

Prince George's County SECAC Minutes
Sept. 28, 2021

Executive Board Members in Attendance: Troy Sampson, chairman; Janie Payne, treasurer; Jamie Anfenon-Comeau, secretary; Pamela Talley, community liaison

Others in Attendance: See attached sign-in sheet.

Chairman Troy Sampson opened the meeting virtually via Zoom at 6:30 p.m.

Mr. Sampson introduced the executive board members in attendance, Prince George's County Public Schools partners and school board member Pamela Boozer-Strother. He thanked everyone for attending.

PGCPS Associate Superintendent Trinell Bowman provided an update from the special education department. She said that a staffing increase has been approved.

Dr. Bowman said that an emergency plan will now be part of future Individualized Education Plans beginning Oct. 1.

Instructional Specialist Marsie Torchon provided an update on the Family Support Center, which helps parents learn information about disabilities, assists in resolving concerns, connects families with resources, strengthens relationships with community partners and provides disability awareness to the larger community.

Ms. Torchon said the FSC runs support groups, has a quarterly newsletter and has a fall miniseries conference planned for October and November.

Dr. Rudolph Saunders, PGCPS director of transportation, said there is currently a bus driver and bus driver aide shortage that the school system is attempting to fill.

Herbert Bridges, special education transportation coordinator, gave a presentation on the transportation department. He said that the communication center is the hub of transportation, and provided a list of bus lot supervisors.

Mr. Bridges said the job of the special education transportation coordinators is to work collaboratively with the special education department, to provide training in special education matters for bus drivers and ensure correct placement of students on transportation.

Mr. Bridges shared a CBS news story regarding the bus driver shortage. He said the school system is holding bi-weekly job fairs and is training drivers to get their CDLs. Parents are encouraged to carpool in the meantime.

Mr. Bridges said coordinators assist during IEP meetings in the determination of whether an IEP student needs transportation.

Mr. Bridges said that special transfer request students are not entitled to transportation.

Mr. Bridges said that transportation services to nonpublic schools when PGCPs is closed is based on the particular nonpublic school's schedule.

Mr. Bridges said that inclement weather decisions are made between 5 and 6 a.m. and are authorized by the school system CEO or their designee.

Mr. Bridges said the transportation department uses several different forms of bus operations technology, and provided a list of those technologies.

Mr. Bridges said parents must use their email address on SchoolMax to sign into School Finder.

Mr. Bridges said all buses are sanitized daily. Drivers are required to wear face coverings and gloves at all times. Face coverings are required of all students, except those with a medical exemption, while on buses, and students may not congregate in aisles. Windows and hatches on buses will remain open whenever possible.

Mr. Bridges said that all transportation personnel are required to attend annual training in supporting special health needs, special equipment and seizure and first aid training. They receive Nonviolent Crisis Intervention training for bullying/harassment non-escalation. For new staff, this is part of their pre-service training. All bullying incidents are documented. If there is a request for video footage, this can be pulled by the vendor and can be forwarded to the school, the instructional director and security, if needed. Complaints should start at the school level.

Mr. Sampson thanked the speakers for the transportation information.

Traci Jones, PGCPs supervisor of health, discussed the difference between fully vaccinated and unvaccinated. To be considered fully vaccinated, one must have both shots, in the case of the Moderna or Pfizer vaccine, (the second shot following two weeks after the first) and then must wait two weeks.

Dr. Jones said that close contact is considered to be within 3 feet in a classroom setting, or 6 feet outside a classroom, for 15 minutes or more.

Dr. Jones discussed the difference between isolation and quarantine.

If one is fully vaccinated and had close contact with a person with COVID-19, Dr. Jones said they must self-monitor for 14 days.

Dr. Jones said masks should preferably be KN95 or surgical masks and properly fitted and worn. She said bandannas are not recommended because particles can still pass through.

Dr. Jones said positive cases must isolate for 10 days from the beginning of symptoms or a positive test. They may return to the school building on Day 11 if released by the county Department of Health, their symptoms are resolved, and no test is needed.

Dr. Jones said the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic is an ever-evolving, updating situation, and procedures may change as conditions develop.

Dr. Jones said children under age 5 must quarantine for 14 days because they may not be able to wear masks properly.

If someone has symptoms of COVID-19, they must be tested. If the test is negative, they may return to school after their symptoms have been resolved, Dr. Jones said.

Dr. Jones said to only quarantine those individuals who have had direct, close contact with a COVID-19 positive person. If a person lives with a quarantined person and cannot isolate, they must begin their quarantine on Day 11.

Dr. Jones said standard precautions to prevent the spread of COVID-19 include vaccination, masking, washing hands and staying/going home if ill.

Dr. Jones said staff COVID-19 testing began Sept. 20. Pool testing for students began Sept. 27. Athletic testing for the unvaccinated will begin Oct. 18.

One attendee asked how the school will differentiate COVID-19 symptoms from allergies. Dr. Jones said if there are any questions, the school nurse can perform a rapid COVID-19 test.

Mr. Anfenson-Comeau asked how the school determines, when there is a COVID-19 positive case, who has had close contact with that individual, given that students move around during the day.

Dr. Jones said the determination is made by asking the student and their teacher(s), but in cases where they are unable to determine, the entire class may have to quarantine.

Another parent asked about virtual class for quarantined students. Dr. Bowman said that new guidance on that subject is forthcoming, but said that if the entire class must quarantine, they can do virtual.

Mr. Sampson thanked everyone for attending, and announced that the next meeting will be held on Oct. 26. The topic, "Let's Talk", will allow parents to discuss the challenges and successes of the new school year. More information about the format will be forthcoming, Mr. Sampson said, adding that he expects some frank discussions and urging everyone to tell their friends about the meeting.

Mr. Sampson closed the meeting at 8:05 p.m.

Participants (22)

Find a participant

JA	Jamie Anfenson-Comeau (Me)		
	Marsie Torchon (Host)		
BD	Beth Diaite (Co-host)		
TJ	Traci Jones (Co-host)		
Y	Yvette Young (Co-host)		
	Rudolph Saunders		
	Herbert Bridges		
	Troy Sampson		
AB	A Bello		
CC	Carnela Coleman		
CT	Carolyn Tucker		
CG	Chrystal George Mwangi		
JP	Janie Payne		
	Karen Andrews		
	Kim Tart		
LD	LaDonna Dingle		
PB	Pamela Boozer-Strother		
PT	Pamela Talley		
SN	Shee New		
TW	Tanisha Wooten		
TP	TjaMeika Purnell		
TB	Trinell Bowman		

Invite

Unmute Me

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