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**Parent Resource Center Report to SEAC  
February 23, 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 January and early February, 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. To date, 128 people have contacted the PRC in February.

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

MONTH	2013-2014	2014-2015	2015-2016	2016-2017
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
September	16	78	139	91
October	18	108	136	119
November	12	124	139	149
December	28	63	70	87
January	79	189	98	172
February	60	102	130	
March	61	112	124	
April	79	91	125	
May	79	100	62	
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)	
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>484</b>	<b>1096</b>	<b>1141</b>	
<b>Percentage Change</b>		<b>+126.4%</b>	<b>+4.1%</b>	

- D. Contact breakdown for January: parents (85), ACPS staff (41), community members (46).
- E. Top disability areas for January: ASD (15), ADHD (12), ID (4)
- F. Top reasons for contacting PRC in January: workshops (104), (IEP/504 (26), community resources (15), support groups (14), PRC resources (12).

**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. *Strategies for Emotional and Behavioral Challenges* was presented on January 25. The workshop was filmed. Forty people attended, and twenty-five evaluations were returned. Each indicated that the attendee found the workshop informative and that it provided helpful strategies. All but one indicated that, overall, the attendees were satisfied with the

presentation. The one evaluation which did not indicate overall satisfaction came from an attendee who found the illustrations on the slides “impossible to read.” Specific comments from the other evaluations included: *“this was a successful and engaging workshop. Parents asked great questions and seemed satisfied with the information shared;”* *“really great tools/methods;”* *“achievable guidance;”* *“would have liked more specific examples of these teaching techniques in action for kids of different ages. At times, a little technical. But, I learned a lot;”* *“all information was good and useful;”* *“I enjoyed the presentation and liked how it was more open and conversational rather than a lecture;”* *“there was a lot of good information presented in a well thought-out manner;”* *“I teach preschool. Didn’t feel the information was tough to transfer to a classroom. To single out students and not give similar treatment to all seems tough. I did find the approach strategies and keeping the teaching times separate from the escalation [sic];”* *“helpful and informative. Would like a presentation for educators;”* *“very clear;”* *“this was incredible. Thank you! Very useful, very encouraging, empowering, practical, useful;”* *“good for parents;”* *“outstanding, valuable event;”* *“more geared towards older children but effective;”* *“strong content and helpful strategies;”* *“excellent information;”* *“very well presented, very encouraging acknowledging that failure sometimes happens;”* *“I would add to tell children your expected behavior before activity begins. i.e. ‘you have so many minutes on the iPad. I expect you to give it to me when the alarm goes off with no begging, screaming, fits. You give it to me and say “thank you””.*

- c. *Understanding the New Medicaid Waivers* was presented by Tia Marsili, Director of Trusts, the Arc of Northern Virginia, on February 15. The workshop was filmed. Twenty-one people attended, and fifteen evaluation forms were returned. Each evaluation indicated that the attendee found the workshop informative, that it provided helpful strategies, and that overall, the attendee was satisfied with the presentation. Specific comments included: *“excellent presentation;”* *“I liked that Tia repeated the questions asked for us to better understand and what is being asked;”* *“very informative;”* *“It’s my first time helps me a lot to have a good guide what’s to do next [sic];”* *“excellent info;”* *“this presentation was excellent. As an ACPS specialized instruction employee who works daily with young families, this information will help me empower families I work with to seek these services. Tia answered*

*questions patiently and was very helpful to all participants. She gave her experience, which helped;" "great presentation. It seems advocacy is so needed. The statistics are depressing;" "it was a great workshop. I learned a lot. Thanks a lot for the efforts you make to raise awareness about the Medicaid waivers;" "it was a good workshop. I got a lot of information. I thank you for this interesting experience."*

