

SECAC-PG Monthly Meeting - Minutes of September 23, 2008

The Special Education Citizens Advisory Committee (SECAC) was called to order by the Chair, Mike McLaughlin at 6:35 PM, September 23, 2008 at the ARC of Prince George's County.

Persons attending: Mike McLaughlin, Lillie Bond, Ceci Aikens(PGCPS), Gail Voigt, Vivian Williams, Troy Boyce, Lakwona Simmons, Judith Kachihske, Carlin Brodie, Abila Tozaru. Welcomes and Introductions were given around the meeting table.

Troy Boyce was welcomed as a new member.

On October 14, 2008, C C Aikens from PGCPS will do a presentation on the Online IEP at the ARC from 6:30 – 8:00 PM. Judy Kachihske and Lillie Bond organized the IEP Forum. Lillie will create a flyer and will distribute.

Lillie Bond also inquired about the role of the Parent Liaison. It was indicated that the Parent Liaison was part of the school staff.

There was also a discussion concerning how IEPs are conducted at some schools. Usually an IEP meeting consists of one table in a room with special educators, related service personnel and parents. However, some schools due to time constraints, conduct multiple IEP meetings at one time in a large room with related service personnel and special educators moving from table to table in a scheduled manner to give their advice/input for a child's progress and IEP. Some parents indicated their disapproval of the practice.

Judith Kachihske indicated that there was no new news from the PGCPS Special Education department.

Mike McLaughlin was seeking an update concerning the number of Special Education supervisory staff who because of budget cuts were being transferred back to the classroom. Mike said it was important to Email the BOE members with concerns that parents might have with the quality of special education due to budget cuts.

CC Aikens presented the new PGCPS Special Education website. This website is much improved over the previous version. For now, the PGCPS special education website can be found at www.1pgcps.org/specialeducation. CC began by showing the group the Special Education Main page where the mission statement is found. The Main page also lists the Initiatives of the Special Education department such as Means Initiative, Online IEP, Autism Expansion, etc are listed. Some initiatives do not have links as yet.

To the right on the Main page, is a link to a list of Special Education Programs displayed as Fact Sheets. The Fact Sheets describe all of the Special Education Programs and the link to the location of those programs are just below the Special Education Program Fact sheets.

At the top of the Main page, there is a banner of menus that cover a vast array of topics concerning the PGCPs Special Education department. This includes the Special Education Administrative offices, Special Education Compliance, Parent Center, link to SECAC-PG website, a more thorough description of the Special Education Programs and a menu of Special Education Opportunities and Partnerships. When each one of these main menus are clicked, there is a list of additional links to the right for further perusal.

Meg Dillman wanted to know if the website contained Email addresses for Special Education personnel. They are not listed on the website. Lakwona Simmons wanted to know if Transition was covered on the website. The website should be published soon within the next week.

Mike McLaughlin suggested that a website, www.4accord.com contained a series of Online Video Workshops. While the workshops are based in Texas, the federal IDEA law is nationwide and these are quite informative. The SECAC needs to think about obtaining Parent Training Videos.

Meg Dillman described her frustration with her child's first month of school as the Autism program did not have a classroom, an assistant, materials and speech teacher. The principal is aware of the problems and the school (principal included) are working to provide services as best as possible under less than desirable conditions.

Judith Kachihske said after discussing such situations with the school, to call Dr Pamela Downing-Hosten at 301 817 3142 and let her know the situation. The Email system is not working at this time since an Email migration went awry. She said that Carol Reed is the supervisor for Special Programs.

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 8:20 PM.

Sincerely,

Gail Voigt
Assistant Secretary