specific high schools for students who do not qualify for AOL/MATA and need life skills training and a distributed vocational model.

Recommendation 3F: Assistive Technology – Conduct timely evaluations and provide the appropriate assistive technology accommodations, including accessible materials, that permit all students with disabilities to access the appropriate curriculum level in all grades (K-12).

- i. Prioritize providing Chromebooks to students with IEPs, 504s or receiving interventions in order to use the reading support programs. A student should not have to wait to access curriculum until a Chromebook becomes available.
- ii. Regularly provide access to the curriculum through AT and regular training on use of AT. Students use voice to text, Learning Ally, RWG, One note, and other AT. These all need to be used on regular basis and not tried “one time and done.”

Recommendation 3G: Autism Support – Improve and provide regular training in instructional methods and behavioral techniques for teachers and substitutes for students with Autism.

- i. With the demand for high skill levels and expertise in working with students with Autism, an ongoing professional development curriculum should be implemented that involves school-based administrators, principals, vice principals, deans, general and special education teachers, school psychologists, speech therapists, school counselors, teaching assistants, and related services personnel to increase competence and efficacy in serving the needs of these students.
- ii. Develop and implement a training curriculum on working with students with disabilities for substitute teachers before they are eligible to substitute in special education classrooms. This training should include identifying behaviors that are manifestations of a child's disability and how to support and intervene when these behaviors are exhibited.
- iii. As the VCU grant is used to help support the Autism Services team in developing a training program for all administrative staff and teachers, consideration should be given to how the training will translate into improved autism programs and supports in easily identifiable and measurable ways.
- iv. Develop programs and guidelines that address the unique needs of students with high-functioning autism who are typically integrated into the general education classrooms.

Recommendation 3H: Visual impairments – Address the teacher shortage by hiring staff with the proper expertise to work with visually impaired students, provide more training to staff who currently teach visually impaired students, and incentivize qualified teachers to teach visually impaired students.

Recommendation 3I: Twice exceptional students – Students with disabilities who are also gifted or high achievers need to be provided with the supports and services needed to accommodate their disability **and** placed in classes and academic programs that are commensurate with their level of intelligence and academic abilities.

- i. Provide appropriate screenings with the necessary accommodations for students with disabilities to determine areas of academic strength or giftedness to identify twice exceptional students.
- ii. Provide the accommodations, services and supports necessary to twice exceptional students to allow them to fully access the appropriate level curriculum and programs, such as those within the Academies of Loudoun.
- iii. Deliver training to special and general education teachers to recognize signs that a student might be twice exceptional and process for referring these students for

further consideration of appropriate supports to help students already in gifted programs to more fully benefit from the range of learning opportunities available, or to help special education students be supported in a manner that permits them to participate in gifted and other advanced academic programs.

Recommendation 3J: Dyslexia Screenings – If the PALS assessment will continue to be used in K-2nd grades as the universal screener for dyslexia, additional curriculum-based measures (such as those listed in the dyslexia subcommittee’s full report) are recommended to screen those students not able to meet the PALS benchmark.

- i. Early screening should include consideration for early language impairment, as well as family history of dyslexia.
- ii. Provide information on how the guidance documents for RTI teams have been developed, distributed to building administrators to guide schools through the screening to intervention process, and which schools have implemented the process.

Recommendation 3K: MAP for dyslexia – If MAP is used as a universal screener, ensure the teachers understand how to interpret the subscores.

- i. Provide MAP overview for parents. What is it?, How to read it?, What does it mean? This overview should explain to parents how to understand the scores, rather than simply giving the score and told they are meeting expectations, are performing below expectations, or are performing above expectations. How are should the information be used? Does it tell us specifically where the student is struggling?
- ii. If MAP is used as a universal screener, administrators of the screener need to make appropriate accommodation decisions based on what skill is being measured. For example, if the goal is to measure vocabulary knowledge, grammar skills, comprehension and language art skills, then these skills may be artificially impacted without a read aloud accommodation, thereby producing poor data collection and intervention design. If one is measuring decoding, encoding, accuracy and fluency, then an accurate measurement would not require a read aloud accommodation.
- iii. Monitor for false negatives. Recognize that while Computer Adaptive Tests (CAT) like MAP, iReady, and STAR may be used as screening measures for SLD/Dyslexia, these assessments concurrently (simultaneously) measure a number of component reading skills and result in false negative results. Consider the implications of the difficulty in isolating the component areas of reading that are

measured in these assessments. Even if a student is flagged, utilize further testing to determine which specific skill area demonstrated a weakness. (MM) <https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Publications/SLD-Dyslexia-Assessment-Resource-Guide/Introduction>

- iv. Provide progress monitoring for students transitioning out of an intensive reading program. Address methods to prevent a student from regressing, along with what is going to be used and how.

Area of Need/Concern 4: Culture and Climate

A pervasive concern relates to a lack of transparency, trust, empowering IEP teams, and communication. These foundational principles should be the uncompromising expectation for productive relationships between LCPS and parents of/students receiving special education students.

Recommendation 4A: Transitions between levels – Develop and implement procedures and guidelines to facilitate smooth, individualized transitions for students between school levels to ensure continuity of services, successful inclusion, early development of trusting relationships, open communication, and the maintenance of student progress.

