

Blue Ribbon Task Force

May 31, 2022

Agenda:

- Picture It!
- Review of Norms
- Charge to the Committee
- Presentation from Office of Special Education and Interval Table Talk with your group:
 - Keep, Add, Stop
- Group Chart IT!
- Review of Next Steps
- Positive Reflections

- Review of Norms
 - Adhere to time limits while speaking - give all an opportunity to share
 - Respect passion and the story people may bring (agree to disagree)
 - No student names
 - Be open minded, listen first, then share.
 - Use the parking lot to avoid sidebar conversations, be mindful of time
 - Eyes on the future and What is Best for Kids
 - Respect the Journey - we need to know where we have been in order to see where we are going
 - End meetings on a positive note & end on time
- Our charge:
 - The task force will be charged with reviewing current programming and practices associated with FCPS specialized programs. In addition, the task force will be asked to explore proactive best practices for behavioral intervention. Through recommendations of the task force, program structures, resources and training will be augmented to guarantee optimal outcomes for the students of FCPS.
- Presentation from Office of Special Education (Specialized Programs)
 - Agenda:
 - Expressions
 - Learning for Life
 - Pyramid
 - Rock Creek School
 - RISE
 - Non-Public Schools
 - Activity
 - Expressions
 - Expressions our functional communications programs, particularly for the non-verbal students
 - It is for PreK through 12th grade
 - Some are diploma bound, some are certificate bound
 - Teach a modified common core program

- Learning for life:
 - Major focus on adaptive learning skills, mostly certificate bound students
 - Geared toward students with intellectual disabilities, typically a decision on putting a student in the program isn't decided before 3rd grade, however a decision can be made at any time to place a student in this program.
 - There is a change potential here. Teachers teach multiple grade levels, right now it's possible for one teacher to teach K-5 (although a more typical grade range at the ES level is 2-5)
 - Learn modified common core and life skills
- Pyramid
 - For emotional behavior disorders w/ significant social and emotional needs
 - The student needs can develop over time due to trauma, abuse and/or genetics
 - Students have an opportunity for more inclusion in gen ed classrooms
 - Typically it starts w/ PE and the art based courses
 - This will be reviewed as students progress and there may come a time that students will reintroduce into their assigned school
 - There are times that students stay in this, not because the student needs the program, but because they need the therapy
 - We admit that this is a problem with this program. This year, FCPS started an initiative to find additional therapeutic resources for students who can function outside of this program
- Rock Creek
 - This program is for severe disabilities, usually students who have both intellectual and social emotional disabilities.
 - Ratios is 3:1 students to staff
- RISE-
 - Operated through the Sheppard Pratt program. This is considered a non-public
 - Shepard Pratt/FCPS partner together to identify students who need additional support. This is considered a short term program.
 - Students get intensive level interventions with the idea that the student will reintegrate back into their home school
 - We have about a 50/50 success ratio
 - Shepard Pratt will also assist students reintegrate back into the school both working w/ the student as well as the school they are returning to.
 - Students can apply or ask to be part of the program but Sheppard Pratt does retain the right to deny admission
- Non-public placement
 - If none of these programs assist a student to the point where they can be successful, then a non-public placement may be appropriate.

- Deaf or blind students are also given the opportunity to attend specialized schools.
 - FCPS supports 106 students in non-public placements
 - Over 80% of students who go to non-public in FCPS have a diagnosis of Autism and/or Emotional Behavior Disability
 - Non-Publics* (ie Schools that account for more than 5% FCPS nonpublic enrollment)
 - Foundation School- Montgomery County
 - Ivymount School
 - Kennedy Krieger School (Greenspring, Powder Mill, and Fairmount)
 - Laurel Hall
 - Sheppard Pratt (RISE, Glyndon, Rockville)
 - Strawbridge School
 - The Harbour School at Baltimore
 - To a degree, the type of students and their placement shows gaps in some of the services FCPS offers, particularly in the area of Autism.
 - Group Discussions (ideas, recommendations, what are we missing to help make informed decisions):
 - Group 1
 - Ah-Ha's
 - Lack of supports and services for all schools, combined with limited options for specialized programs/services have created a "pipeline" to stay in programs.
 - Teachers' roles are too vast, they can't do 3 jobs well.
 - Wonderings
 - How can we structure classrooms better to support staff during behavior incidents
 - Tell me more:
 - FBA/BIPs only vs IEP's
 - More Data, what diagnosis and/or demographics of students is the DOJ observing in classrooms
 - How many school Psychs in FCPS? What are roles?
 - What training exists for all staff to recognize bx issues and address concerns before they get to (a boiling point)
 - What will crisis prevention training be going forward?
 - Reflections/Recommendations/Discussion
 - Structuring programs so there are more teams to support teachers and students without having to go to specialized programs-
 - having teams w/ various backgrounds, including diversity
 - taking a more proactive role rather than waiting for things to fail
 - A more timely response to issues.

