

Special Education Advisory Committee

Interim Report to the Albemarle County School Board

December 2013

SEAC would like to recommend the following regarding the needs of children with disabilities in Albemarle County Public Schools:

- Social Skills groups at all schools facilitated by Social Worker/ Psychologist/ SPL. This meets students' needs by fulfilling Communication and Collaboration both with their peers and teachers.
- Full- Time Nurse at Every School every day
- Continued funding of the Parent Resource Center that is part of the Piedmont Regional Education Program.
- Early Childhood Special Education – SEAC recommends and support adding an additional preschool classroom for children with disabilities to the Western Feeder pattern including transportation times below 1 hour
- Early Childhood Special Education – Requests the addition of a Southern Feeder pattern preschool classroom for children with disabilities including transportation times below 1 hour
- SEAC supports increasing opportunities for Pre-school inclusion (i.e. more opportunities for children with disabilities to participate in Bright Stars and Head Start programs)
- Professional Development for all Special Ed. Teaching Assistants not just those working in VAAP classrooms
- SEAC recommends a more stable approach to staffing of special education programs in the Division. Red Hill - 1.5 FTE in Special Education class at beginning of year then loss of .5FTE in Spring. Parents felt that we are losing too many highly trained desirable teachers due to this personnel decision
- Everyone is fed up with SOL's and special needs children. They are not a sensitive enough instrument to measure their growth and this hurts the students, the teachers that deserve recognition of their time, effort and Skill, and it hurts the Parent/School relationship.

SEAC supports the following:

1. Funding for staffing for Pre-School programs for children with disabilities.
2. Funding for Growth for the K-12 special education programs.

3. Funding the Virginia Institute for Autism / Albemarle County Early Childhood Special Education class.
4. The addition of a full time Behavior Specialist to support children and with disabilities and their teachers to maintain placement in the least restrictive setting in our community.
5. Funding for an additional full time Special Education Coordinator to oversee the Early Childhood Special Education Programs, Related Services and Extended School Year Services during the Summer months.
6. Funding for an additional full time Special Education Office Assistant

Recommendations:

- SEAC recommend the Director of Special Education consider improving dissemination/advertising of the State Special Education Survey. Only the really web savvy know it exists.
- SEAC recommend the Director of Special Education consider improving advertising of Child Find for families of school aged children.
- With regard to Response to Intervention and School Based Intervention Teams, SEAC feels that parents do not have a platform or advocacy committee to file complaint. There are no formal written guidelines for Parents to participate or even figure out how to participate in planning remediation of struggling students. SEAC recommends the division create a parent advisory committee specific to Response to Intervention or a division advisory committee with parent representation.
- SEAC recommend that time for Special Education teachers to work with parents and students to share out the knowledge they gained at Professional Development training be included in planning. That is considered by SEAC to be an underutilization of services.

Thank you,
Catherine Lochner
SEAC Chairperson
skyfarwalker@[gmail.com](mailto:skyfarwalker@gmail.com)