Recommendation 4B: Communication and collaboration - Improve parent and staff awareness of policies, procedures, regulations and resources by:

- i. Engage school-based administration in appointing a SEAC PTA/PTO Parent Representative to enhance communication within the special education community.
- ii. Set firm expectations for school-based administrators to proactively provide parents of students with disabilities with key information including contacts at the school level, the variety of resources, services and supports available at the school and within the district to meet student needs, the roles and responsibilities of case managers and special education teachers, routes for addressing concerns with processes, programs, staff or services, and/or school-based protocols, etc.
- iii. Reviewing performance indicators for parental involvement at the school level, and increasing regular and meaningful communication in preferred formats to improve collaboration and positive student outcomes.

Recommendation 4C: Retaliation – Develop a plan for addressing the fear of parents and actions of staff members in retaliating against parents and students for expressing concerns or dissatisfaction with programs, services, staff and/or the treatment of students with disabilities, or for contacting outside entities for advocacy or legal support.

Recommendation 4D: Inclusive culture – Promote a district-wide inclusive culture in every LCPS school and provide tools for school-based staff to implement activities and programs that create an environment where individual differences are valued, embraced, and evidenced by:

- i. Increasing opportunities for cooperative and collaborative planning and teaching practices that integrate students with disabilities in the general education classroom setting and that model acceptance, active involvement and understanding towards students with differences.
- ii. Provide regular opportunities for peer supports in the classroom, buddy systems for lunch and school activities, and the active encouragement of students with disabilities' participation in extracurricular activities.
- iii. Use evidence-based inclusive practices, such as the Stetson Inclusive Practices framework.
- iv. Set the expectation for a welcoming environment for students with disabilities at school events, before/after school activities, special school-based programs (i.e. chorus, drama, student council, planning committees, morning news show, etc.)
- v. Create a LCPS web page dedicated to sharing and promote examples of inclusive practices in action for adoption by other staff and schools.

Recommendation 4E: Communication to parents regarding dyslexia initiatives– Improve transparency with parents of students with dyslexia by communicating more regularly to facilitate meaningful participation, and build trusting, positive working relationships. Specifically, families should be fully informed about the Intervention Digital Implementation Guide currently used by 48 schools, which includes tier definitions for reading and instructional match guidance for choosing an appropriate intervention based on student need and an instructional matrix specific to students with dyslexia.

Recommendation 4F: Dyslexia SIF-Rs should be present in IEP meetings the first year. The “in training” specialized reading facilitator does not have the ability to set realistic goals based on a system they are not completely trained in. The goals should be implemented by the highly trained SIF-Rs the first year, with fidelity. Fully trained and

full accountability should be the expectation. It reduces time, cost in finding teacher subs for IEP meetings, and could reduce the high cost of an advocate recommending missed goals.

Area of Need/Concern 5: Compliance

Issues related to the IEP, consistency across the school division, and the implementation of supports and services continue to impact the performance, inclusion, and achievement of students with disabilities.

Recommendation 5A: IEPs – Provide school-based administration and special education staff with clear expectations and regular training for staff who develop, monitor, report, and supervise IEPs to ensure that each IEP is unique to each student and meets legal and regulatory requirements. Hold staff accountable for IEP compliance as part of an annual special education performance review and as part of their formal performance evaluations.

Recommendation 5B: IEP Implementation – Create new mechanism by which fidelity and consistency in implementing all IEP supports and services is monitored to ensure timely and competent delivery by the appropriate personnel.

- i. Establish a response system that reacts swiftly when supports and services have not been implemented per the IEP to minimize disruption to the student and lost opportunities to learn, access the appropriate curriculum, and participate in academic and school-wide activities.

Recommendation 5C: Fidelity and frequency of specialized reading instruction, to include:

- i. Follow up classes to all teachers that are implementing OG in their classrooms, support on a regular basis, video database showing teachers how to introduce concepts that they can regularly view and use in their teaching,
- ii. Struggling students should get 1:3 ratio, with the MOST skilled instructor. This is the instructor who has the most training and has finished or is in the process of doing their practicum. Students should not be receiving intervention from assistant teachers UNLESS they are trained in the method of intervention.
- iii. Partnerships with parents and students in the upper grades to have a “zero period” (before school starts) for more intensive intervention every day. To help a student

bridge the gap there should be at least 2 hours of instruction and sometimes another 40-90 on top of that every day. "Catch-up growth is driven primarily by proportional increases in direct instructional time. Catch-up growth is so difficult to achieve that it can be the product only of quality of instruction in great quantity."

Teacher quality x time = growth.

http://www.fcrr.org/science/pdf/crawford/ESE_Interventions101_final_web.pdf

iv. Offering ESY with a qualified trained reading facilitator.

Recommendation 5D: Qualified dyslexia training support, to include:

- i. Teachers implementing interventions need more training and monitoring. Interventions being implemented are not being given enough time to work correctly. In addition, interventions are being "piecemealed" together which leads to fidelity and reliability issues. Remediation takes time and requires fidelity to program.
- ii. SIF-Rs should become certified in order to oversee the implementation of the OG program correctly and with fidelity.
- iii. Allocate funds to hire more SIF-R to support schools. This would enable SIF-Rs to meet with teachers on a more regular basis. SIF-R are stretched out in too many schools. 10 people are not enough to oversee 92 schools in LCPS. There should be at a minimum monthly meet and greets, video updates, or other support to help these teachers.
- iv. Require follow-up sessions and monitoring over teachers implementing OG.

Recommendation 5E: Intervention with secondary dyslexic students – Secondary students need to be given more intense intervention without being penalized in their schedules. Offer a middle and high school Pilot program for a Zero Block, where students can receive the intense remediation needed to close the gap.

