

## Prince George's County SECAC meeting minutes 1/24/23

Executive Board Members in Attendance: Troy Sampson, chairman; Sarah Wayland, vice chairwoman; Jamie Anfenson-Comeau, secretary; Ayo Bello, listserv manager; Pamela Talley, community outreach liaison.

Others in Attendance: See attached screen capture

Board chairman Troy Sampson opened the meeting virtually via the Zoom online meeting platform at 6:31 p.m. Mr. Sampson welcomed everyone to the meeting and introduced school system partners, executive board members in attendance and speakers. He discussed the agenda for the meeting.

Mr. Sampson introduced Dr. Trinell Bowman, PGCPs associate superintendent, department of special education. Dr. Bowman noted that the Prince George's County Board of Education has a new chairperson, Judy Mickins-Murray, and new vice chairperson, Lolita Walker. She also shared a link to CEO Dr. Monica Goldson's mid-year report.

Dr. Bowman noted that the second grading period is ending and reminded everyone that Jan. 25 is an asynchronous learning day, in which students will have assignments from their teachers to complete at home.

Dr. Bowman said she will provide updates on boundary change initiatives, including impacts to special education programs, at SECAC's next meeting.

Dr. Bowman said the Department of Special Education will release parent guides on Understanding the Central Individualized Education Process and Understanding the Nonpublic Placement Process.

Dr. Bowman provided a link on the special education department's presentation to the Board of Education's Academic Achievement Committee, given during its Jan. 23 meeting.

Dr. Bowman also provided the Special Education Resolution Team Contact List, which can also be found on the SECAC website.

Mr. Sampson introduced the first speaker, Doralie Palamos, secondary transition program specialist, to discuss secondary transition planning and preparing for life after high school.

Ms. Palamos noted that for students with disabilities, transitions are not necessarily effortless. She added that transitions should be based on a student's needs, strengths, preferences and interests.

Ms. Palamos said that transition is a continuum that begins before school, but that secondary transition plans start at age 14, and are a continuous process throughout high school.

Parents are essential partners, but the student is the key decision-maker, and a very important part of that process, Ms. Palamos said.

Ms. Palamos said that the goal of the student, including employment or post-secondary education, should be considered. If the goal is post-secondary, is it college or a trade school? If college, 2-year or 4-year? Large or small? Local or residential? What field of study? What are their career goals?

Ms. Palamos discussed key differences between disabilities in education at the K-12 level vs. at the college/post-secondary level.

Ms. Palamos shared some services students may receive in high school, including self-advocacy skills, social skills, independent living skills, work-based and community-based instruction and academic programming based on clear state standards.

Ms. Palamos shared a consent form used for outside agencies such as the Department of Rehabilitation Services (DORS) and the Maryland Developmental Disabilities Administration (DDA) to participate in the IEP process, which usually begins in the 8<sup>th</sup> grade.

One attendee, a PTO member and parent of a child at the C.Elizabeth Rieg Regional School in Bowie, said that most of the information that had been provided in the presentation was geared toward higher functioning students. She asked what transition looks like for regional students, because the information Ms. Palamos provided did not apply to them.

Ms. Palamos responded that some students may be able to go out to work sites now that that some COVID restrictions have been lifted.

The parent replied that that students in a wheelchair, with feeding tubes, or who require nurses, are being left behind, because their transition needs are not being addressed.

Ms. Palamos said that DDA has a variety of services that are appropriate for many regional students.

Dr. Bowman said that having an event or a night for families of regional students is a good suggestion that they can take under advisement.

Another parent said that DORS did not help her student, and if they cannot get services through DORS, there are no other options. Her child also attends Rieg Regional, and cannot communicate to participate in the transition process.

Ms. Palamos provided an overview of organizations providing services. She said that for DORS, individuals must apply and be determined eligible. Referrals may be made as early as 14. DORS provides employment assistance. Competitive employment is the outcome. Individuals must follow through with appointments to remain eligible. DORS services include vocational guidance and assessment, job training, job search placement and supported employment.

Ms. Palamos said DDA provides employment and day services, self directed services, community and personal supports, residential services and Low Intensity Support Services (LISS).

Ms. Palamos said the Maryland Department of Labor, through the Department of Labor Workforce Development, has the Youth Career Connections Program (YCC), for ages 14-24, and Knowledge Equals Youth Success (KEYS), for ages 18-24.

Melonee Clark, outreach and resource program coordinator for The Arc of Prince George's County, said The Arc is holding a Transition 101 Lunch and Learn: Understanding the Role of Coordinator of Community Services webinar on Feb. 21 from noon-1 p.m. at <https://bit.ly/3wp60rK>.

PGCPS is also holding a Special Education College and Career Fair on April 12 at Fairmont High School.

SECAC vice chairwoman Sarah Wayland took over chairing the meeting following the departure of Mr. Sampson on urgent business.

Ms. Wayland said every child is different, and so planning for every child has to be very, very different.

Ms. Clark said that everyone needs to develop a vision, a roadmap, for the future.

Ms. Clark said The Arc is glad to partner with the school system to assist with transition planning.

Ms. Clark said it is very useful to have a vision board, or visuals, to show what makes your child excited, when you go into that transition planning meeting.

Ms. Clark said The Arc of the United States has a video about future planning, to share information about your life and that of your child, in the event something happens to you.

Kiarra Bragg, transitioning youth program supervisor for Total Care Services Inc., said the coordinator of community services (CCS) helps connect students with services and benefits. A CCS will help with transition services.

A parent attending the meeting asked in the chat how do you get a CCS?

Ms. Clark responded that you have to be enrolled with DDA services. She said do not wait, apply for everything, even if you are not yet eligible for those services.

Ms. Clark said to make your child a part of the community, have them volunteer, become active in the community.

Ms. Clark said that anyone with a disability can apply for LISS, and receive a grant of up to \$2,000.

Ms. Wayland said she got a CCS after 6 years on the DDA waitlist.
























































Ms. Clark said DDA has a family waiver. They cannot help you if they don't see you in their system. She said that even if a child is denied for DDA or the autism waiver, they can still appeal, and The Arc can assist with the appeal.

Ms. Clark said to share your child's worst day in the application, not their best. Share their medical records, every health need. Don't give up. List all of their needs; independent living skills, health and safety.


































































Ms. Wayland thanked the presenters and everyone else for attending, and said a recording of the presentation will be posted on the SECAC website.

Ms. Wayland closed the meeting at 8:04 p.m.

Find a participant

JA	Jamie Anfenson-Comeau (Me)	 
	Marsie Torchon (Host)	  
	Doralie Palamos (Co-host)	   
	Karen Andrews (Co-host)	  
AB	Ayo Bello	 
CH	Christy Hammett	 
CM	Claudia Mejía	 
CT	Crystal Thomas	 
D	Dorcas Kiptepkut	 
	Irin Wills-Allen	 
	Kiarra Bragg	 
KT	Kim Tart	 
KW	Kim William	 
	Kisha Toppin	 
LD	LaDonna Dingle	 
MS	Margaret Sheppard-Kelly	 
	melonee Clark	 
MK	Myrtle Kirlew	 
	Pamela Boozer-Strother	 
PT	Pamela Talley	 
	Sarah Wayland	 

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