

# Hand-In-Hand

## Parents and Educators Working Together

### The Special Education Citizens' Advisory Committee (SECAC)

- **Mary Baskar**  
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- **PJ Shafer**  
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- **Sheila Baynes**  
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Join our  
Yahoo Group,  
BaltoCO-SECAC@  
yahoogroups.com

#### Meeting Dates 2011

January 10  
Dyslexia Tutoring Program

February 7  
Universal Design for  
Learning

March 14  
Conversation with  
Dr. Hairston

April 11  
Education of Students with  
Autism Spectrum Disorders

May 9

June 13

*All meetings are  
open to the public.  
7-9 p.m.  
ESS Building  
6901 Charles St.  
Towson, MD 21204*

**New Members Welcome!**

A joint publication of the Special Education Citizens' Advisory Committee (SECAC) and the Baltimore County Public Schools, Office of Special Education.

**Its purpose is to provide families and staff with information related to children with disabilities.**



### Parent Surrogates Needed!

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) requires that parents be involved in decisions regarding special education needs. Whenever a student who resides in either foster care or a group home has an educational disability or suspected disability, a determination must be made regarding who can legally act as a parent in the Individualized Education Program (IEP) team process. One of the options is to appoint a parent surrogate who will represent the student in educational decisions until the student is no longer in need of special education.

#### What is a Parent Surrogate?

A parent surrogate is an individual appointed by Baltimore County Public Schools (BCPS) to represent a student in place of a parent in matters relating to the educational decision making process. A surrogate is appointed when the parents' whereabouts are unknown or if a court has awarded guardianship or limited guardianship to a local government agency such as the Department of Social Services (DSS).

#### Who can be a Parent Surrogate?

Qualifications for a parent surrogate:

- ❖ **At least 21 years of age.**
- ❖ **Has no interest that conflicts with the interest of the student.**
- ❖ **Has knowledge and skills that will ensure adequate representation of the student.**
- ❖ **Must not be employed by the school system or any public or private agency which is involved in the education and/or care of the student.**

#### What does a Parent Surrogate do?

Under state and federal law, the parent surrogate has the same rights in the special education process as do natural parents or guardians. The parent surrogate acts as an advocate on behalf of a student to assure that the student receives a free, appropriate, public education (FAPE) within the least restrictive environment (LRE). This is accomplished by:

- ❖ **Becoming familiar with the student's educational history and any other information relating to the student's education.**
- ❖ **Participating in the planning, development, and approval of the student's IEP.**
- ❖ **Monitoring the student's educational development.**

**If you are interested in becoming a Parent Surrogate, please contact  
Candace Riddle at 410-887-3660.**

There is no cost involved in being a parent surrogate. A parent surrogate may resign his or her responsibility at any time and should give the school system sufficient notice so that a new parent surrogate may be appointed.

## Hand-In-Hand is available online:

[http://www.bcps.org/  
offices/special\\_ed/  
parent-resources.html](http://www.bcps.org/offices/special_ed/parent-resources.html)

Comments, questions, or  
submissions to this newsletter  
should be directed to:  
Jean Considine,  
Parent Coordinator  
jconsidine@bcps.org  
410-887-5443

Published by:  
The Resource Center for  
Families and Schools  
8401 Leefield Road,  
Room 100,  
Baltimore, MD 21234



### FREE Online Tutoring

Chat with a tutor from  
2 p.m. - 11:55 p.m.  
7 days a week.

All you need is a valid library  
card registered at the  
Baltimore County  
Public Library.

Free online tutoring for  
students Grades K through  
adult learners is available  
from home, work, or school  
or from the Baltimore  
County Public Library home  
page under *Research Databases-  
Homework Resources* or  
[http://bcpl.info/info/home  
work/#OnlineTutors](http://bcpl.info/info/home<br/>work/#OnlineTutors).

Spanish-speaking tutors are  
available.

## YOU ARE INVITED TO ATTEND THE SPECIAL EDUCATION COMMUNITY FORUM

Monday, February 28, 2011



7 - 8 p.m.

