

# Mental Health Task Force To Examine Ways To Continue Addressing Social And Emotional Needs Of Children

Posted by [TBN\(Staff\)](#) On 07/10/2019

July 11, 2019 - A task force jointly chaired by a school system and county staff members will begin examining ways to continue to address the social and emotional needs of children, the Board of Education was informed at today's meeting.

Members of the task force will include students, parents, community groups, mental health experts, and county and school system representatives. The membership list will be finalized in the coming weeks by co-chairs Ryan Voegtlin, AACPS' Director of Student Services, and Adrienne Mickler, Executive Director of the Anne Arundel County Mental Health Agency.

The group was established by a vote of the Board at its May 15, 2019, meeting. It will begin meeting in September and present a report the Board of Education in May 2020. The task force's goals are to:

- identify contributing factors to the increasing mental health needs of our children.
- better coordinate services and communication between and among the school system, county government, and service providers.
- identify proactive measures and best practices.
- make recommendations for improved delivery of services to children and families.
- The group's initial meeting in September will be open to the public, but no public testimony will be taken. Subsequent meetings will be scheduled for November, January, and March.

The task force will seek to identify various factors leading to the increase in mental health issues among children, identify services both in and out of school to assist students needing mental health support, determine areas for greater collaboration, and identify changes in areas such as parenting trends, community activities and resources, educational practices, and the environment that could lead to a steady reduction in mental health issues. Its work will include:

- developing an overview of services provided through AACPS and Anne Arundel County government agencies.
- conducting a gap analysis.
- providing recommendations for next steps.
- The task force may form subcommittees to further some of its work.