Recommendation 5F: Dyslexia intervention should not be school based. Provide more consistency between schools, and parents more involved in evaluating whether benchmarks have been met.

- i. Using the school improvement plans, publicize whether or not 80% of students have met benchmarks and standards for each school for each grade.
- ii. Meet ESSA requirements specifying that LEA's develop and implement an evidence-based comprehensive support and improvement plan to improve student outcomes in identified schools in *"partnership with stakeholders (including principals, and other local leaders, teachers and parents."*

- iii. Include all of the information for cut-scores, benchmarks, interventions, programs, RTI/MTSS models and RTI/MTSS manuals, including the Response to Intervention Digital Guide in publicly accessible formats to enable parents to meaningfully participate and engage in thoughtful and educated discussions.
http://myschoolmyvoice.nea.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/School_Improv_Under_ESSA.pdf

Recommendation 5G: Platforms for personalized learning and dyslexia – Increase use of Personalized learning platforms like Achieve 3000.

- i. Audio should be an example of what a student can use to access the curriculum on their level even though they cannot read on their own.
- ii. Provide access to grade level content and do not reduce the content based on the Lexile score. Schools are utilizing one data point to design curriculum across subjects. Child is given a Lexile score and classwork is produced from that score. Lexile levels are being determined without accommodations for children with dyslexia. Children with Dyslexia have a reading disability and in most cases do not need to have coursework modified.

Recommendation 5F: Dyslexia program fit – Determine if a reading intervention program is the appropriate fit for a student who has had previous reading remediation and regressed. Instead of quickly making changes to methods, examine other possible reasons for the student’s regression. For instance, Is the program being implemented with fidelity? Is the group size appropriate? Is the intensity level correct? Is the teacher properly trained and implementing the program correctly?

Recommendation 5G: Follow ESSA for dyslexia - ESSA defines comprehensive reading instruction and what it should entail for a structured literacy approach (See Appendix 2). We continue to support this to provide FAPE for all students. As well as, looking at our current approach to Tier 1 instruction to show balanced literacy is not an appropriate method for our students to tackle language development.

SEAC STRUCTURE

SEAC COMPOSITION

SEAC is composed of 21 members who are parents and at least one educator who volunteer their time to our community. They are appointed for two-year terms by the School Board through an application and recommendation process. The executive committee of SEAC is elected by its 21-person membership to lead the work of SEAC throughout the year. SEAC also requests that a PTA/PTO Representative for each LCPS school be appointed each year to attend meetings, participate in discussions, and report back to the school on matters that affect special education. The following SEAC members were elected to the following officer roles on the SEAC Executive Committee for this year (2018-2019):

Dr. Carol Williams-Nickelson, Chair	seacchair@lcps.org
Lorraine Hightower, Immediate Past Chair	seacpastchair@lcps.org
Sharon Tropf, Vice Chair, Membership	seacvicechairmembership@lcps.org
Shehnaz Khan, Vice Chair, Planning	seacvicechairplanning@lcps.org
Dr. Amy Elledge, Vice Chair, Communications	seacvicechaircommunications@lcps.org
Alison McArthur, Secretary	seacsecretary@lcps.org

As of November 2018, there are three open membership slots for the twenty-one-member committee. In addition to SEAC's executive committee member, the committee is composed of the following members:

Jackie Baker	Jackie.Baker@lcps.org
Billie Jo Bevan	BillieJo.Bevan-SEAC@lcps.org
Heidi Bunkua	Heidi.Bunkua-SEAC@lcps.org
Chris Croll	Chris.Croll-SEAC@lcps.org
Deana Czaban	Deana.Czaban-SEAC@lcps.org
Nancy deLlanas	Nancy.deLlanas-SEAC@lcps.org
Nichole McMahon	Nichole.McMahon-SEAC@lcps.org
Craig Metz	Craig.Metz-SEAC@lcps.org
Jeannine Pepper	Jeannine.Pepper@lcps.org
Veena Sajjan	Veena.Sajjan-SEAC@lcps.org
Kimberly Shierts	Kimberly.Shierts-SEAC@lcps.org
Claudia Skinner	Claudia.Skinner-SEAC@lcps.org

SEAC and its officers work closely with the new Assistant Superintendent of Pupil Services, Dr. Asia Jones (Asia.Jones@lcps.org) and the Director of the Office of Special Education, Dr.

Suzanne Jimenez (Suzanne.Jimenez@lcps.org), who serves as the staff liaison. The staff liaison and her designees serve as consultants and resources to SEAC.

Debbie Rose (Debbie.Rose@lcps.org) serves as the school board liaison to SEAC. The school board chair assigns liaisons to various LCPS groups each year.

SEAC establishes subcommittees to examine and make recommendations pertaining to identified needs and concerns. All SEAC members are required to participate on at least one subcommittee. The SEAC Chair serves as an ex-officio member of all subcommittees and ad hoc groups. PTA/PTO Representatives to SEAC are encouraged to participate on subcommittees.

The subcommittees and groups for the prior year (2017-2018) included Autism, Dyslexia, Transition and Mental Health.

