

Howard County Commission for Transitioning Students with Disabilities  
Meeting Minutes  
January 11, 2018

**Attendees:**

Rob Baynard, Beth Benevides, Patrick Boxall, Katie Collins-Ihrke, Stephanie Discepolo, Valerie Harvey (for Keri Hyde), Michelle Henry, Colette Jackson, Kathy Land, Erica Lewis, Kathy McSweeney, Dianne Nagle, Judi Olinger, Lisa Ott, Laura Parsons, Sharon Plump, Susan Potts, Dawson Robertson, Ann Scholz, Clara Scholz, Stephanie Wallace, Janice Yetter

**Guests:** Elizabeth Burrage (Project Search), Linda Schnapp (HCC), Kelsey Wilson (intern, HCRP)

**Absent:**

Stephanie Chapple, Kathy Conwell, Chris Glover, Wanda Hutchinson, Keri Hyde, Cindy Parr, Kelly Ruby, Jemira Sarratt, Terri Savage, Dana Shourbaji, Brian Welsh

Meeting called to order at 8:35am

**Welcome and Introductions**

**Approval of Minutes**

Judi Olinger made a motion to approve the November 9, 2017, meeting minutes. Rob Baynard seconded the motion. Minutes were approved unanimously.

**Office of Children and Families Update**

V. Harvey provided a department update on behalf of Keri Hyde. She shared information on the “Grand Families” program sponsored by the Office of Children and Families to address the increase in calls for support from grandparents who are raising their grandchildren. There is a need for education and outreach to this particular group. It was suggested that nonprofits such as HCAS and the Arc might consider targeting this population in their outreach as well.

OFC will be moving to the Nonprofit Center in Patuxent Woods.

**Collaboration with the Commission on Disability Issues**

R. Baynard and B. Benevides provided an update on their meeting with Ande Kolp, chair of the Commission on Disability Issues. CDI has a very different role than the Transition Commission and priorities are not the same. However, they would be willing to consider the Transition Commission’s initiatives, especially around employment and awareness, and perhaps offer support for our recommendations.

**Workgroup Reports**

**Education:** A. Scholz shared information on upcoming events: “Transition Journey: Parent to Parent” at Wegmans on January 31 and “College 101” at HCC on May 1.

College 101 for parents and students will cover such topics as accommodations and modifications, IDEA v. ADA 504, self-advocacy, etc. This is a joint collaboration of HCC Project Access and HCPSS.

D. Robertson and J. Yetter are still working on videos for the website about the various HCPSS work programs (Project Search, Community Connections, work/study, enclave, ARL, etc.). One-page flyers for each programs are complete.

J. Yetter reported that the new Transition Planning Guide published by MSDE is available for distribution. All ITLs have received copies.

A standard parent presentation on transition is in development. A presentation was offered at Marriotts Ridge High School. L. Parsons developed an informational brochure for families on the transition process and invited anyone interested to contact her for copies. D. Robertson and the transition teachers will work together to create a common transition presentation with a goal of completion by February 2018.

P. Boxall expressed continued concern that parents are not receiving common information from transition teachers across all schools. The inconsistency remains a great concern to parents.

**Employment:** L. Ott provided information on the DDA Rate Study and the new Family Supports Waiver (serving 400 children birth to 21 who are DDA eligible) and the Community Supports Waiver (serving 400 adults on the DDA wait list).

The group discussed employment in Howard County and reiterated the need for a culture change among employers—helping business managers with creating positions and customizing as necessary for people with disabilities. A recommendation was made that the county create a position for an employee to promote and support customized employment in county offices. Another recommendation was to connect with the Office of Aging and Independence and see how we might further our initiatives around intentional hiring.

The annual report will include several recommendations from this committee, including a recommendation that the Commission meet with the Human Resources department to discuss many of the initiatives.

S. Plump provided an update on Pre-Employment and Transition Services from DORS. Pre-ETS proposals from providers are being reviewed and approved every two weeks in an effort to offer more services in Howard County.

S. Plump shared data on DORS referrals for Pre-ETS services. The number of referrals has substantially increased. S. Plump reiterated that all students are eligible for Pre-ETS and referrals should be made for every transitioning student. Transition teachers and school-based teams should not be making the determination of whether a student is eligible. The referral should be sent for determination by DORS.

**Community:** K. Collins-Ihrke is planning to meet with the Office of Community Resources to discuss faith-based communities and how they may offer community-based support to people with disabilities.

### **Member Updates**

K. Collins-Ihrke shared information on the Maryland Youth Leadership Forum for students with disabilities in their last two years of high school. This event will take place June 21-June 23 at Towson University.

The Transition Symposium will take place on March 24 at Cedar Lane School and Lime Kiln Middle. There will be tracks for educators, parents, and students. Social work CEUs will also be offered.

J. Yetter shared that HCPSS is applying for a grant from MSDE around secondary transition.

K. McSweeny shared that the number of students with disabilities who are currently supported by the Disability Student Services Office at HCC is 806. L. Schnapp offered volunteer assistance now that she is retired. If interested, please contact her at [lschnapp@howardcc.edu](mailto:lschnapp@howardcc.edu).

L. Ott asked for continued assistance in encouraging families to apply for the Family Supports Waiver.

S. Discepolo has scheduled a tour of the ARL for Commission members on February 8 at 7:45am. Members should email her directly if interested in attending.

S. Discepolo shared information on the Electrician Apprenticeship Program available through CRD. It is the first of its kind in Howard County, offering 12 CRD students the opportunity for site-based work experience in a pre-apprenticeship class. Students will be paid, reimbursed for mileage, and provided with industry tools. Once they complete the 200-hour apprenticeship, they will be linked to employers for full-time employment. This is a collaboration of HCPSS, the Department of Labor, and Office of Workforce Development. Independent Electrical Contractors in Laurel is the apprenticeship partner. The program will begin February 5. HCPSS hopes to develop a cosmetology apprenticeship program next.

D. Nagle provided information on the Project Access Open House, January 20, at HCC.

C. Scholz provided an update on her internship with Howard County Recreation and Parks. She is in her second rotation and currently working at the reception desk at the Roger Carter Community Center.

L. Burrage noted that the Project Search application is online. There will be a parent information night in January.

**Closing**

The meeting was adjourned at 10:41am.

**Future Meetings:**

March 8, 2018 (8:30-10:30am) – Roger Carter Community Center

May 10, 2018 (8:30-10:30am) – Roger Carter Community Center