

24 June 2008 - SECAC General Meeting

Mike McLaughlin - President

Gail Voigt - Assistant Secretary

Sarah Wayland - Secretary

Asha Dobbs - parent of child who doesn't currently live in PG County

Mary Bell - PGCPs Special Education Dept. representative

Gladys Auokam - parent of child in PGCPs

Dr. Abila Tazanu-Legall - founder of One World Center for Autism

Announcement (Dr. Abila Tazanu-Legall)

July 12th, the One World Center for Autism, in conjunction with Magic Johnson Theaters will be hosting a special screening of Wall-E for families with members who have special needs. The sound will be lower, the lights will not be turned off during the show, and everyone will be welcome. Tickets are \$6 per person.

Election of Officers for 2008-2009 School Year

The proposed slate is:

Mike McLaughlin - President

Lillie Bond - Vice President

Meg Dillman - Treasurer

Sarah Wayland - Secretary

Gail Voigt - Assistant Secretary

Sarah Wayland remembered that TjaMieka Purnell Davenport had volunteered to help with secretarial duties, but as she wasn't present at the meeting we didn't want to vote her in without her consent. We all agreed that she was extremely organized and any help she wanted to give us would be greatly appreciated.

Gail Voigt handed out a list of members and their attendance at meetings over the last 10 months. Based on this list, we determined that the only people who could vote in the election were Mike, Gail & Sarah, who dutifully voted themselves into office.

We discussed the by-laws and in particular the requirement that people have attended at least 3 meetings before they could vote. Ms. Wayland asked whether that policy might be too restrictive. We decided to evaluate that issue at a later time when more of the board were present.

Brainstorming About Next Year's Goals

1) Membership and how to get more people involved.

- (a) Gail Voigt discussed the letter she had written to PGCPs employees involved with special education (e.g., SLPs, OTs, Assistive Technology specialists, school nurses, guidance counselors, parent liasons, pupil personnel workers

(PPWs)¹ teachers, specialists, and paraprofessionals) and said she was able to work on that initiative over the summer.

- (b) We also discussed outreach through the PTAs. Ms. Wayland mentioned that we might be able to get contact information for PTAs in Prince George's County through the Maryland PTA. Mr. McLaughlin mentioned that a number of PTAs in the county had decided to not affiliate with the Maryland PTA so we would need to get contact information for them from each school. We should definitely contact the PTOs at the Early Childhood Education centers, Frances Fuchs and Chapel Forge.
- (c) Ms. Wayland mentioned the PTA meeting in Annapolis on July 26th, and sent the link to Gail Voigt in case Ms. Voigt wanted to contact the Maryland PTA to ask for help with our outreach efforts. (<http://www.mdpta.org/>). Information about the "Summer Leadership Conference" can be found at (http://www.mdpta.org/documents/MDPTA-SummerConferencePacket2008_000.pdf)
- (d) A concern was raised that by going through the PTAs, we would not be reaching parents of children who are getting special education. We talked about the need for a Special Education Committee at each school (as perhaps a part of the PTA.)
- (e) Distribute fliers at libraries - Dr. Tazanu-Legall had contact information for the administrators at the Hyattsville branch (6532 Adelphi Road, Hyattsville, MD) who can help us get material distributed at all libraries in PG County. They are Barbara Hurley (301-699-3500 x245; irene.briggs@pgcmls.info), Robin Jacobsen (301-699-3500; robin.jacobsen@pgcmls.info), and Barbara Hurley (no contact information available.)
- (f) Work with the Judy Hoyer Parent Information Center in Adelphi.
- (g) Host a forum and ask parents how they prefer to get information to help us focus our outreach efforts. We also discussed distributing a survey through the schools, but a number of people felt that the effort involved wasn't likely to be worth the return.
- (h) Talk to the Gazette, the PennySaver, and area churches about getting the word out. Mike mentioned that it would be good to send notices of meetings, workshops, etc. on a regular basis.
- (i) Also outreach through various parent support groups, e.g., the Children's Developmental Clinic (at both PGCC and U of MD.)
- (j) Distribute a quarterly newsletter

¹ Ms. Wayland asked what a PPW was. Mary Bell explained that they were in charge of monitoring compliance, including tracking attendance, suspensions, home visits, and whether a child was getting a Free and Appropriate Public Education. In the next school year, they will also be monitoring each child's response to intervention. They are part of the P-Team, which also includes the parent liaison, school nurse, and school psychologist. They used to monitor up to 12 schools, they now cover 3-5 schools.

- 2) We discussed hosting a PGCPs TV show aimed at educating parents and school administrators about special education
 - (a) Mr. McLaughlin said that he had plenty of material to keep it on the air for the indefinite future. We thought he could post YouTube videos on the topics as well. He mentioned the following topics;
 - i. MSDE training material
 - ii. Raising awareness/information regarding services available.
- 3) Website
 - (a) FAQs
 - i. e.g. IEP, ILP, etc.
 - ii. different types of disabilities
- 4) Educational Forums
 - 1) MD Online IEP²

PGCPs Update (Mary Bell)

- Current activities in the Special Education Department are focused on ESY (Extended School Year.)
- Providing year-round IEP training for teachers.
- Drafting an administrative procedure for how to measure “Response to Intervention”, wherein a school can implement interventions for a child who is having trouble, and then monitor his or her progress with periodic re-evaluations. This is an initiative for the entire school population (General Education.) Parents or teachers can initiate the process, and the P-Team will represent the school.
- Mr. McLaughlin asked how the Individualized Learning Plans were going. Mary Bell said that all currently enrolled students now had an ILP, whether their parents had participated or not.
- We asked about the Judy Hoyer Parent Center and its outreach efforts. Mary Bell said that they were working on getting a web site and distributing flyers to all schools.

² There was some discussion about whether the MD Online IEP satisfies Section D of the IDEA (where the parents and teachers collaborate on creating the IEP.) Mary Bell explained that the purpose of sending a draft of the IEP before the meeting was to give the team somewhere to start, but that they encouraged parental input at the IEP meeting. Someone mentioned that they had heard a number of parents express concerns about how IEPs were handled. Mr. McLaughlin said that it really depended on the IEP team - that some teams were very responsive and others weren't. But it wasn't an issue with the MD Online IEP - rather it was an issue with the IEP team at that school.