This current year's (2018-2019) subcommittees are organized around the primary areas of need/concern and will address issues related to specific disabilities (such as autism and dyslexia) within the following frameworks:

1. Policies, Practices and Procedures

Co-Chairs: Craig Metz and Shehnaz Kahn

2. Executive Functioning and Social-Emotional Learning

Co-Chairs: Jeannine Pepper and Billie Jo Bevan

3. Specialized Programs and Services

Co-Chairs: Chris Croll and TBA

4. Culture and Climate

Co-Chairs: Veena Sajjan and Heidi Bunkua

5. Compliance

Co-Chairs: Claudia Skinner and TBA

Beginning in January 2018, SEAC will host coffee and conversation meet-ups in the community for parents to informally share information with SEAC members about their experiences with LCPS special education services. These meet-ups are designed to give SEAC members an opportunity to listen to parents who cannot attend SEAC meetings or do not feel comfortable offering public comment or meeting formally with SEAC officers and LCPS staff.

PTA/PTO REPRESENTATIVES

LCPS SCHOOL	SEAC REPRESENTATIVE	EMAIL ADDRESS	CLUSTER
Aldie ES			John Champe HS
Algonkian ES			Potomac Falls HS
Arcola ES	Susan Caldrone		John Champe HS
Ashburn ES	Jackie Prendergast	jaxprend@gmail.com	Broad Run HS
Ball's Bluff ES	Ashley Caskey	ashcaskey@gmail.com	Tuscarora HS
Bannekar ES			Loudoun Valley HS
Belmont Ridge MS	Alissa Allbee	alissa.allbee@hotmail.com	Riverside HS
Belmont Station ES	Rachael Perrott	rachael.perrott@fairfaxcounty.gov	Stone Bridge HS
Blue Ridge MS			Loudoun Valley HS
Briar Woods HS	Kelly Huff-Snyder	Kellyhuff@hotmail.com	Briar Woods HS
Brambleton Middle	Aimee Tucker		Independence HS
Broad Run HS	Janice Saylor	jsay89@gmail.com	Broad Run HS
Buffalo Trail ES			John Champe HS
Cardinal Ridge ES	Tramaine Gillus	tramaine.gillus@gmail.com	Freedom HS
Catoctin ES	Anna Bickham	anna.bickham@gmail.com	Loudoun County HS
Cedar Lane ES	Patricia Keehn	jamesherringparent@gmail.com	Stone Bridge HS
Cool Spring ES	Joe Sable	jsable43@gmail.com	Heritage HS
Countryside ES	Jeannine Pepper	jeanninepepper@hotmail.com	Potomac Falls HS
Creightons Corner ES			Independence HS
Discovery ES			Broad Run HS
Dominion HS			Dominion HS
Dominion Trail ES			Broad Run HS
Eagle Ridge MS	Kelly Huff-Snyder	Kellyhuff@hotmail.com	Briar Woods HS
Emerick ES	Sue Mateiski	ssmatelski@comcast.net	Loudoun Valley HS
Evergreen Mill ES			Loudoun County HS
Farmwell Station MS	Janice Saylor	jsay89@gmail.com	Broad Run HS
Forest Grove ES	Abigail Yeskatalas		Park View HS
Frances Hazel Reid ES			Tuscarora HS
Frederick Douglass ES			Loudoun County HS
Freedom HS	Jenna Arndt	Jenna.arndt@lcps.org	Freedom HS
Goshen Post ES	Diane Gibbs	dianegibbs.seac@rcn.com	John Champe HS
Guilford ES			Park View HS
Hamilton ES			Loudoun Valley HS
Harmony MS	Kimberly Shierts	kshierts@gmail.com	Woodgrove HS
Harper Park MS			Heritage HS
Heritage HS	Melanie Worrall	melanieworrall@icloud.com	Heritage HS

Hillsboro Charter Academy			
Hillside ES	Donna Malpeli		Briar Woods HS
Horizon ES			Dominion HS
Hutchison Farm ES	Allison Eastridge	allisoneastridge@gmail.com	Freedom HS
Independence HS			Independence HS
J. Michael Lunsford MS	Katherine Balanc		Freedom HS
J. Michael Lunsford MS	Jennifer Gauvreau	jgauvreau@gmail.com	Freedom HS
J.L. Simpson MS	Tricia Russell	jadetmr@gmail.com	Loudoun County HS
J.L. Simpson MS	Chris Croll		Loudoun County HS
John Champe HS	Aimee Tucker		John Champe HS
John W. Tolbert Jr. ES	Rebecca (Becky) O'Neill	rebecca.oneill.msw@gmail.com	Heritage HS
Kenneth W. Culbert ES	Rana Marraccini	rana@gumart.com	Woodgrove HS
Leesburg ES	Lindsey Christensen		Tuscarora HS
Leesburg ES	Dawn Horan		Tuscarora HS
Legacy ES	Nikki Mc Mahon	mcmahonnikki5@gmail.com	Independence HS
Liberty ES	Alisha Vaughan	aavlll2000@hotmail.com	Freedom HS
Lincoln ES			Loudoun Valley HS
Little River ES	Heidi Bunkua	heidibunkua@hotmail.com	Freedom HS
Loudoun County HS	Chris Croll	chris@nationalcenterforgiftedservices.com	Loudoun County HS
Loudoun Valley HS			Loudoun Valley HS
Lovettsville ES			Woodgrove HS
Lowes Island ES	Martha Daniel	natalie.daniel@verizon.net	Dominion HS
Lucketts ES	Toni Soliday	toni.soliday@gmail.com	Tuscarora HS
Madison's Trust ES			Independence HS
Meadowland ES			Dominion HS
Mercer MS	Kathryn McAllister	kathryn.mcallister@lcps.org	John Champe HS
Middleburg Community Charter School			
Mill Run ES			Briar Woods HS
Moorefield Station ES			Briar Woods HS
Mountain View ES			Woodgrove HS
Newton Lee ES	Lesley Lynch		Riverside HS
Park View HS			Park View HS
Pinebrook ES	Laura Stapleton	stapletonfamily@verizon.net	John Champe HS
Potomac Falls HS	Erica Orbach		Potomac Falls HS
Potowmack ES	Danielle Bischoff	dsbischoff@gmail.com	Potomac Falls HS
River Bend MS	Margie McGinnis		Potomac Falls HS
Riverside HS			Riverside HS
Rock Ridge HS	Shehnaz Khan	Skhan_621@yahoo.com	Rock Ridge HS
Rolling Ridge ES	Synthia Morant	Synthiandmarlon@gmail.com	Park View HS
Rosa Lee Carter ES	Valerie Davis	valerie160@hotmail.com	Rock Ridge HS

