

SECAC Meeting: September 24, 2013

The following people attended the September 24, 2013 meeting:

Pamela Talley, Sarah Wayland, Betty Jones, Ed Hendel, Mary, Yvette Y DeCosta, Nathalie Legerwood, Tasha Howard, Mary Bell, Joan Rothgeb, Scott Geist, Kay Kane, Beth Ann Hancock, Marie Brayman, Stacy Travers, Enid Smith, Veniece Weddington, Liz Burley, Jeanette Copeland, Tracy Content, Meg Dillman, and Tresa Robinson.

The meeting was opened by welcome and introductions of attendees. An update was provided by the Department of Special Education in regards to the special education and support services workshops for teachers, special educators and paraprofessionals held August 14, 2013. Mary Bell mentioned that the event went very well. There were 1400 teachers and special educators; and 900 paraprofessionals. Mr. LaDerrick Holmes spoke at both workshops. He spoke about common core, instruction, data collection and union issues /placements. He also asked for parent involvement and ask parent to provide input on IEP meetings. Dr. Kevin Maxwell, the new Superintendent was also in attendance.

Liz Burley reported that there would be a college fair for kids with disabilities on October 16, 2013 at Largo High School from 5p.m. to 8p.m. The fair is for kids with disabilities who are on IEP/504 plans.

Pam Talley reported that there would be a Parent of Children with Down Syndrome (PODS) of Prince Georges County walk on October 13, 2013 from 2p.m. to 4p.m at Lake Arbor Community Center. Tresa Robinson volunteered to speak on behalf of the SECAC at the Angel Walk.

Nathalie Legerwood, Community Outreach Coordinator for the One World Center for Autism (OWCA) shared with the group the history of OWCA and the different needs and services the organization provides. She noted that OWCA would like other organizations to partner with them to support their goals. In addition, she mentioned that there would be a four- session workshop on Behavior 101 starting October – May (confirmation on specific dates). More information can be found at www.worldforautism.info.

Tracy Content provided update on the Learning Disability (LD) survey. She reported that they have received fifty-one responses thus far. Survey will close Oct 1, 2013. The result of the survey would be presented at the next SECAC meeting.

Rose Blucher, "*Learning Disabilities and Twice Exceptional Children*" would present at the next SECAC meeting.

A parent asked if Prince Georges County Schools still has the Facilitated IEP Program. It was noted that Prince Georges County doesn't have enough staff to serve as facilitators, but working with "Community Mediation" in Montgomery County to get facilitators. Marie Brayman will be helping to improve the program.

Another parent wanted to know if staff are trained on specific IEP issue (eg. ADHD) and if not, who should they contact. It was noted that the issues had to be related to the IEP to get trained. However, the Special Education Instructional Specialist (SEIS) assigned to each school is trained, and they are in the process of working on training general education teachers.

Mary Bell encouraged parents who have IEP-related issues to work with the Partners for Success Parent Center (Beth Diaite 301-431-5675). It is a resource that is provided by MSDE. Parents should get response within 2 days.

A parent wanted to know if a parent can find out if a teacher is certified. Joan Rothgeb noted that a teacher can teach a year "out of field" – but not sure about the policy. She mentioned that the Office of Human Resources should be able to assist parents. In addition, she noted that the goal this year is to focus on progress monitoring, in which the department is using Charlotte Danielson's framework for teaching to evaluate teachers as highly effective. Last, she noted that she is seeking a Special Education Human Resource Specialist - not in the current HR structure.

SECAC will plan for a Board of Education Presentation. SECAC will highlight its vision and mission to the Board of Education members, as well as areas of concern. This usually takes place at least once a year; Peggy Higgins (board member) has recommended that the presentation be early in the year; October would be ideal.

Information sharing – A suggestion box has been placed in the back for parents to note topics that they will be interested to talk about.