

Janet Reese
ACPS Parent Support Specialist
Courtney Davis, Ph. D.
Coordinator, Parent Resource Center

Parent Resource Center Report to SEAC
Oct. 11, 2017

The Anne R. Lipnick Special Education Family Resource Center, also known as the Parent Resource Center or the PRC, is located in Room 134 of the Minnie Howard Campus of T.C. Williams High School, 3801 W. Braddock Road, Alexandria, VA 22302. The Parent Resource Center is open every school day from 8:30-3:30. The PRC offers the following services at no cost to anyone who lives, works or goes to school in the City of Alexandria:

- A lending library with over 500 books and DVDs on a variety of disabilities and parenting issues;
- A list of service providers in the community, such as speech therapists, math tutors and respite care providers;
- Support groups for parents;
- A workshops series for parents on various disabilities and general parenting topics;
- Individual confidential consultations to help parents understand their child's special education services and to support them with the challenges of raising a child with a disability or learning difference.

The following is a summary of Parent Resource Center activity for the months of September and early October, 2017.

I. PRC Contacts:

- A.** For PRC data recording purposes, a "contact" is communication **initiated** by a parent, staff member or community member with the PRC, either by phone, email or in-person meeting.
- B.** As of October 2016, the Department of Education has changed some of the parameters regarding what constitutes a single contact with a PRC. This could potentially lessen the total number of contacts as compared with previous years.
 - a. For example, prior to October of this year, each contact on a separate day surrounding one particular issue was counted as a separate contact.

- b. Now, the DOE wants PRCs to count all contacts surrounding one specific issue as a single contact, regardless of whether the contact is limited to one interaction between the parent and the PRC or twenty.

C. Comparison of PRC use for 2013-2014, 2014-2015 and 2015-2016 School Years

MONTH	2013-2014	2014-2015	2015-2016	2016-2017	2017-2018
August	6 (PRC opened 8/19)	15 (PRC opened 8/15) Includes data from summer	49 (PRC opened 8/21) Includes data from summer	54 (PRC opened 8/22) Includes data from summer	70 (PRC opened 8/4) includes data from summer
September	16	78	139	91	90
October	18	108	136	119	
November	12	124	139	149	
December	28	63	70	87	
January	79	189	98	172	
February	60	102	130	152	
March	61	112	124	181	
April	79	91	125	127	
May	79	100	62	149	
June	46 (PRC closed for summer 6/23 with the end of the school year)	114 (PRC closed for summer 6/22 with the end of the school year)	69 (data is through 6/24 and the end of the school year)	66 (data is through 6/22 and the end of the school year)	
TOTALS	484	1096	1141	1347	
Percentage Change		+126.4%	+4.1%	+18.1%	

- D. Contact breakdown for September: parents (45), ACPS staff (35), Community members (10).
- E. Top disability areas for September: ASD (14), ADHD (7), speech (3), ID (2), LD (1).
- F. Top reasons for contacting PRC in September: PRC resources (20), strategies (18), workshops (15), IEP (12), support groups (9), community resources (9).

G.

II. Family Engagement Workshop Series and Other Workshops:

A. Family Engagement Workshops

- a. ACPS staff members are welcomed and encouraged to attend workshops. Each workshop in the Family Engagement series has been built into PLMS, and staff can receive re-certification points for attending.
- b. The first workshop of the 2017-2018 Family Engagement Workshop Series, *Promoting Motivation, Determination and Executive Functioning in Your Child*, took place on Oct. 4.

