

Howard County Commission for Transitioning Students with Disabilities
Meeting Minutes
January 12, 2017

Attendees:

William Alexion, Rob Baynard, Beth Benevides, Patrick Boxall, Stephanie Chapple, Katie Collins-Ihrke, Kenyatta Cully, Ananta Hejeebu, Michelle Henry, Colette Jackson, Sharon Kramer, Erica Lewis, Mary Manzoni, Kathy McSweeney, Laura Parsons, Marya Pecukonis, Brandee Pigatt (DDA), Susan Potts, Jemira Sarratt, Linda Schnapp, Ann Scholz, Dana Shourbaji, Stephanie Wallace, William Webster, Janice Yetter

Guests:

Naysha Conway (Humanim), Doris Jacobs (Humanim), Tami Shaw (Arc of Howard County)

Absent:

Kathy Conwell, Nancy FitzGerald, Chris Glover, Wanda Hutchinson, Keri Hyde, Kathy Land, Cindy Parr, Dawson Robertson,

Meeting called to order at 8:40 am

Welcome and Introductions

Member Updates:

- W. Alexion announced his recent employment offer from Howard County Government Department of Labor, Licensing, and Regulations
- Transition Partnership will host all-day Transition Symposium on March 18 (Saturday) at Cedar Lane School
- Inter-Agency Transition Council will host full-day transition conference on March 20 at Ten Oaks Ballroom. Registration is required through Maryland Department of Disabilities.
- HC Department of Community Resources and Services—new director Steven Bullock

Approval of Minutes:

K. Collins-Ihrke made a motion to approve the November 10 meeting minutes.
P. Boxall seconded the motion. Minutes were approved unanimously.

Workgroup Priorities:

B. Benevides shared the edited video of business leaders in the community who have hired students with disabilities. The video was commissioned by HCPSS (Judy Pattik) last year.

Feedback from the commission included: adding an introduction about the commission; adding a conclusion with contact information; adding video captioning; and separating the videos into four individual viewing blocks.

The group will need to determine how these videos can be effectively promoted and viewed.

The Employment workgroup discussed the idea of a marketing campaign. It was suggested that a unified campaign be produced for the use of school system employees, job developers, and others.

The large group discussed how the Commission can have the greatest impact—focus is on the Commission and making the community aware of our priorities and the needs of transitioning youth.

The mission of the Commission was discussed. B. Benevides and D. Robertson will create a document that clarifies mission and goals and how each subgroup supports the overall mission, as well as what the expectations of the workgroups (Community, Education, and Employment) are.

B. Benevides will meet with Department of Community Resources to discuss how the Commission will work with the department, budget/resources, the Commission on Disability Issues, and other County departments, boards, and commissions.

Guest Presentation: Christopher House, vocational rehabilitation specialist, Pre-Employment Transition Services, MSDE/ DORS

C. House shared that 15% of vocational rehabilitation budget is to be used for students ages 14-21 with disabilities (504/IEP). To be DORS eligible, students must be capable of competitive employment.

Pre-Employment Transition Services were described: job exploration, work-based learning experience, counseling on post-secondary options, workplace readiness training, and instruction on self-advocacy.

A FAQ sheet on Pre-ETS is available and has been added to the Transition Handbook.

C. House noted that Howard County does not have any providers currently providing Pre-ETS services to Howard County students. He encouraged any adult providers interested in providing any or all of the five services to apply to his office for the contract.

Guest Presentation: Renae Kosmides, Director of Training and Technical Assistance, Maryland Association of Community Services

Located in Howard County, MACS is a membership organizations. Providers are mostly nonprofits. MACS has a strong legislative presence. Sick and Safe Leave in current legislative session is a priority.

They have peer networks, where members can come together to discuss various topics; they also provide training on various topics.

MACS hosts conferences and workshops focused on training for direct support professionals and mid-managers/executives.

MACS is currently involved in helping providers understand the Home and Community Based Settings (CMS) Rule and transition to that model of service.

Workgroup Priorities

The workgroups met in December—community, education, and employment—to discuss priorities and begin focusing priorities.

Education (notes provided after the meeting by A. Scholz): concentrating efforts on ensuring students and families are making informed and appropriate decisions about their post-secondary education and employment options.

Primary focus will be to ensure the Parent Questionnaire (created last year by the committee) is being used in each high school, and that the survey is prompting further conversation and sharing of resources as needed. Part of that would include the use of transition planning meetings or extended meetings specifically focused on transitioning. Group will reach out to the Instructional Team Leaders to assess the use of the questionnaire.

Employment: see notes above regarding marketing campaign. R. Baynard shared this group is concerned with whose “work” it will be to actually implement any recommendations put forth.

Community (notes provided after the meeting by M. Pecukonis): a focus of this group is the number of students exiting Cedar Lane who have very limited options among providers in Howard County. A group of parents, including C. Jackson, will meet with County Executive Kittleman to inform him of the issue and ask for the support of the Commission on Transitioning Students with Disabilities and the Commission on Disability Issues to research and address.

Closing

The meeting was adjourned at 10:35 am.

Future Meetings:

March 9, 2017 – Roger Carter Community Center

May 11, 2017 – Roger Carter Community Center