Round Hill ES	Alexandria Davila	alexandria386@hotmail.com	Woodgrove HS
Sanders Corner ES	Kelly Melka	Kellyannmelka@gmail.com	Stone Bridge HS
Sanders Corner ES	Kiran Ahmad	wzk11@yahoo.com	Stone Bridge HS
Seldons Landing ES	Alison Waters	amh205@yahoo.com	Riverside HS
Seneca Ridge MS	Mariela Naimi		Dominion HS
Smarts Mill MS	Christy Bixler	Christydiane@gmail.com	Tuscarora HS
Sterling ES	Amber and Austin Catlett		Park View HS
Sterling MS			Park View HS
Steuart W. Weller ES			Riverside HS
Stone Bridge HS	Jeanne Murck	jeanne.murck@gmail.com	Stone Bridge HS
Stone Hill MS	Kimberly Miner	djminer@verizon.net	Rock Ridge HS
Sugarland ES	Erica Young	erica.young@lcps.org	Dominion HS
Sully ES	Maria Ifurung	Maria.Ifurung@lcps.org	Park View HS
Sycolin Creek ES	Kathleen Feeney	Kathleen.feney@lcps.org	Independence HS
Trailside MS	Veena Sajjan	vs9876@gmail.com	Stone Bridge HS
Tuscarora HS	Fernando Montanez		Tuscarora HS
Waterford ES			Woodgrove HS
Willard Intermediate	Nona Hunter	hnt847@aol.com	John Champe HS
Woodgrove HS	DEana Czaban	kelly_dscm@yahoo.com	Woodgrove HS

BUSINESS MEETINGS

SEAC business meetings are held throughout the school year, typically on the first Wednesday of each month at the LCPS Administration Building. SEAC's bylaws require at least six (6) business meetings per year, which SEAC meets or exceeds. The agendas for business meetings are published in advance of the meeting on the SEAC web page (www.lcps.org/seac) and the meetings are open to the public. Minutes are approved at the next scheduled meeting and posted to the SEAC web page. Talking points are created after each meeting and posted to the SEAC web page for PTA/PTO Representatives to share helpful information and updates on their respective campus. Business meetings include reports and updates from SEAC officers, the Director of Special Education, Parent Resource Services, and chairs of subcommittees and focus groups, as well as appropriate follow-up on issues raised at earlier meeting and new business. Time is reserved at each business meeting for public comment. Guidelines for public comment are also available on the SEAC web page.

Executive Committee planning meetings are held regularly throughout the school year. The agendas for these open meetings are also posted to the SEAC web page in advance of the meeting. Similarly, subcommittee meeting agendas and minutes are posted, and they are open to the public.

SEAC's business meetings are well-attended. Sometimes the business meetings are paired with presentations that address areas of need and concern for the special education community. The purpose of SEAC business meetings are to identify and clarify the needs of special education students and identify emergent systemic issues.

SEAC's meeting format and subcommittee structure has been revised this year to focus more on engaging and involving the wider special education community.

PRIOR YEAR'S PUBLIC COMMENT THEMES (2016-2017)

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 2017-2018 public comment process and contributed to the development of the current year's (2018-2019) identified needs and concerns:

October 2017

Dyslexia

- Supplied research as to Dyslexia as a national problem and urged LCPS to continue to examine their practices to improve identification and remediation of those with dyslexia.
- Request update on the FOLI and OG training for teachers; follow up training, numbers of teachers trained, use of instructional facilitators; what training do instructional facilitators use
- Propose for LCPS to incorporate an annual Dyslexia simulation event into the school calendar as mandatory staff development for teachers and administrators

PBIS

- Asking for Social Skills or "The Hidden Curriculum" be taught at the elementary level to help promote anti-bullying at the elementary level. Many students experience the different types of bullying at a much younger age

Assessments

- Eligibility assessments and making sure that staff who are testing students for eligibility know, understand and apply the science of reading while assessing for weaknesses and strengths, and thereby make recommendations accordingly.

November 2017

Mild ID Focus Group

- Focus group to gather more information on the needs of mid to high functioning Intellectually Disabled students, and if there is enough need within the county to warrant a self-contained center specifically for these students

College Self-Advocacy

- Students with accommodations from Disabled Student Services that are not being trained enough in self-advocacy; students never follow up and take the responsibility to arrange for a note taker, or extended testing or any of the accommodations that they need

Music Therapy

- Concerns over the changes in offering music therapy without music therapists, how it is unacceptable for students and the individualized method for reaching IEP goals.
- Specialized Music instruction does not meet the needs of special education students and IEPs.

