

# Fairfax County SEPTA

Board Meeting  
February 1, 2022  
Virtual - Zoom



7:04PM

- I. **Call to order - Michelle Cades, Diane Cooper Gould, Cathy Greulich, Ally Baldassari, Jenn Benecke (left 7:51), Cheri Belkowitz (left 8:18), Margaret Behrns, Amanda Campbell, Stephanie Smith, Amy LaCrosse (left 7:30), Kaitlin Erkkila, Lauren McCaughey**

- A. Absences noted in advance: Kate Volpe

7:PM

- II. **Committees & Liaisons – [COMMITTEE SIGN UPS HERE](#)** from past SEPTA events

- A. [PLANS FOR NEXT YEAR HERE!](#)

- B. **Staff/Teacher liaison**

1. There continues to be misinformation/lack of dissemination of information to teachers (eg. new WIDA (English language screening test) accommodations form that hasn't been shared with special ed teachers, new VAAP criteria that has not been disseminated and there is no one on one training for the new criteria - a question was brought up as to why FCPS and VDOE are not educating parents on these issues)
2. Neurodiversity specialist info - Liaison sent and email to Mike Bloom and Shannon Merriweather an acting representative (Equity specialist) for this address the concern that the description for the position is not specific enough for the described intention of the position. She said the description was left vague to allow candidates to create what they want for the position. The job has been posted twice. The first time they didn't get anyone that fit the criteria of the job and it wasn't clear if the position had been posted outside FCPS. The position would be held for someone that would be a good fit if they weren't able to start right away which will leave the neurodiversity position open

- C. **Annual awards**

1. Nominations open through February 14 – EVERYONE please publicize!  
<https://tinyurl.com/SEPTAawards2022>
2. So far there are 6 responses.
3. A lot of schools are not allowing new gatherings/after school activities. She has reached out to NOVA Community Church (NCC) a partner in FCPS Ignite may have a facility available. Options for location were discussed including possible outdoor ideas.

- D. **Events**

1. FCPS Special Education Conference planning is ongoing. It will include 1 keynote and 6 live presenters from outside FCPS that will be zoom and livestream at the same time. Each division will give asynchronous presentations (approx 10). They are planning to send out proposal requests to stakeholders to see if they want to provide a proposal about being involved. Discussion included the exhibit hall (virtual) which had issues last year that included not using their logos or information. This year at the November meeting it was suggested they will have an exhibit hall tab on the website and it will have links to each group's information. Mary Beth Fleming will be working on the Exhibit Hall. In the past speakers had to be co-presenters with FCPS. The student strand has been

eliminated because it is virtual (FCPS said it was a problem last year to do a student session virtually) and instead will have CTS have presentations on the transition process.

2. Next general membership meeting Tuesday, Feb 15. The plan was to get someone from FCPS to present on the program they use for the IEP programs. Could possibly get someone from VDOE to speak about the changes to the VAAP.

#### **E. Mini Grants**

1. Application due date, Tuesday, February 15. There are two submitted so far which would be \$950, we gave away about \$3,000 in the Fall. Which means we wouldn't necessarily need an increase in the funds. Chair will invite interested volunteers to observe the review process to see if they are interested in participating next year.

**F. [ACSD Report](#)** - Joanne Walton had to step down and Nicole Zupan is interested in filling the staff representative position. On Restraint and Seclusion policy review is overdue and FCPS presented what is going to be added to the policy with six days to respond. The executive committee sent a response and feedback. It is unclear when the School Board and ACSD will review this. Discussion included when FCPS has to make the consent decree from the lawsuit over restraint and seclusion public. Any policy changes would need to go through ACSD.

#### **G. Outreach/Liaisons**

1. Brochures distribution - libraries, PRC, Front Offices of schools

#### **H. Military families**

1. Potential collaboration with Heartleaf Play Therapy - There are currently 1½ FCPS therapy staff at the schools at Fort Belvoir. A recent report showed a 23 month wait to receive services. Cheri will be doing a training for special education services for free.

#### **I. Advocacy - [Advocacy Report](#)**

1. General Assembly update - literacy bills HB319/SB616 (requiring Science of Literacy be taught in schools) are looking positive for passing. There others are not as focused. The bill requiring staff working with students using AAC devices be trained needs support.
2. Joint Literacy Partners (SEPTA, DDVA, NAACP) update - an updated statement is ready with 13 partner organizations to go out in the next week.
3. Basal Resource Adoption Update - Meetings have been postponed until March because staff are working in schools. This is the first time that digital accessibility has been included in procurement.
4. Superintendent Search - Communication, strong backbone have been identified as important characteristics. SEPTA has been included in stakeholder meetings.
5. A Senate Bill has been introduced that requires that the procurement process has to look at accessibility of digital materials.. Digital tool providers have to present a 3rd party assessment of any materials to prove that their material is or is not accessible and what they are or are not going to do to make it accessible. The question is could this rule impact the selection of materials that are a best practice versus forcing school districts to choose one that is not the best practice, but 'accessible'.
6. Speech/language legislation requires the Department of Education to develop a plan to hire and retain speech language pathologists. It would require the state to collect data on speech language services for each district in the State. The overall intention to get lower case loads from 68-50.

7. Supporting Public Schools and Staff Initiative - Once the General Assembly session is over this will be a priority for Advocacy Committee. Send any ideas to Diane and there will be a follow up brainstorming session.

8:30PM

### **III. Officer Reports**

#### **A. President**

1. Update on National PTA Listening Sessions - Sessions have filled up.
2. Meeting with Michelle Boyd - Link here: [Thursday, February 3, @ 12:00](#)
3. [Special Ed Conference](#) - Saturday, March 26
4. Nominating Committee - Cathy Greulich, Diane Cooper Gould, Vanessa Hall expressed interest.
5. Meeting with Nardos King - options
  - a) Wednesday, February 23 @ 4:30
  - b) Tuesday, March 1 @ 4:30
  - c) Monday, March 7 @ 4:30
  - d) Wednesday, March 9 @ 4:00

#### **B. Vice President**

1. Announcements
  - a) VA PTA Deadline for Proposed Resolutions - March 1st.
    - (1) May want to consider submitting a literacy resolution.
  - b) VA PTA Annual Meeting - Saturday, May 21, 2022.
  - c) National PTA Convention & Legislative Conference - in National Harbor - June 14-19th.
  - d) Calendar for 2022-2023 went through. The Vice President was a representative on the committee.

9:20PM

### **IV. Adjourn**

**\*\*Thank you for attending; we hope to see you at our next event! Feel free to contact SEPTA any time via email or FB. Check us out on the web at [www.FairfaxCountySEPTA.org](http://www.FairfaxCountySEPTA.org)\*\***