

Minutes - Prince George's SECAC meeting 2/27/18

SECAC Board members in attendance: Pamela Talley, vice chair; Jamie Anfenson-Comeau, secretary.

Vice Chair Pamela Talley opened the meeting at 6:48 p.m.

Announcements included the 7th Annual Family Empowerment Conference and the MSEA Parent Survey.

Ms. Talley also announced the free SECAC workshop “Technically Speaking: Improving Student Communication and Outcomes Through Assistive Technology” by Sama Bellomo, rehabilitation technologist, on Saturday, March 24, from 9 a.m. to noon at John Carroll Elementary School.

Dr. Christopher Vick, owner of A-Z College Consulting, spoke about his business, providing individualized college application support to students.

Pam Jones, PGCPs College and Career Readiness support programs, spoke about Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs, which can provide “completer credit” in place of two years of a foreign language or technology programs.

Ms. Jones said students can also earn articulated or transcribed college credit or may take part in dual enrollment with a college.

Programs include automotive, cosmetology, construction, culinary arts and others.

To participate, a student must have a minimum 2.0 GPA, no failing grade and attend at least 94 percent of the time.

CTE partners with the special education department to provide the Summer Camp Explorers program, a two week camp; 50 percent of the seats are reserved for students with an Individualized Education Plan (IEP). It takes place at Crosslands High School and transportation will be provided at no cost. The program is open to rising 9th and 10th graders.

Ms. Jones said that students in the Frederick Douglass High School attendance zone can also apply to the Pathways to Technology in High School and College (P-Tech) program, in which students can earn completer credit and an Associates degree. Entrance is by lottery.

Ms. Talley asked why the program is only for zoned students, and Ms. Jones said that this is a pilot program, and transportation costs are a limiting factor. If successful, the school system is looking at creating a north county counterpart, but said the state is not allowing new P-Tech programs at this time. Less than 10% of CTE students have an IEP.

Liz Burley, transition specialist, said a lot of students do not enroll in a CTE program because they do not want to have to change high schools midway through.

Ms. Burley spoke in regards to promoting self-determination, components of which include self awareness, knowledge of oneself, knowledge of one's rights, communication of knowledge of oneself and one's rights, and leadership.

Ms. Burley said discussion of career goals should start early, and recommended the website imdetermined.org, a project funded by the Virginia Department of Education.

Ms. Burley said a discussion of career goals should focus on a student's strengths, interests, preferences and needs.

Ms. Burley also recommended the use of chore charts, self determination checklists and setting goals, helping children learn skills towards living independently when they're young, rather than waiting until they're 18.

Ms. Burley said it is important to involve children in planning activities, such as planning a vacation, making a shopping list or doing a budget..

Ms. Burley also recommended talking to children about their disability, otherwise they will come to think it is something to be ashamed of. She recommended doing this by emphasizing their strengths and letting them know what supports they need to be successful.

Ms. Burley said that for children in pre-kindergarten or kindergarten, give them lots of opportunities to make choices, and foster the expectation that they can be successful in a work environment. Allow them to contribute to family life and practice life skills, discuss people working in the community.

For middle school to high school students, Ms. Burley said to help them make long-term plans for independent living, allow them to participate in their IEP meetings and understand the purpose and information contained in their IEP. Give them input in setting IEP goals.

If they go on to college, they will have to disclose that they have a disability and state what accommodations they need, Ms. Burley said. Every college has a Disabilities Support Services program.

One resource, Ms. Burley said, is the Maryland Transition Planning Guide for Individuals with Disabilities, produced by the Maryland State Department of Education, Division of Special Education/Early Intervention Services.

If you have a child who is going to need long-term support, apply to the Developmental Disabilities Administration (DDA). If moving from one state to another, DDA supports do not transfer.

Know what your children's career interests and preferences are and talk with them about it all the time.

Ms. Talley closed the meeting at 8:15 p.m.