Use of tape recorder during FBA meetings

- Concern over how LCPS allows for the tape recording of IEP meetings but not FBA meetings; parents want to re-listen to the meetings in order to reflect and understand what was agreed upon. Asked if policy could be changed.

December 2017**Placement**

- Concerns over students in programs being moved from school to school. This transition can be harmful to the student and thus requiring additional resources (BIP/Crisis Plan)

Dyslexia Training

- 3 questions raised after the implementation of the new reading strategies program: 1) what type of training have the specialized instructional facilitators received; 2) is there policy in place for students whose needs are not being met during transition time or staff to support their needs in the school they are attending; 3) who provides the service if a teacher has not yet been trained?
- Importance to have teachers become certified in OG reading method

February 2018**Outside Observations**

- Allowing outside observations in the general education and self-contained classroom in order to be part of the IEP team and help address areas of need for the student

March 2018**Specialized Reading Program**

- Concerns that the specialized reading program is moving too rapidly to gain mastery and there is not meaningful progress being made; for the program to be successful, it is imperative that the implementation are in accordance with the principles of Orton Gillingham

Adaptive Agenda

- Creating a daily communication log for students who are non-verbal; parents would like feedback as to what they did during the day and how their day went

Higher Functioning students with Autism

- Concern over the lack of services and/or support available to mid-high functioning students with autism; job coaching not available, creating an environment conducive to inclusion, lack of training for staff on how to engage/support mid-high functioning students with autism, lack of job coaching services for these students

Transition Support

- Students who are “too high functioning” for CII; lack of opportunities to prepare students for transitioning after high school; sharing possible services available for parents

Lack of resolution to LCPS Online complaints

- Parent submitted an online LCPS comment and complaint form for three months; never received a solution but was informed that LCPS sent autism consultants to observe their child without informing them. This was a way that they learned there were autism consultants in LCPS

Lack of Assistive Technology

- Seeking AT for student with executive functioning deficits. Only told there was Read, Write, Gold; parents also had concerns with lack of follow through with what was said in the IEP meeting

Dismissive of Executive Functioning

- Student being academically challenged due to teachers expecting him to perform rudimentary tasks even though he is unable to due to lack of executive functioning. Teachers not being aware of how things are broken down in Basic Skills class in order to help teach executive functioning.

Restraint and Seclusion

- Wondering how special education teachers could go from being passionate about helping children to putting them “in a closet”. Concern of what LCPS proper use and documentation of seclusion is, why are protocols not being followed, why are parents not being notified, was a full investigation done and why were parents not given information, what steps is the school board supporting?

Broadcasting SEAC Meetings

- Parent wondering if there was a possibility to broadcast the SEAC meeting on Webex or other county provided videoconference software. Parents don't all have accommodations to watch children and would like to attend the meetings.

High Functioning ID

- Requesting the special education department and anyone else to research and find articles that demonstrate long term outcomes of high-value education for disabled and special needs students in order to be productive members of society. This request is to produce data driven results as justification for additional spending for special education students

Outside Observations

- Requested an outside observation of child's ECSE classroom by private preschool director which was denied; student was being cut back in ECSE program and wanted to make sure consistency was there in order to help with progress

CII 5 mile radius

- Significantly shortened list of approved places that can be attended; other concern would be those places listed as deemed "unsafe"

April 2018

Visual Impairments

- Concern with students with visual impairments not receiving the level of support they need. Family neighbor moved out of the area to be taught Braille in school district

Consistency in the Self-Contained programs

- Concern with substitutes in self-contained classes; inconsistencies are not helpful to the routines of these classrooms (ID or Autism for example). Would be helpful for substitutes to receive further training if they would like to be in those classrooms to help; requesting administration spend at least an hour a week in the classroom to see the day to day activities

PRIOR YEAR'S PROGRAMMING (2017-2018)

Topics for SEAC's monthly presentations are generated from community interest, informational needs, and SEAC's priorities. Last year's presentations were well attended and occurred in conjunction with monthly business meetings. SEAC established explicit goals for its programs last year, which were to share progress and updates regarding SEAC's ongoing priorities and concerns, and to deliver a panel presentation that provided deeper information to a sophisticated parent audience. SEAC received feedback that programs were not always as comprehensive as expected and, in some cases, did not illuminate progress or answer questions as well as attendees hoped. SEAC has incorporated this feedback into the current year's program planning. The prior year's schedule was as follows:

- September 6, 2017:** Orientation for PTA/PTO Reps and New Members, 6:15 p.m.
SEAC Briefing 2017-2018: The Role of SEAC in Identifying Unmet Needs, 7:00 p.m.
Henry J. Millward, Director, Office of Specialized Education Facilities and Family Engagement, Division of Special Education and Student Services, Virginia Department of Education
- October 4, 2017:** (Dyslexia Awareness Month) SEAC Business Meeting, 6:00 – 6:50 p.m.
An Update on Dyslexia Interventions and Next Steps, 7:00 p.m.
- November 1, 2017:** SEAC Business Meeting, 6:00 – 6:50 p.m.
Understanding the LCPS Budget Process: Advocating for the Necessary Funding to Support Special Education, 7:00 p.m.
- December 6, 2017:** (Inclusive Schools Week) SEAC Business Meeting 6:00 – 6:50 p.m.
IEP Part 1 - Promoting True Individualization of the IEP: Goals, Services and Expertise, Inclusion, Discipline, Giftedness, 7:00 p.m.
- January 17, 2018:** Special Education Town Hall Meeting with School Board Members, 6:00 – 8:00 p.m.
- February 7, 2018:** SEAC Business Meeting, 6:00 – 6: 50 p.m.
Related Services: Speech/Language, Occupational Therapy, Physical Therapy, Music Therapy and Social Skills Training, 7:00 p.m.
- March 7, 2018:** SEAC Business Meeting, 6:00 – 6:50 p.m.
Facilitating a Continuum of Successful Transitions: From Elementary to Middle, Middle to High, and After High School, 7:00 p.m.

