

Howard County Commission for Transitioning Students with Disabilities
Meeting Minutes
May 10, 2018

Attendees:

Rob Baynard, Beth Benevides, Patrick Boxall, Stephanie Chapple, Karen Gerald, Keri Hyde, Colette Jackson, Kathy Land, Erica Lewis, Kathy McSweeney, Dianne Nagle, Judi Olinger, Cindy Parr, Laura Parsons, Sharon Plump, Susan Potts, Dawson Robertson, Ann Scholz, Clara Scholz, Linda Schnapp (HCC), Janice Yetter

Guests: Elizabeth Burrage (Project Search), Naysha Conway (Humanim), David Lee (County Executive's Office), Suzanne Mesol (Wilde Lake High School), Robert Walker (Arc Howard County)

Absent:

Katie Collins-Ihrke, Stephanie Discepolo, Michelle Henry, Lisa Ott, Kelly Ruby, Jemira Sarratt, Terri Savage, Dana Shourbaji, Stephanie Wallace, Brian Welsh

Meeting called to order at 8:30am

Welcome and Introductions

Approval of Minutes

Patrick Boxall made a motion to approve the March 8, 2018, meeting minutes.
Rob Baynard seconded the motion. Minutes were approved unanimously.

HCPSS Update: High Schools and Transitioning Students with Disabilities

J. Yetter presented an update on the focus for transitioning students with disabilities. There is great systemic change underway, in the school system and in the Department of Special Education, with new leadership of Dr. Martirano and Dr. Savage, respectively.

The role and responsibilities of transition teachers has changed, with higher expectations and more responsibilities to better prepare students and parents. School counseling and CRD office is collaborating with special education.

There will be more opportunities for community based instruction in the 2018-19 school year. ("Enclave" will be renamed.) The goal is to align with outcomes of adult agencies: person-centered, strengths-based, cross-agency collaborations, and higher expectations. Community-based instruction will become more integrated. Currently, students are still separate from the general population at many employment sites. Will begin sending smaller groups of students to sites. Community-based instruction will be offered three (rather than four) days next year (Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday).

D. Robertson is still working with transition teachers to create one, common transition presentation for transition teachers and ITLs. The goal is to have this ready for the new school year.

J. Yetter shared a video about Walgreens on Facebook. Walgreens strongly promotes hiring of people with disabilities. The chain has a training program (REDI) for people with disabilities. A priority for the transition office will be partnering with more businesses to provide additional work opportunities for students.

Office of Children and Families Update

K. Hyde and D. Lee (Office of the County Executive) discussed Project Search and the county government's participation in the program. The MOU, which does not specifically state the hiring expectations mentioned at last month's meeting, expires this summer. D. Lee discussed expanding opportunities in the county government, but also shared that Executive Kittleman continues to champion the hiring of individuals with disabilities to business owners. It may be worth going to larger businesses to encourage additional Project Search sites. S. Plump offered that DORS can train employers who need additional support in working with individuals with disabilities. In early 2019, the county government office at Bendix Road will close; Project Search will be relocated, though a new space has not yet been identified.

Workgroup Reports

Community: S. Potts shared that parent workshops led by Accessible Resources for Independence (ARI) are being held each month concurrent with the Rec & Parks dances.

The annual Transition Symposium was held on March 24. It was a well-coordinated, widely-attended event. Feedback suggested the event be held in the fall rather than the spring.

The Transition Outreach Partnership will hold a retreat in the months ahead to plan for next school year. An MOU will be developed among the partners. A website is needed to highlight various transition-focused events, workshops, resources, in addition to highlighting the annual symposium.

Education: A. Scholz shared that 60 people attended the College 101 event hosted by HCC.

Thus far, four Transition Journey: Parent to Parent Meetings have been held. The May meeting is cancelled so that parents may attend the Board of Education Candidate Forum on special education issues hosted by HCAS, the Arc of Howard County, and the Family Support and Resource Center. A. Scholz will invite DORS to present at a future meeting.

The workgroup is using the MSDE Transition Guide as a basis for developing checklists. Additional information and detail will be included for parents (website links, definitions, agency descriptions, etc.).

D. Robertson shared that transition teachers will begin reviewing MSDE Transition Planning Guide with parents at IEP meetings, at which time the teachers will highlight specific information, review key points and timelines, and answer questions. They will offer to meet individually with families to further discuss.

Employment: R. Baynard provided an update on the workgroup's goals. Would like to see greater initiatives around Disability Employment Awareness Month (October). Suggested there need to be more employers at meetings and involved in the Commission work; consider inviting Maryland Works. Focus of the Commission remains heavily targeted on improvements in the high school transition process. Suggested balance with focus on employment and opportunities after high school. Need to get information about the Commission to the community.

Member Updates

D. Nagle shared that Project Access is still accepting applications.

E. Lewis discussed the recently passed County Resolution charging the Commission on Disability Issues to report on priority issues. The CDI Provider Committee will meet on May 16. An online survey is also being developed for distribution in June.

S. Plump provided information on the new Pre-Employment Transition Services program called Summer Youth Employment Program. Five students will participate in the nine-week program, which is paid although it does not provide job coaching. Another new program called Workbase Learning Experience will be housed at the Phillips School and will focus on culinary training. This full-day (9am-3pm) four-week program will include 8-10 students.

One-stops are now called American Job Centers. In Howard County, the American Job Center is located within the Columbia Workforce Center.

Closing

The meeting was adjourned at 10:35am.

2018-19 Meetings:

September 13, 2018 – 8:30-10:30am (Roger Carter Community Center)

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)