

Howard County Commission for Transitioning Students with Disabilities  
Meeting Minutes  
September 13, 2018

**Attendees:**

Rob Baynard, Beth Benevides, Patrick Boxall, Stephanie Chapple, Katie Collins-Ihrke, Stephanie Discepolo, Karen Gerald, Michelle Henry, Kathy Land, Erica Lewis, Dianne Nagle, Lisa Ott, Cindy Parr, Laura Parsons, Susan Potts, Dawson Robertson, Ann Scholz, Meghan Smallwood, Brian Welsh, Debbie Yare (for the Howard County Office of Children and Families), Janice Yetter

**Guests:** Naysha Conway (Humanim), Natalie Dohner (Project Search), Doris Jacobs (Humanim), Mike Shin (Project Search)

**Absent:**

Colette Jackson, Kathy McSweeney, Judi Olinger, Sharon Plump, Kelly Ruby, Jemira Sarratt, Dana Shourbaji

Meeting called to order at 8:30am

**Welcome and Introductions**

New liaison to the Commission from the Office of Children and Families is Kaya Swann.

Natalie Dohner welcomed as the new program manager for Project Search replacing Elizabeth Burrage.

Mike Shin will be recommended for appointment to the Commission as the new student representative; Clara Scholz recently completed high school.

Meghan Smallwood, transition specialist at Cedar Lane School and River Hill High School, will take Stephanie Wallace's place on the Commission.

Rob Baynard is serving on behalf of Family Services Foundation; he left Abilities Network in August.

**Approval of Minutes**

Katie Collins-Ihrke made a motion to approve the May 10, 2018, meeting minutes. Ann Scholz seconded the motion. Minutes were approved unanimously.

**HCPSS Update: High Schools and Transitioning Students with Disabilities**

J. Yetter, recently promoted to the Director of Special Education, presented an update on the focus for transitioning students with disabilities. She and Executive Director Dr. Terri Savage are excited about many current and planned initiatives focused heavily on transition.

HCPSS is using grant funds from MSDE to focus on transition. Self-advocacy major theme; curriculum to teach students across the spectrum of disabilities advocacy skills and ADA Section 504 rules and protections.

“Enclave” has been replaced by Career and Community Exploration Program (CCEP). Combining skills taught in classroom and at schools with work-based and community-based opportunities. On Mondays and Fridays, students will explore “career clusters,” which are opportunities to learn about various jobs and meet people employed in those jobs. Community-based instruction will be offered Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday. In addition, students participating in this program will explore resources in the community to better prepare for more independent living and more meaningful post-school days.

DSE is creating a parent information presentation on transition. Goal is to complete by the end of the school year.

Transition Fair will be combined with the Family Resource Fair, grades 1-12. The hope is to reach more middle school families with information on transition. Will take place on October 27, 2018, 10:00am-2:00pm at Cedar Lane School. Tables are still available for anyone wishing to exhibit.

MSDE has mandated increased monitoring and accountability of transition pages in the IEP. Effective July 1, 2018, activities listed under each transition goal will be monitored on a quarterly basis.

ITLs and transition specialists will distribute transition folder to families with various resources, guides, etc. There will be different folders for diploma-seeking and certificate-seeking students.

Students with 504s are eligible for Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS) from DORS. Transition specialists should provide this information to guidance counselors so that they may pass along to families.

### **Office of Children and Families Update**

Debbie Yare attended on behalf of Kaya Swann. Provided information on the success of the Childcare Resource Center and training students to work in childcare field.

The marketing department is creating a logo, brochure, and printed tablecloth for the Commission. The Commission’s information on the county website has been updated.

The Loan Closet is expanding to accept donations to serve all ages and needs. Developmental toys, strollers, etc., may be accepted and loaned/gifted to people with disabilities. More information forthcoming once the physical space expands.

County’s new Human Resource Campus (Patuxent Woods) will host an Open House with Executive Kittleman on September 20, 2018, 2:00-4:00pm.

### **Commission on Disability**

M. Henry shared that the Commission on Disability Issues has officially been renamed the Commission on Disabilities.

M. Henry provided an update on the County Resolution to study the effectiveness of county services to people with disabilities. The report deadline has been extended past the October due date, as the Commission is still conducting surveys and hosting focus groups on various issues. The transportation forum will be held on September 29, 2018, at the East Columbia Library. Individuals with disabilities, families, and students with disabilities are encouraged to complete the online survey, which can be found on the Commission on Disability website.

