

Prince George's SECAC
May 23, 2022

Executive Board members in attendance: Troy Sampson, chairman; Sarah Wayland, vice chairwoman; Janie Payne, treasurer; Jamie Anfenson-Comeau, secretary; Pamela Talley, community liaison; Ayo Bello, listserv and website manager.

Others in attendance: See attached screen capture

Troy Sampson opened the meeting virtually via the Zoom online meeting platform at 6:33 p.m.

Mr. Sampson introduced the executive board and Prince George's County Public Schools special education department partners and welcomed attendees.

Mr. Sampson introduced Trinell Bowman, Prince George's County Public Schools' associate superintendent of the Department of Special Education, to provide an update on the special education department.

Dr. Bowman said that the MSDE "report card" for PGCPs was assigned a Universal Tier of Support, the highest ranking, for its Infants and Toddlers program, and was moved up from the Focused to Targeted Tier for its grade school program.

Dr. Bowman also said that HB1255, the Physical Restraint and Seclusion bill, has passed the General Assembly. The bill bans the practice of seclusion, which had already been prohibited for many years in PGCPs, provides oversight and requires corrective action if not in compliance. MSDE will conduct a review in June.

Dr. Bowman also said there will be a meeting of the Support Group Supporting Behavioral Change on May 26 and June 9, a Parent Wellness Support Group and a Virtual Paint Party and June 9 from 6:30 to 8. Painting supplies will be provided. Registration is limited to 30 participants.

Andrea Torey spoke regarding the Adults with Developmental Disabilities Citizens Advisory Committee. Torey said that many people feel that there are a lot of supports for children with disabilities while they are in school, but that once they graduate, there are few supports and services.

Ms. Torey said that she and other parents in Prince George's County talked about the situation, held meetings, spoke with their delegates, and were able to put together a bill to create an organization like SECAC but for adults.

Ms. Torey said that ADDCAC is for parents, self-advocates, teachers and service provider agencies. ADDCAC advocates for positive systemic change for adults with developmental disabilities.

Ms. Torey said the Prince George's ADDCAC was the first organization of its kind in the state, and that it is made up entirely of volunteers. Although the group was created through the Maryland legislature, they do not receive any funds from the state.

Torey said ADDCAC works to develop opportunities in the community for adults with developmental disabilities. She said that arts and physical fitness were early focuses.

Alice Holt of ADDCAC said each meeting has a different topic; the last was on group homes, services and availability. She said that monthly meetings are held virtually, and that self advocates run the meetings.

Email contact is addcacpg@aol.com.

Mr. Sampson said ADDCAC are a great group of people, who work hard to help young adults transition into adulthood.

Dana Cunningham spoke about the Prince George's School Mental Health Initiative. The pilot program was funded by the Maryland Department of Health in collaboration with the National Alliance to Advance Adolescent Health, through its "Got Transition" program.

The program started as a collaboration between the Maryland State Department of Education, PGCPs and the University of Maryland School of Medicine, Ms. Cunningham said. Services include individual therapy, group therapy, teacher/staff consultations, family support and case management.

Ms. Cunningham said the program was developed to divert students identified as high risk for nonpublic placement. It provides a mental health component to the existing special education program.

Ms. Cunningham said the program is currently in two elementary schools, two middle schools and four high schools.

Two tools used by the program include its Mental Health Transition Readiness Assessment for Students and its Mental Health Transition Readiness Assessment for Parents/Caregivers, Ms. Cunningham said. It also includes a Post-Graduation Wellness Plan to help students think about what's next after high school in terms of mental health services and how to find resources.

Ms. Cunningham can be emailed at dana.cunningham@pgcps.org.

Mr. Sampson thanked Ms. Cunningham for the presentation and resources provided. He introduced Sue Giebner of The Arc of Prince George's County.

Ms. Giebner said the Arc will host a Brunch Bunch Thursday from 11 to 12 for Mental Health Awareness Month.

During the public comment portion of the meeting, Pamela Talley spoke about how valuable the school system's Relationship Development Intervention (RDI) program has been an invaluable resource for her family and other families in the county. She said the program's current facilitator is retiring and there are no plans to replace them. She said she wants to have collaborative discussions with the special education department about the importance of this program and how it has changed lives. She read a letter from a participant in the group. She said Prince George's County was the first and only school district to offer this program.

Another parent said the RDI program gave her a sense of hope and connection with other families in similar circumstances.

Dr. Bowman said the department is looking at the program and working on developing its next steps, and will move forward with working to set up the meeting that Ms. Talley requested.

Another parent asked if there was someone who could help her with benefits and other needs.

Dr. Bowman told the parent she can set up a meeting with the Family Support Center and with the secondary transitions supervisor.

The parent said she applied to the Maryland Developmental Disabilities Administration twice and was denied both times. Dr. Bowman said she can set up a meeting with a social worker for the parent to help identify resources within the community.

Another parent said she has been with the RDI program for seven years and that it has made a significant difference for her son. She said her son is a dynamic thinker who can build relationships thanks to the program, which teaches you how to build on steps.

Another parent said that her child is in a nonpublic placement. She would like them to have access to PGCPs resources, but that requires a school system email address.

Dr. Bowman said that they do not yet have a solution to that problem, but that they are working with the school system IT team to help develop one.

Mr. Sampson thanked everyone in attendance and thanked the special education department for all of their hard work. He said that the pandemic has pulled the band-aid off of the education system in a major way.

Mr. Sampson asked attendees to spread the word about SECAC and ADDCAC. He said to be safe, have a great Memorial Day holiday, a great summer, and will see everyone next school year.

Dr. Bowman asked attendees to keep the families of the victims of the Uvalde, Texas school shooting in their thoughts and prayers. A moment of silence was held for the victims.

Mr. Sampson closed the virtual meeting at 8:10 p.m.



Participants (30)


Q

Search




SW

Sarah Wayland (me)









Marsie Torchon (Host)






AT

Andrea Toney (Co-host)








Dana Cunningham (Co-host)





YY


Yvette Young (Co-host)





AH

Alice Holt








Troy Sampson





AR

Alexis Russell







Andria Thomas





CR

CHERYL ROTHWELL





DM

Dorcas Mungai





ES

Erin Sisk





FW

Faith Wills





JA

Jamie Anfenson-Comeau





jP

janie Payne



KA

Karen Andrews





LaKeisha Swan



Sc



LaTonya Ward



Lillie Bond



Lily Williams



Pamela Talley



Ronda Bullock



Sharon Williams



Sue Griebner



Sue Griebner



Sue Griebner



Sylvia Taylor



Tanisha Wooten



Trinell Bowman



Trudy Biddle