The Office of Special Education and the Special Education Citizens' Advisory Committee (SECAC) are asking for your input on the approved *Baltimore County Public Schools' (BCPS) Special Education Staffing Plan for 2010-2011*. This input will be used to update the current staffing plan in preparation for drafting the *BCPS' Special Education Staffing Plan for 2011-2012*. These community sessions also provide an opportunity for parent input on other issues regarding special education.

### What is a staffing plan?

The staffing plan documents the information and procedures used by BCPS to recommend the number and types of service providers needed to ensure the provision of FAPE (Free, Appropriate, Public Education).

### Where are the community forums being held?

- *Charlesmont Elementary, 7800 W. Collingham Drive, Baltimore, MD 21222.*
- *Church Lane Elementary, 3820 Fernside Road, Randallstown, MD 21133.*
- *Dogwood Elementary, 7215 Dogwood Road, Baltimore, MD 21244.*
- *Padonia International Elementary, 9834 Greenside Drive, Cockeysville, MD 21030.*
- *Vincent Farm Elementary, 6019 Ebenezer Road, Baltimore, MD 21162.*

### Why is community input needed?

- To provide comments/recommendations for the draft of the BCPS' Special Education Staffing Plan for 2011-2012.
- To give parents an opportunity to express opinions about the delivery of special education services in BCPS.

### If I can't attend the meeting, are there other ways to provide input?

The community can provide written comment through February 2011 by sending an e-mail to: [staffingplan@bcps.org](mailto:staffingplan@bcps.org) or by writing to the Baltimore County Public Schools' Staffing Plan, Office of Special Education at 6901 Charles Street, Towson, MD 21204.

You can get a copy of the staffing plan by calling the Office of Special Education, 410-887-3660 or online at [www.bcps.org/offices/special\\_ed/staffing-plan.html](http://www.bcps.org/offices/special_ed/staffing-plan.html). For more information about parent input into this process contact Mary Baskar, SECAC Chairperson, at 410-453-6644 or [MARYAF@aol.com](mailto:MARYAF@aol.com)



**IEP UPDATE! 5 DAY RULE**

**Before an IEP team meeting:**

- At least five (5) business days before a scheduled IEP team meeting, the parents are to receive an accessible copy of each assessment, report, data chart(s), draft IEP, or other document the team plans to discuss at the meeting.
- If the school personnel are unable to provide an accessible copy of the documentation at least five (5) business days before the scheduled meeting because of an extenuating circumstance, school personnel are to document and communicate to you the nature of the extenuating circumstance that prevented school personnel from providing accessible copies of material(s).

**After an IEP team meeting when the purpose is to develop an IEP:**

- No later than five (5) business days after a scheduled IEP team meeting, appropriate school personnel are to provide parents an accessible copy of the completed IEP. If the IEP has not been completed by the fifth business day after the IEP team meeting, school personnel shall provide the parents with the draft copy of the decisions made regarding the IEP.

In accordance with Education Article §8-405(e), Annotated Code of Maryland, failure of school personnel to comply with the timelines and actions does not constitute a substantive violation of the requirement to provide a free, appropriate, public education (FAPE). However, you maintain the right to initiate a complaint with the Maryland State Department of Education and initiate mediation or due process with the Office of Administrative Hearings on matters involving the identification, evaluation, placement or provision of services under IDEA.



Save the Date!

*Honestly Autism Day*

Saturday, April 2, 2011  
7:45 a.m. – 4:45 p.m.  
New Town High School  
Owings Mills, MD



**Keynote speaker: Carol Kranowitz, M.A.**

Carol Kranowitz is the author of *The Out-of-Sync Child, The Out-of-Sync Child has Fun, The Goodenoughs Get in Sync*, and the *Sensory Issues in Learning & Behavior* video. With co-author Joye Newman, she has written a new book, *Growing an In-Sync Child*.

The day will also feature:

- ❖ Breakout sessions on many autism-related topics
- ❖ A panel of people on the autism spectrum to share their insights
- ❖ Vendors, door prizes, the BCPS Parent Mobile, and more!

Registration Fee is \$25.

