

BOARD OF EDUCATION OF HARFORD
COUNTY INFORMATIONAL REPORT
PRESENTATION ON THE SPECIAL EDUCATION CITIZEN
ADVISORY COMMITTEE
NOVEMBER 18, 2019

Background Information:

The Special Education Citizen Advisory Committee (SECAC) works in conjunction with the requirements of the Individual Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) in supporting an advisory council for parents of students with disabilities (SWD) and with the Board of Education as one of their Advisory Committees.

For the 2019-2020 school year, SECAC reviewed feedback exploring the results of the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) parental survey. Feedback is also gathered from the monthly meetings held at the McFaul Center in Bel Air.

The committee continues to focus on enhancing communication and Special Education programming, which has been an area of study for the past few years. This initiative aligns with the Mission Statement of SECAC:

To enhance partnerships of students, families, community leaders, organizations, educators and administrators through discussions that focus on the enrichment of services and opportunities for students with disabilities and their families.

Discussion:

To reach and inform a greater audience of parents of children with disabilities, speakers are sought to present information about topics of current interest at monthly meetings. Leaders and experts in the field of Special Education meet with the parents. Business meetings also provide an opportunity to dialogue about programming and the continuum of services for students with disabilities and gather input about the needs of the students with disabilities. Last year, topics addressed were: Transition Services, IEP Basics, Sensory & Occupational Therapy, Mindfulness & Calming Techniques and a presentation from the Department of Rehabilitation Services (DORS). By offering a variety of topics, SECAC has been able to reach a greater audience of parents and community members.

Although there are many opportunities for meeting the needs of SWD within HCPS, SECAC supports and recommends the continued need to enhance programming by:

- Staffing Partners for Success with a full-time staff member,
- Increasing staffing to ensure access for all students in the Least Restrictive Environment,
- Expanding secondary transition programs, and
- Collaborating with community resources to increase social opportunities for all students.

The committee appreciates the opportunity to work collaboratively with Harford County Public Schools Board of Education and the Department of Special Education to support students with disabilities and their families and invites you to attend a meeting this year.