

Prince George's County SECAC meeting, 2/22/22

Executive Board Members in Attendance: Troy Sampson, chairman; Sarah Wayland, vice chairwoman; Janie Payne, treasurer; Jamie Anfenson-Comeau, secretary; Pamela Talley, community liaison.

Others in Attendance: See Attached Screen Capture

SECAC Chairman Troy Sampson opened the meeting virtually via the Zoom meeting platform at 6:37 p.m.

Mr. Sampson introduced the executive board members in attendance and the PGCPSS school partners.

Mr. Sampson said reducing screen time for children has become a huge concern with the move to virtual, hybrid and concurrent learning.

Mr. Sampson introduced Trinell Bowman, Prince George's County Public Schools' associate superintendent of the Department of Special Education, to provide an update on the special education department.

Dr. Bowman said the school system is continuing to hold vaccination clinics, and individuals can schedule appointments at pgcps.org/vaccine.

The Family Support Center is also holding a Behavioral Support Group and a Parent Wellness Support Group. Individuals can also sign up for the FSC newsletter.

Dr. Bowman said that March 19 is the kickoff for the 11th Annual Parent Empowerment Conference, being held again virtually. She said that the virtual College and Career Fair will be held April 6.

Mr. Sampson shared a presentation on the subject of "Help! I Cannot Get My Child Off the Screen!"

Mr. Sampson said the internet has become a significant source of information and entertainment. He introduced strategies to monitor, manage and reduce screen time.

Mr. Sampson said that according to Dr. Victoria Dunckley, screen time, especially interactive screen time, acts as a stimulant, causing the brain to produce dopamine. Dopamine affects children differently because their cerebral cortexes are not developed enough to feel satisfied with small doses or to self regulate.

He said parents should not expect children's brains to adapt or manage the level of artificial stimulation their brain is not ready to handle, and that it is especially difficult when there are some adults experiencing the same level of challenges.

Mr. Sampson introduced a 12-Step Program to deal with limiting and managing children's screen time.

Step 1 – Determine how much screen time to allow outside of schoolwork or occupational need. For example: 30 minutes in the morning, 30 minutes in the evening. Be consistent.

Step 2 – Be clear and consistent. Stick to your guns and don't let whining let you down. Tears, screaming, etc., are normal because they are "hooked." Make sure all adults are on the same page.

Step 3 – Absolutely no electronics if homework/chores are not done or if they have misbehaved (outside of homework). Screen time is a privilege, not a right!!! Screen time must correlate to doing the right things.

Step 4 – Check phones, tablets, iPads, computers at the door. Don't be afraid to lock items away from children.

Step 5 – Be vigilant. Monitor their screen time, what they are doing.

Step 6 – Explain the dangers as best as you can. Let them know you're trying to protect them. Find examples of screen time gone wrong.

Step 7 – Expect boredom. Children will whine or cry that they are bored. "I'm bored" is code for "I want my electronic fix." Have a plan for what to do.

Step 8 – Guide or direct them to alternate activities. Doing other things will become easier over time. Help them do other things like playing cards or board games.

Step 9 – Expect relapses and regression. Stuff happens that may require relying on electronic devices during emergencies. Monitor how often you have to rely on electronics for conflict avoidance, babysitting, etc.

Step 10 – Make adjustments as necessary. If your plan isn't working well, you may need to adjust your plan.

Step 11 – Do an electronics sabbatical. Take advantage of camps or programs that do not allow electronic devices. If none are available, do no-electronics sabbaticals at home with rewards.

Step 12 – Be a role model. Lead by example; when you are with them, don't check your phone. Do the sabbatical with them. Do off-screen time with them and catch up if you need to away from the children and out of their sight. Make time for family fun so they know you are serious. Don't be a hypocrite!!!

Board vice chairwoman Sarah Wayland said that she finds it helps to post a visual schedule, so that her children know what to expect. She asked how to keep children from getting distracted (going down a YouTube rabbit hole, for instance) while doing schoolwork on their devices.

Mr. Sampson said that he and his wife had to sit with their son while he was doing his homework to help keep him on track.

Yvette Young with the Family Support Center said there are apps that can be used to block distracting sights. There is also a blue light blocking app, she said.

Ms. Wayland said that the American Academy of Pediatrics has “sliders” that can help have a conversation with children about time management. It can be found at www.healthychildren.org/English/media/Pages/default.aspx.

An attendee asked if PGCPS will change its masking policy now that the state board of education has made mask policy up to local school systems to decide. She also asked if the school system is still doing contact tracing.

Dr. Bowman said masking policies will be made the first week of March, and that contact tracing is still in place.

The attendee said contact tracing was not being followed in relation to school buses.

Dr. Bowman asked for details and said she will follow up and investigate.





















































PGCPS Principal Sothern said that if a child tests positive through the weekly COVID testing kits, they are not required to do contact tracing, according to school system policy.




















Mr. Sampson said that the next meeting will be on March 22, with guest speaker Dan Habib, award winning documentary maker. Mr. Sampson thanked everyone to wear masks, social distance and wash hands.

Mr. Sampson closed the meeting virtually at 7:58 p.m.

Participants (23)

Search

-  Sarah Wayland (me)  
-  Marsie Torchon (Host)  
-  Troy Sampson (Co-host)    Screen
-  Karen Andrews (Co-host)  
-  A Bello  
-  Alex Barnes  
-  Andria Thomas  
-  Carnela Coleman  
-  Celia Lewis  
-  Jamie Anfenson-Comeau  
-  Janie Lareece Payne  
-  Jeanette Henry  
-  Kimberly William  
-  LaTanya Sothern  
-  Laura Almiraz  
-  Pamela Talley  
-  richenda hobbs  

-  richenda hobbs  
-  Shee N  
-  Sylvia Taylor  
-  Tanisha Wooten  
-  Terry Hampton  
-  trinell bowman  
-  Yvette Young 