**More information coming soon!**  
[www.bcc-asa.org](http://www.bcc-asa.org) or call 410-655-7933

Brought to you by the partnership between Baltimore County Public Schools and the Autism Society of Baltimore-Chesapeake

**Is there a special student, teacher, school, administrator, or community organization that you would like to recognize for touching the lives of people with autism or their families? Nominate them for a Partnership Award!**

For more information, contact Debbie Page at 410-655-7933 or [dpage2@bcps.org](mailto:dpage2@bcps.org).

**Available on Request from the Resource Center:**

**Basic Facts about Dyslexia & Other Reading Problems**

*By Louisa Cook Moats, Ed. D. and Karen E. Dakin, M. Ed.*

A must-have guide for any parent or teacher of a child struggling to learn to read, this essential resource provides parents and professionals with the information they need to identify, understand, and support students with dyslexia and other reading problems.

Call the Resource Center for Families and Schools at (410) 887-5443 for a free copy while supplies last.

**Resource Center  
for Families and  
Schools**

**Parent  
Workshops**

**Applying for Social  
Security Income**

*Answers questions about the  
SSI process and eligibility for  
students with intellectual or  
other developmental  
disabilities who are  
17 or older.*

**March 23, 2011  
7 - 9 p.m.**

**What Will Happen to  
My Child When I am  
Gone?**

*Focuses on planning for your  
child's lifelong financial  
security.*

**March 30, 2011  
7 - 9 p.m.**

**Exploring  
Guardianship Issues**

*Answers questions about the  
pros and cons of obtaining  
guardianship for children  
with intellectual or other  
developmental disabilities who  
are over 18 years-of-age.*

**April 6, 2011  
7 - 9 p.m.**

All workshops are  
**FREE!**

ESS Building, Room 114  
Greenwood Campus  
6901 Charles Street  
Towson, MD 21204  
To register call  
**410-887-5443**

**Community Bulletin Board**

**Baltimore's Child Camps  
and Summer Programs  
Fair**

Sunday, March 6, 2011  
Noon - 3 p.m.

Crowne Plaza Timonium  
2004 Greenspring Drive.

**For more information  
call 410-367-5883 or  
info@BaltimoresChild.com**

Featuring programs for the  
summer of 2011 **and a  
chance to win a \$250  
Campership!** Meet camp  
directors and ask questions.  
Children's entertainment  
provided. Back by popular  
demand, **Camp for  
Everyone**, sponsored by the  
Arc of Baltimore. Admission  
is **FREE**.

**Sibshops**

A program for siblings of  
children with disabilities  
will be offering Saturday  
sessions.

Call **410-578-5169** for  
more information.



**New Workshop!  
Parent Advocacy 101**

April 30, 2011  
10 a.m. - 12 p.m.  
ESS Building, Room 114

This workshop is designed to  
give parents an idea of various  
advocacy **strategies they can  
use** during IEP meetings  
where effective advocacy is  
important to ensure their child  
receives a Free, Appropriate,  
Public Education (FAPE). The  
workshop will provide  
**practical tips** for ensuring  
clear communication and  
collaboration between families  
and schools.

Sponsored by the Baltimore  
County Public Schools  
Resource Center for Families  
and Schools

**Call to register!  
410-887-5443**

*"Parent Support in Special  
Education"*

**Back by Popular Demand!**

**☞ No One Knows My Child  
Like I Do!☞**

**A Workshop on Letters of Intent**

April 13, 2011 7 ~ 9 p.m.  
ESS Building, Room 114,  
Greenwood Campus

This will be a hands-on workshop where  
families will learn how to write a letter of  
intent, also known as an individual plan of  
care. This is a valuable tool that includes  
all of the critical information about your  
child with a disability.

A letter of intent is used when you are not  
available to direct your child's care. It  
informs family members, professionals,  
and support staff of the details of your  
child's life and care so that your vision  
and wishes can be carried on in the future.

**Registration required.  
Call 410-887-5443**



**Library Corner**

*Temple Grandin*

This DVD starring Claire Danes as  
Temple Grandin paints a picture of a  
young woman's perseverance and  
determination while struggling with the  
isolating challenges of autism at a time  
when it was still unknown.

Call **410-887-5443**  
to borrow.

*We can send it to your school for pick-up.*