Commission on Disability Annual Awards Ceremony will be held on October 4, 2018, at 6:30pm.

### **Priorities for the Upcoming Year**

B. Benevides shared priorities identified from the July 12, 2018, meeting of the chairs of the Community, Education, and Employment Workgroups.

The Commission will recommend that the countywide employee award ceremony (October) recognize employees with disabilities as well as those who have served as mentors. The goal is to encourage recognition of Disability Employment Awareness month beyond the Commission on Disabilities award ceremony.

B. Benevides, N. Conway, E. Burrage, and K. Gerald attended the Howard County Society of Human Resource Managers monthly meeting in August. The keynote was EEOC Trends. Disability ranks #3 in the number of discrimination cases. B. Benevides and others attended to make the Commission known to attendees and to network with this business group.

B. Benevides followed up with the SHRM Committee on Diversity and Inclusion and has been invited to attend their meeting. The goal is to invite someone from this group to attend the Employment workgroup and the Commission at large as a business partner.

Marketing the Commission will be an ongoing priority in the year ahead. Office of Children and Families is currently working on materials to assist with this promotion.

Collaboration between the Education and Employment subgroups remains a priority, namely: connecting students to employment; preparing students for employment while in school; and promoting CRD and ARL to all students.

The group discussed the ARL open houses scheduled for November 8 and December 11. Information is sent to all 8, 9, and 10<sup>th</sup> grade parents. S. Discepolo will send information to A. Scholz so that the Family Support and Resource Center can highlight that students with disabilities are encouraged to consider the ARL.

## Member Updates

N. Dohner provided an update on Project Search. There are 12 interns and 3 job coaches for the year. Fewer individual sites this year, which is a concern. Rec & Parks are hosting several interns. Fleet, DILP, and Elkridge Senior Center backed out. Agreed that PS needs more of a presence in the George Howard Building and in unique sites across the county offices. Concern with grouping in too few departments. N. Dohner hopes to begin task analysis at various sites to understand the work and how PS interns can support.

K. Gerald noted the October 4, 2018, countywide employee award ceremony at the Howard County Fairgrounds. If interested in attending, please let her know.

P. Boxall shared the County Executive Forum on Disabilities will be held on October 1, 2018, at 7:00pm at the Nonprofit Center. Hosted by HCAS, Arc, and Humanim. HCAS Walk/5k is October 6, 2018, at Centennial Park.

S. Discepolo provided an update on the development of a registered apprenticeship program. Currently forming an advisory group; will apply to MSDE for grant funding for a program in 2019-20. Goal is to pilot with 25-30 students, and to develop base of employers for these apprenticeships. Will support students with IEPs in these programs as well.

D. Jacobs shared that We Step (Humanim) has 9 students from Homewood enrolled. These students volunteer two days each week in childcare settings at Veterans Elementary School and the Y.

L. Ott updated members on the new DDA waivers. The Family Supports Waiver and Community Supports Waiver are in full swing and still enrolling. Trending that families are choosing less day habilitation services and more employment services. DDA is also increasing behavior support providers. The Central Region office has expanded its staff. Case management support staff has been added to provide better technical assistance to Coordinators of Community Services (CCS). Cheryl Gottlieb has been hired as self-advocacy specialist.

D. Nagle celebrated the success of Project Access. This summer, the largest number of students participated in Project Access—77 students. (102 applications were received) 64% of the students were from Howard County. She credited guidance counselors with getting information to families and DORS with providing \$10,000 in student grants.

K. Collins-Ihrke shared that ARI is developing resource guides on the core service areas for people with disabilities. Also developed a program booklet explaining pre-ETS for students 14-21 with document disabilities. Maryland Candidate Forum on Disabilities will be held on October 5, 2018, at 1:30pm at the Baltimore Hyatt Regency.

A. Scholz announced the continuation of the Transition Journey: Parent to Parent Meetings, last Wednesday of the month at the Nonprofit Center. Janice Yetter has been

invited to attend to provide an update on HCPSS transition services. B. Benevides suggested a parent panel that would discuss what to look and what questions to ask when visiting providers.

**Closing**

The meeting was adjourned at 10:40am.

**2018-19 Meetings:**

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

January 10, 2019 – 8:30-10:30am (Roger Carter Community Center)

March 14, 2019 – 8:30-10:30am (Roger Carter Community Center)

May 9, 2019 – 8:30-10:30am (Roger Carter Community Center)