- d. *Coping Strategies for Anxious Children*, originally scheduled for Oct. 26, was held on February 22. The workshop was not filmed. Forty-six people attended, and thirty-eight people returned evaluations. Every evaluation indicated that the attendees found the workshop informative. Similarly, every evaluation indicated that it provided helpful strategies, although one evaluation qualified that as providing "some" helpful strategies, and another indicated in the comments section that the attendee would have liked additional strategies. All but one evaluation indicated that, overall, the attendees were satisfied with the presentation, but that one evaluation did not indicate dissatisfaction with the workshop; the question was simply left unanswered. Specific comments included: *"audience participation was great! Examples are great!;" "reinforced a lot of ideas and strategies that I use- even though it's directed more towards parents-it is useful to me as a preschool teacher, in sharing these strategies with my children's parents. They are always asking for ideas to help their child. Thank you;" "muy enriquecedora charla, situaciones reales de nuestra vida. Muchas Gracias (very enriching talk, real situations to our life. Thanks very much);" "This workshop provided a lot of useful information for me to use as a teacher in my 4-year old classroom;" "very informative;" "thank you the workshop give me more information about anxiety and help me how can help kids can be quiet [sic];" "good workshop evaluation and we thank for Ms. Cathy Canfield for that [sic];" "needed more strategies. It would be good to have open mic and just be able to give assist with each situation, to give helpful strategies that's going to work and not affects their own business as a professional[sic];" "good topic. Very relevant for parents and probably needs to be repeated. It can also lead into creating support group that can meet once a month;" "excellent use of clinical examples. Taking audience questions and goals at the beginning was a good way to structure presentation;" "all of the graphics were of white families which isn't reflective of our diverse school. Power point wasn't personalized and updated for this audience;" "wonderful to witness good attendance and*

*audience were engaged. Thank you for this important aspect of teaching.”*

- e. *Why Do They Do That? A Behind the Scenes Look at ADHD* will be presented by Dr. Karin Varblow on March 8.
- f. The PRC has added two additional workshops to the Family Engagement Series for this year: *Special Needs Trusts and Able Accounts: Protecting the Financial Future of Your Child with a Disability*, scheduled for March 29, and *Making the Move to Independent Housing for People with Disabilities*, scheduled for April 26.

## **II. Raising Awareness of PRC/Community Outreach/Transition**

- a. 1/27/17-presentation at JA principal’s coffee re services of the PRC. (JGR)
- b. 1/27/17-meeting with parent liaison at T.C. Williams.(CPD)
- c. 1/30/17 meeting with Jeannie Cummins, Senior Integrated Community Options Specialist, Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services for Virginia, about housing options for people with developmental disabilities. (JGR, CPD)
- d. 2/8/17- planning meeting with Ramsay Parent Liaison and Occupational Therapist about upcoming school based support group meeting scheduled for February 15. (JGR)
- e. 2/13/17-attended registration for City inclusive playgroup for infants and toddlers to provide information about upcoming support group at Lee Center. (JGR)
- f. 2/14/17-meeting with T.C. parent liaison re supporting families of students with disabilities. (CPD)
- g. 2/16/17-meeting with Early Childhood Coordinator and Child Find specialist to discuss additional ways PRC can support Child Find and Early Childhood Special Ed families (JGR)
- h. 2/16/17-conference call re Mason Life Program for students with cognitive disabilities (JGR)
- i. 2/17/17- meeting with MacArthur special education administrator re PRC services and supports available to parents of students with disabilities. (JGR)
- j. 2/23/17-manned table at Minnie Howard Rising High event for parents. (JGR,CPD)

## **III. Support Groups**

- a. Support group for parents of young children receiving special education services Feb. 7-one person attended. Another who had planned to come cancelled due to illness.

- b. Support group for parents of students with moderate to severe disabilities Feb. 8-one parent attended.
- c. School-based monthly support group at Ramsay, Feb. 15-one parent attended.
- d. School-based monthly support group at Maury, Feb. 21-five parents attended.
- e. School-based monthly support group for Spanish-speaking parents of students with disabilities at George Mason is scheduled to have its initial meeting on February 28.
- f. Mt. Vernon monthly support group will start up again on March 14. This group differs from the other school- based groups, in that it is facilitated by school staff and not by PRC staff.

**IV. Library Use**

- a. To date, fifty-three books have been borrowed from the PRC library this school year. One parent reviewed a number of books in the PRC library and then chose to purchase them herself, rather than borrowing them from the library.

**V. Mursion**

- a. The next Mursion coaching session for parents is scheduled for March 13.

**VI. Mail Chimp**

- a. The PRC is now using Mail Chimp as its means of distributing information about upcoming events.

**VII. 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 100 “likes” and 104 people who follow the PRC. In addition, the PRC is on Twitter at LearnwithThePRC.