April 4, 2018: (Autism Awareness Month) SEAC Business Meeting, 6:00 – 6:50 p.m.
An Update on Autism Service Expansion, 7:00 p.m.

May 2, 2018: (Mental Health Awareness Mo.) SEAC Business Meeting, 6:00 – 6:50 p.m.
Mental Health Awareness and Integrative Supports for SPED Students,
7:00 p.m.

May 15, 2018 (Tues): SEAC Annual Excellence in Special Education Awards Ceremony, 6:00 p.m.

CURRENT YEAR'S MEETING SCHEDULE (2018-2019)

Note that this schedule is subject to change.

September 5, 2018: Orientation for PTA/PTO Reps and SEAC Members, 6:00 – 7:30 p
SEAC Membership Business Meeting 7:30 – 8:30 p

September 26, 2018: SEAC Executive Committee Meeting, 6:30 – 8:00 p

October 3, 2018: Presentation: An Update on Dyslexia Services & Supports, 6:00 – 7:00 p
SEAC Business Meeting, 7:15 – 8:30 p

October 10, 2018: SEAC Executive Committee Meeting, Panera, 6:30 – 8:00 p

November 7, 2018: SEAC Business Meeting, 6:00 – 8:00 p

December 5, 2018: Presentation on Twice Exceptional Students, 6:00 – 6:30 p
Presentation on LCPS Restraint and Seclusion Regulations, 6:30-7:00 p
SEAC Business Meeting, 7:15 – 8:30 p

January 9, 2019: SEAC Business Meeting 6:00 – 7:15 p
Presentation or SEAC Subcommittee Meetings: TBA, 7:30 – 8:30 p

January 23, 2019: SEAC Executive Committee Meeting, 6:30 – 8:00 p

February 6, 2019: SEAC Business Meeting, 6:00 – 7:15 p
Presentation or SEAC Subcommittee Meetings: TBA, 7:30 – 8:30 p

February 11, 2019: SEAC Executive Committee Meeting, Panera, 6:30 – 8:00 p

March 6, 2019: SEAC Business Meeting, 6:00 – 7:15 p

Presentation or SEAC Subcommittee Meetings: TBA, 7:30 – 8:30 p

March 26, 2019: SEAC Executive Committee Meeting, 6:30 – 8:00 p

April 3, 2019: SEAC Business Meeting, 6:00 – 7:15 p
Presentation or SEAC Subcommittee Meetings: TBA, 7:30 – 8:30 p

April 24, 2019: SEAC Executive Committee Meeting, 6:30 – 8:00 p

May 1, 2019: SEAC Business Meeting, 6:00 – 7:15 p
Presentation or SEAC Subcommittee Meetings: TBA, 7:30 – 8:30 p

May 15, 2018: SEAC Annual Excellence in Special Education Awards Ceremony, 6:30 – 8:00 p, Location TBA

ANNUAL EXCELLENCE IN SPECIAL EDUCATION AWARDS

The Annual Recognition of Excellence in Special Education Awards program is an important way for the LCPS community to thank those who through dedication, creativity, patience and determination excel at helping LCPS students receiving special education to experience success. Award recipients and nominees serve as role models as they promote acceptance and inclusion and an environment where every student is valued, welcomed and encouraged to succeed.

This past year marked the 8th anniversary of the annual awards ceremony. It was held in the three rooms for LCPS school board meetings and the space was once again overflowing with enthusiastic and proud supporters. Several elected officials were invited and attended the awards ceremony. Superintendent Williams attended and offered opening remarks, along with Assistant Superintendent for Pupil Services, Dr. Mary Kealy, Delegate David Reid and Delegate Wendy Gooditis. Congresswoman Barbara Comstock was represented by one of her staff members, and several other elected officials who could not attend sent congratulatory messages and words of support. Debbie Rose, SEAC's liaison from the school board, and school board Chairman, Jeff Morse attended and personally congratulated each award winners posed for pictures along with Superintendent Williams with each award recipients. Opening remarks by distinguished leaders and guests communicated a powerful message about the value of inclusion and the significant contributions that students with disabilities can make that enrich learning for everyone and promote acceptance.

Award recipients were as follows:

Educators

Administrator	Doug Anderson	Riverside HS
Administrator	Rose Frazee	Riverside HS
Counselor	Gretchen Mostero	Eagle Ridge MS
Paraprofessional	Khadija Kouiroukidis	Belmont Ridge MS
General Education	Elizabeth Bland	Kenneth W. Culbert ES
General Education	Stacey Hagenlock	Legacy ES
Special Education - ECSE	Valerie Swan	Horizon ES
Special Education - ES	Brenda Brady	Mill Run ES
Special Education - MS	William Herndon	Blue Ridge MS
Special Education - HS	Al Faraone	Stone Bridge HS
Special Education - HS	Christina Rochester	Briar Woods HS

Students

Logan Pepin	Ashburn ES
Lucy Edmonds	Creighton's Corner ES
Victoria Sherr	Discovery ES
Micah Carsto	Frederick Douglass ES
Vishwanath Venkateswaran	Frederick Douglass ES