- c. Forty-one people registered for the event, and twenty attended. Nine people had requested Spanish interpreters, but none of them attended.
- d. Sixteen evaluations were returned.
- e. All sixteen evaluations indicated that the attendees found the workshop informative.
- f. Fifteen of the sixteen indicated that it provided helpful strategies, and the sixteen indicated that it provided “some” helpful strategies.
- g. Fourteen of the sixteen evaluations indicated overall satisfaction with the workshop. One indicated neither satisfaction nor dissatisfaction, as no box was checked, and one checked both the “yes” and “no” boxes for overall satisfaction.
- h. Specific comments included:
 - “Excellent presentation and great resource;” “[T]his workshop was great and will use the strategies to encourage our children to move and continue with whatever they may be working on;”*
 - “very informative. I will incorporate what I’ve learned immediately. I see where I may have contributed to the current mindsets of my teenagers;”*
 - “excellent speaker;”*
 - “it wasn’t quite what I expected-thought it would be more on executive functioning skills, but was still useful and informative;”*
 - “need more explanation of some terminology;”*
 - “Dr. Varia was great-excellent workshop! Very helpful to have practical suggestions offered to try at home;”*
 - “maybe go into more detail about different age groups. Have breakout groups and have them talk about different challenges;”*
 - “it was very nice and organized and a lot of examples. I loved it;”*
 - “it was good. I thought I would leave with more tools and strategies. I will implement what I learned;”*
 - “excellent speaker!”*
 - “smaller setting that feels more intimate and personal;”*
 - “Q+A was most helpful. Information on presentation was not sent home. I would have liked the presentation to focus on how to motivate kids to do things they need to do like homework, chores, etc., rather than the focus on grit. Q+A was great, though;”*
- i. The two part workshop, *Understanding Social Security Benefits for Adults with Disabilities*, scheduled for Oct. 11 and Oct. 18, was cancelled, due to insufficient enrollment. It will be rescheduled for later in the school year.
- j. *Assistive Technology Tools: What Parents Need to Know* will take place on Oct. 23, and *Managing Challenging ED Behaviors* is scheduled for Oct. 25.

III. Raising Awareness of PRC/Community Outreach/Transition

- a. 9/14//17-meeting with Communications Department re filming of workshop series. (CPD)
- b. 9/19/17-meeting at John Adams re PRC supports for families of students with disabilities. (JGR)
- c. 9/19/17-meeting re filming of workshops (CPD)
- d. 9/19/17-manning of PRC resource table at MV open house and meeting with parents of students in MV Citywide classrooms. (JGR)
- e. 9/22/17-meeting with Hammond Parent Liaison re supports for Hammond parents of students with disabilities. (JGR)
- f. 9/28/17-meeting with Hammond administrator re PRC supports for Hammond parents of students with disabilities. (JGR)
- g. 9/28/17-meeting with Ramsay administrator re PRC supports for Ramsay parents of students with disabilities. (JGR)
- h. 10/4/17 meeting with TC Sped Administrator re PRC supports for TC parents of students with disabilities (CPD)
- i. 10/4/17 meeting with Mt. Vernon Parent Liaison and Lead Special Educator re PRC supports of families of students with disabilities (JGR)
- j. 10/9/17-presentation to City wide teachers and paraprofessionals about services and resources of the PRC (JGR/CPD)

IV. Support Groups

1. Support group for parents of young children receiving special education services, Oct. 3-six parents attended.
2. Support group for parents of students with moderate to severe disabilities-Oct. 11-one parent attended.
3. School based support group at Maury, Oct. 6-six attendees.
4. Parents at MV will be surveyed to determine possible interest in a support group.

V. Library

Ten books and DVDs have been borrowed from the PRC library so far this school year.

VI. Facebook and Twitter

Parents are encouraged to “like” the PRC Facebook page found at *The Anne R. Lipnick Special Education Parent Resource Center*. The PRC now has 125 people “following” and 119 “likes” on Facebook and 49 Twitter followers (LearnwithThePRC).

VII. Annual Statewide PRC Conference

- A. PRC staff (JGR and CPD) attended the annual statewide PRC Conference, *Connect for Success*, in Virginia Beach on September 25-26.
- B. John Eisenberg, the Assistant Superintendent for Special Education and Student Services at the Virginia Department of Education, sent a video message outlining areas of focus for the DOE, including:
 - a. Building capacity of PRCs in Virginia as a critical point of welcoming and engaging parents;
 - b. Outlining a statewide IEP system to go into effect in 20 school divisions in Virginia;
 - c. Facilitated IEPs to allow an independent, outside person to run IEP meetings;
 - d. Back to Basics campaign on how to write strong IEPs;
 - e. Creating high quality programs for kids with ASD and Dyslexia. There is an increasing number of students with these disabilities in Virginia.
- C. At the conference, PRC staff attended trainings on inclusion, support of English Learners with disabilities, transition, cyber- bullying and dispute resolution.
- D. PRC staff presented a workshop at the conference: *Empowering Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Parents: How a PRC increases Access to Special Education Information*.