- Create/Separate case management role from teachers to allow them to safely and effectively manage behaviors
 - IE Separating more of Teachers roles (they wear too many hats as it is)
- PL for all teachers
 - More training regarding bx supports ID in/for all staff, schools and teachers
- Mental health teams and supports for all staff/schools, not just specialized programs
- Promote a culture of safety for all students and staff
 - Debriefing following restraint incidents for students and staff
 - Cameras in specialized programs to review when restraints occur.
- Questions
 - Need more data regarding dx, demographics of students.
 - Specifically, what are the number of students who have FBA's/BIPs (with or without IEP's)?
 - What crisis management program is going to be selected to replace CPI. How is the program being selected?
- Group 2
 - Ah-ah moments
 - How many students are on the Autism spectrum
 - We have parents that have experiences in other countries, states, even countries whose knowledge and experience exceed our own
 - The PL offered to staff is disappointing, not sufficient
 - Wonderings
 - How we can manage parent interest for “adequate” supports given data focused on meeting the needs of Autistic students.
 - How do we use data to improve systems
 - We have robust data, let's use that to guide our programs
 - Tell me more:
 - College & Career ready for all
 - How can it happen
 - What are we missing?
 - Data trends/disaggregated
 - How are we using the data collected, how is it addressed?
 - Reflections/Recommendations/Discussion
 - Provide PL/Training for the teachers in regards to our neuro divergent students
 - Recent years, PL has been a struggle
 - More personalized learning
 - Bias training for staff
 - Over identifications, low income and African Americans

- More training for IEP chairs, knowing how to take the large documents and create and understanding for parents and staff
- More SEL
- College & Career prep for specialized programs
 - Not providing “soft skills” to prepare students to work in a job
- Parent Education
 - Better programs, Autism Society was one that was mentioned
 - Are there other organizations we can partner with/use to help support students/training programs
- Admin training
 - Having Admins in the building level that just deal with special education/specialized programs
- Time/Pay for special ed staff members
- MTSS/Tier 2 and 3 needs, more explicit instruction for educators
- Group 3
 - Ah-Ha’s
 - Improving inclusion in FCPS (increase co-teaching)
 - Wonderings
 - What can’t we keep out students in FCPS (rather than out of county placements)?
 - Should we be removing students from general education before grade 3?
 - What are the nation-wide gold standard programs? Which can/should we emulate?
 - Can we have more students try/stay in home school?
 - How do we create best practices in co-teaching (including) at all levels?
 - Can we get more data/info from Heather Ridge, Success & Delta programs?
 - Tell me more:
 - What is the opportunity for inclusion (in Pyramid, Expressions, Learning for Life)?
 - Deciding diploma bound at grade 3?
 - Can the gen ed teacher truly identify the strategies that are being utilized?
 - Reflections/Recommendations/Discussion
 - Making sure we are maintaining program integrity and if it’s the best fit for the kid
 - Executive functioning program is needed in FCPS!
 - L4L staff are trying to meet too many grade levels (at the Elementary school level)
 - Expand Success program to make more diploma bound

- Should include life skills and diploma programs
 - Co-teaching K-12, more instruction
 - Would like more data/information on students who attend Rock Creek, Heather Ridge (IEP focus)
 - Some would also like information about the gen ed students within those programs as well
 - Systemic procedures and expectations for co-teaching
 - Group 4
 - Ah Ha's
 - Pyramids-higher staff to student ratio needed (balancing w/ Expressions) especially to facilitate inclusion.
 - Wonderings
 - 6 open positions at Rock Creek
 - "People" retention, retaining, & training.
 - Improve professional development for all staff
 - Can we create a program to retain the non-public students (and the funds spent on tuition)
 - Re-allocation the money from here to split up Pyramid based on the function of behavior, ex ED vs. ADHD or ASD
 - In the immediate future, what can we use in lieu of calming rooms (seclusion/time-out) and restraint? What will be in place on day 1 of school in August?
 - Reflections/Recommendations/Discussion
 - How expressions has a certain staff ratio, feels that Pyramid should have a higher ratio
 - Working on staff retention and training, improved PL for all staff
 - All staff should know how ADHD can present, for example, or other disabilities
 - What is it about the non-public schools that they are offering that we can add here to keep more of the funding w/ the county
 - What can be utilized in place of seclusion?
 - There are kids that need a calming room, what can we do with them?
 - What will be in place on the first day of school in August?
 - The group has heard a lot about what we will do in the future, but what will we do in the now?
- General Questions:
 - Can we get some additional information about the programs and how they may change
 - What to know more about the number, how much money will we be able to spend on our recommendations?
 - We can request budget enhancements, but there is a budgetary cycle so some of the recommendation may take longer to roll out, particularly in

regards to the non-public students (but we do have to be realistic about the non-public students that are doing well in their programs and may not want to leave the school they are in)

- Parking Lot:
 - We need to include Heather Ridge in this conversation. There are many students there with IEP's. How many? How many are behavior based?

Next meeting will be on Jun 7, 2022 6-8pm