Cadence Hostetter	Little River ES
Caitlin Reichert	Little River ES
Keira McDowell	Little River ES
Molly Bollhorst	Pinebrook ES
Chance McLane	Rosa Lee Carter ES
Jackson Flynn	Rosa Lee Carter ES
Hemani Bhaskara, Isha Vepa, Netra Trivedi, Anisha Rapolu, and Kiersten Engen	Stone Hill MS
Tyler Means	Potomac Falls HS
Cheney Stockov	Riverside HS
Sayuj Naikwadi	Riverside HS
Makenzie Flake, Tyrese Johnson and Aimee Holland	Stone Bridge HS
Taylor Nutter	Woodgrove HS
Grace Schnabel	Woodgrove HS

Programs and Groups

Inclusive School		Liberty ES
Program - ES	A.P.E. Buddies	Ashburn ES
Program - Secondary	FHS Unified Track Team	Freedom HS
Program Collaboration	HS and ES Collaboration	Rock Ridge HS and Rosa Lee Carter ES

Elected officials and distinguished invited guests in attendance were as follows:

Delegate David Reid	VA House of Representatives, District 32
Delegate Wendy Gooditis	VA House of Representatives, District 10
Hank Millward	Director of the Office of Specialized Education Facilities and Family Engagement Division of Special Education and Student Services Virginia Department of Education (VDOE)
Jeff Morse	LCPS School Board Chairman
Debbie Rose	LCPS School Board Member and SEAC Liaison
Dr. Eric Williams	LCPS Superintendent
Dr. Mary Kealy	LCPS Assistant Superintendent, Pupil Services
Dr. Suzanne Jimenez	LCPS Director of Special Education

APPENDICES

LCPS Training Hours for Specialized Reading Instruction

Elementary Training

	Reading Specialists	Teacher Assistants	Teacher, ELL	Teacher, Gen Ed	Teacher, Special Education	Grand Total
Academy of Specialized Reading	4	3	9	9	87	112
Comprehensive Orton-Gillingham Training (grades K-2)	53	10	69	98	215	445
Intermediate Orton-Gillingham Training (grades 3-12)	21	5	24	18	93	161
Corrective Reading	1	1	1	1	11	15
Fundamentals of Literacy Instruction (FOLI)	66	19	95	181	257	618
Language! Live Professional Learning Sessions					1	1
Reading Mastery (2-day Initial Training for Teachers)		3		2	45	50
ID/AUT/ Academy of Specialized Reading					47	47
Grand Total	145	41	198	309	756	1449

Secondary Training

	Reading Specialists	Teacher Assistants	Teacher, ELL	Teacher, Gen Ed	Teacher, Special Education	Grand Total
Academy of Specialized Reading	7			5	37	49
Comprehensive Orton-Gillingham Training (grades K-2)	8	1	3	8	35	55
Intermediate Orton-Gillingham Training (grades 3-12)	19	2	9	23	86	139
Corrective Reading					5	5
Fundamentals of Literacy Instruction (FOLI)	33	8	25	40	179	285
Language! Live Professional Learning Sessions	9	4	2	4	87	106
Reading Mastery (2-day Initial Training for Teachers)					2	2
ID/AUT/ Academy of Specialized Reading					43	43
Grand Total	76	15	39	80	474	684

Subpart 2—Literacy Education for All, Results for the Nation

SEC. 2221. ø20 U.S.C. 6641

PURPOSES; DEFINITIONS.

(a) PURPOSES

The purposes of this subpart are:

(1) to improve student academic achievement in reading and writing by providing Federal support to States to develop, revise, or update comprehensive literacy instruction plans that, when implemented, ensure high-quality instruction and effective strategies in reading and writing from early education through grade 12; and

(2) for States to provide targeted subgrants to early childhood education programs and local educational agencies and their public or private partners to implement evidence-based programs that ensure high quality comprehensive literacy instruction for students most in need.

(b) DEFINITIONS

In this subpart:

(1) COMPREHENSIVE LITERACY INSTRUCTION

The term “comprehensive literacy instruction” means instruction that:

- (A) includes developmentally appropriate, contextually explicit, and systematic instruction, and frequent practice, in reading and writing across content areas;
- (B) includes age-appropriate, explicit, systematic, and intentional instruction in phonological awareness, phonic decoding, vocabulary, language structure, reading fluency, and reading comprehension;
- (C) includes age-appropriate, explicit instruction in writing, including opportunities for children to write with clear purposes, with critical reasoning appropriate to the topic and purpose, and with specific instruction and feedback from instructional staff;
- (D) makes available and uses diverse, high-quality print materials that reflect the reading and development levels, and interests, of children;
- (E) uses differentiated instructional approaches, including individual and small group instruction and discussion;
- (F) provides opportunities for children to use language with peers and adults in order to develop language skills, including developing vocabulary;
- (G) includes frequent practice of reading and writing strategies;
- (H) uses age-appropriate, valid, and reliable screening assessments, diagnostic assessments, formative assessment processes, and summative assessments to identify a child’s learning needs, to inform instruction, and to monitor the child’s progress and the effects of instruction;
- (I) uses strategies to enhance children’s motivation to read and write and children’s engagement in self-directed learning;
- (J) incorporates the principles of universal design for learning;
- (K) depends on teachers’ collaboration in planning, instruction, and assessing a child’s progress and on continuous professional learning; and
- (L) links literacy instruction to the challenging State academic standards, including the ability to navigate, understand, and write about, complex print and digital subject matter.