

Prince George's SECAC meeting minutes 11/28/2023

Executive Board Members in Attendance: Janie Payne, chairperson; Jamie Anfenson-Comeau, vice chairperson; LaMonica Jones, treasurer; Sarah Wayland, ex-officio advisor.

Others in Attendance: See Attached Screen Capture.

Chairperson Janie Payne opened the meeting virtually at 6:32 p.m. via the Zoom online meeting platform. Ms. Payne introduced the board members present and the Prince George's County Public Schools (PGCPS) partners.

Ms. Payne introduced Dr. Trinell Bowman, PGCPS associate superintendent, Department of Special Education.

Dr. Bowman held a moment of silence for the families of Riverdale Elementary School.

Dr. Bowman said the department will be asking for recommendations for individuals to be interviewed as parent/guardian voices for the 2.0 Strategic Plan update.

Dr. Bowman said Colin L Powell K-8 Academy opened on Nov. 27. The academy has an autism program.

Dr. Bowman said the Parent Empowerment Conference will be held March 16-April 20, and the 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Autism Summit will be held April 20.

Ms. Payne said that today's topic was bullying, harassment and intimidation. She said there was so much interest in the topic last year that SECAC wanted to bring it back this year.

Ms. Payne discussed the agenda of tonight's meeting.

Ms. Payne introduced speakers Richard Moody, supervisor, PGCPS Office of Student Engagement and Student Support, Jocelyn Yao, PGCPS psychologist and Marvie Corbett, director of psychotherapy and clinical therapist with Rebecca Resnick and Associates, Montgomery County.

Ms. Yao gave examples of what is and is not bullying.

Ms. Yao gave the formal definition of bullying, which includes sustained harassment over a period of time, and a perceived power imbalance between the bully and the victim.

Ms. Yao defined four types of bullying: physical, verbal, social and cyber.

Ms. Yao said bullying inflicts harm and distress on the victim and puts them at risk of academic, psychological, social and mental health difficulties.

Ms. Yao said children with disabilities are three times more likely to be bullied, but 60% less likely to report being bullied.

Ms. Yao said parents should talk with their children about their experiences, validate their experiences, model healthy conflict resolution skills, model empathy, and let your children know you hear their concerns and want to help.

Ms. Yao shared coping strategies, including WITS – Walk away, Ignore, Talk it out, Seek help.

Ms. Yao said it is important to let children know that seeking help from bullying is not tattling.

Bullying can be reported by using the online Bullying, Harassment and Intimidation (BHI) form, which can be found on the main PGCPSS website or on every school's homepage.

Ms. Yao said that in the case of cyberbullying, make screenshots, document everything, and report it to the social media platform where the cyberbullying is taking place as well as to the school.

Mr. Moody noted that the power imbalance in the definition Ms. Yao gave does not have to be physical; it can manifest as an imbalance in popularity, intellect, privilege or in many other different ways.

Mr. Moody said that often parents may see something that may be a conflict, but is not necessarily bullying. An adult should intervene when they see something. If it is not bullying, that's fine, but if it is, they should report it.

Mr. Moody said that twice a year, students review the Student Rights and Responsibilities Handbook.

Mr. Moody said that PGCPSS has embraced the Welcoming Schools module from the Human Rights Campaign, which uses a bias-based bullying model.

Mr. Moody also said that "Second Step" Social Emotional Learning is being rolled out in all middle schools.

Mr. Moody said that all schools are required to have a bullying prevention plan.

Mr. Moody said that the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) has posted a new online course, "Bullying Prevention for Maryland Educators."

Mr. Moody discussed a number of potential interventions that can be used for both the bully and the targeted student.

Mr. Moody said peer mediation should never be used as an intervention for bullying.

Ms. Corbett reiterated that there has to be a power imbalance for bullying to occur. She said the word has lost some of its meaning because it has been overused.

Ms. Corbett said many children have difficulties in reporting bullying, particularly if they cannot rely on adults to effectively intervene and make the situation better.

Ms. Corbett said that strategies need to be developed that address kids both on the giving and the receiving ends of bullying.

Ms. Corbett discussed assertiveness training, different communication styles, and how to reinforce healthy communication styles, as well as distress tolerance.

Ms. Corbett said we need to develop, as a community, a non-judgmental place to land when our child is being the aggressor, to take accountability for the impact aggressive behaviors can bring, and to guide children to make amends for their actions and reward doing so.

An attendee asked what to do if you file a BHI report and there is no response from the school.

Mr. Moody said to follow up with the school administration and also to contact him.

In response to a question about assertiveness training, Ms. Corbett said she has assertiveness training programs at the middle school level.

She said there are often secondary gains for both the aggressor and the victim, in terms of connection, or attention, status, removal from the environment. She said we need to think about what need is being met by these behaviors if they persist, and what other ways can these needs be met.

Ms. Payne thanked everyone for attending, including the speakers and the parents.

Ms. Payne noted that there will be no meeting in December. The next SECAC meeting will be Jan. 23, and the topic will be Planning for a Successful Transition Across Grade Levels.

















































Ms. Payne wished everyone a safe holiday.

Ms. Payne closed the meeting virtually at 8:02 p.m.

Z Participants (27)



Find a participant

- JA** Jamie Anfenson-Comeau (Me)  
- MT** Marsie Torchon (Host)   
- MC** Marvie Corbett (Co-host)    
- AS** ANGELA SALMERON (Co-host)   
- JY** Jocelyn Yao (Co-host)   
- KA** Karen Andrews (Co-host)   
- YY** Yvette Young (Co-host)   
- EL** Edith Linares (Interpreter)   
-  Alita-Geri Carter  
-  Irin Wills-Allen  
- J** Jamal McClain  
- JP** janie payne  
-  Joni Turner  
- KR** Karly Rose  
-  Kenrimu Ughiovhe  
-  LaKeisha Swan  
-  Lakisha Thelusma  

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LaKeisha Swan



Lakisha Thelusma



Lisa Wilson



Miranda Knox



Robert Malone



Robin Parker



Ronda Bullock



Sarah Wayland (she/her)



Tanisha Wooten



Trinell Bowman



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