

Rocio.bautista81@gmail.com
ManzanoJuana@~~Sk~~+cloud.com

DRAFT

SECAC Meeting, September 25, 2012

the following people attended the September 25, 2012 SECAC meeting. They are:

Joan Rothgeb (PGCPS)
Mary Bell (PGCPS)
Sarah Wayland
Beth Ann Hancock
Lillian Bond
Pamela Talley
Amani Kharam
Janice Briscoe, Director - Pupil Personnel Services (PGCPS)
Alyssa Hoover-Ott, Social Worker, Child Advocacy Center (Dept. of Social Services for PG County)
Patricia Waldman, Supervising Attorney - Child Advocacy Unit (Legal Aid Bureau of PG County)
Carline Presbury, Social Worker - Child Advocacy Center (Dept. of Social Services for PG County)
David Thompson, Jr., Chief of Staff Administration, PG County Department of Social Services
Alyssia James
Vivene Williams
Melonee Clark
Kari Fisher
Kiarra Bragg
Fidelia Nwachukon
TiaMekia Purnell Davenport
Andrea Toney-Thomas
Mike McLaughlin

Joan Rothgeb spoke briefly on a successful start to the new school year, with new individuals in key positions. Including, but not limited to, Interim Superintendent of PGCPS, Alvin Crawley, who has a wealth of experience, including special education and Thomas Bishop, Transportation Director who is very hands-on and has varied experience including driving a special education bus. Also, Infants and Toddlers classroom based programs have been moved from ECC to the Judy Hoyer Center. This move opened up two classrooms in most centers.

Janice Briscoe spoke on the primary responsibility with respect to all students attending PGCPS which is safety. The primary goal of all personnel is to provide a safe, supportive school environment. Every staff member in the school system is required to attend training on policy and procedures of reporting suspected child abuse or neglect concerns.

Suspected child abuse cases must be reported to the immediate supervisor and a written report must be completed within 48 hours. A thorough explanation of what is child maltreatment, abuse and neglect, who is responsible for reporting, the process for reporting, and consequences for failure to report, including your individual rights when reporting are explained in detail in PGCPs Child Abuse and Neglect Reporting Procedures pamphlet. Currently, there is not any follow-up on educational neglect, unless a minor child has never attended school in the state of Maryland. Additional information in this pamphlet includes the definition of abuse, types of abuse and a list of physical signs and behaviors that abuse victims may display. There is a link to this information on our website.

There are four important criteria needed to investigate an allegation. They are:

- 1) suspected victim is under the age of 18;
- 2) if suspected abuser is a caretaker;
- 3) if the abuse occurred within the jurisdiction;
- 4) reporting abuse or neglect.

Alyssa Hoover-Ott discussed the different types of abuse and the age a child can be left alone unsupervised, or supervised by another child. It was pointed out that the development age of a child is a very important aspect when leaving a child to be supervised by and older child.

The Child Advocacy Center creates an environment where the child can feel comfortable talking and provide information that is authentic. A number of interviewers have undergone special training in forensic interviewing and apply these specialized skills when interviewing a child. Interviewing is not conducted by school personnel in the case of suspected child abuse or neglect.

In-depth discussions are conducted with parents to better understand the child's communication style for children who are very young, possess limited verbal skills, or are nonverbal.

If a case of suspected child abuse or neglect is found to have no probable cause, the record is expunged after four months. Parents can request record not be expunged to allow DSS to track patterns of erroneous reporting.

Patricia Waldman, Legal Aid Bureau, stated that the focus of their agency is to represent the child's best interest. In many instances when dealing with a suspected child abuse or neglect issue, the parent and child may want a different outcome. The Legal Aid Bureau attends expulsion/supervision and IEP meetings to represent child's best interest.

Parents who suspect their child has been abused or neglected while not in their care may call and report a case of suspected abuse or neglect. They can call in to a screener and provide as much specific

information as possible. Then a structured decision-making tool is utilized to determine whether to follow through on investigation into suspected allegations.

There was general discussion about how parents can empower their kids to recognize if something different is happening to them. Being repetitive and verbally explaining to a child why mom or dad is performing a certain function. Letting a child know that mom or dad are the only individuals authorized to assist in certain personal care. While in the community, briefly explaining why child may present with behaviors that could be misinterpreted by others as abuse. Some strategies of other parents are to hand out a card stating the disability of the child, and some behaviors that often accompany disability. Creating additional ways for more community awareness will benefit all children with disabilities and their families.

A number of helpful brochures on child abuse, neglect, and appropriate discipline of children were made available from the Department of Human Resources, Prince George's County Department of Social Services, and Prince Georges County Public Schools. A link to these informational brochures can be found on our website.