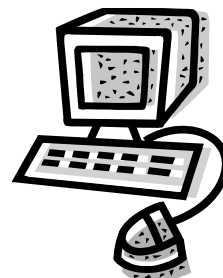


Georgetown ISD Special Education Community Advisory Council (SECAC)

Welcome to the SECAC Website!

The Special Ed Council has recently launched their own website at www.georgetownisd.org/programsandservices/secac.



What will be available?

- Present and past SECAC Newsletters
- SECAC By-laws
- Information about the members of SECAC with contact information
- Agendas and Minutes from the monthly SECAC meetings
- Links to other websites that will keep you up-to-date with all areas of Special Education
- Camping information for students (Spanish & English)
- Waiting Lists all parents must know about (Spanish & English)
- Parent references for many disability related items

Keep checking back as this will be a very active website and we would love to get feedback from you!

Exceptional Georgetown Alliance

At the February 26 Special Education Council Meeting, it was voted unanimously by SECAC members to work in collaboration with the Chisholm Trail Communities Foundation to establish the Exceptional Georgetown Alliance (EGA). The EGA is a nonprofit organization to support persons with disabilities in the Georgetown Community. An EGA Board is being formed and there will be 1 or 2 members of the SECAC sitting on the Board. This is a very exciting time for the Council and the EGA and we hope you will show your support for the many different projects and fundraising events in the future. Watch your mail and e-mail for announcements and remember,



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Exceptional Georgetown Alliance



Together we can make a difference!

SECAC Mission Statement

Our mission is to strive to promote excellence in special education through collaboration and outreach with united voices of family, staff and community.

Welcome Dr. Abbe Boring!

On Thursday, November 8, 2007, the Georgetown ISD Board of Trustees unanimously voted to hire Dr. Abbe Boring as Superintendent/CEO. Dr. Boring's most recent experience is Superintendent/CEO of public schools in Bartow County, Georgia. She also served as chief academic officer and senior advisor to the Superintendent/CEO for the DeKalb County Georgia public schools for three years. Before relocating to Georgia, she served for four years as deputy superintendent for instruction in the public schools of Birmingham, Alabama.

Dr. Boring has extensive and impressive experience in Texas as an educator and administrator. Her Texas tenure spans 17 years and includes experience as an elementary teacher, curriculum writer, assistant principal, principal, interim district superintendent, and district executive director.

Dr. Boring started in Georgetown on January 2, 2008. Below you will find the District Goals that were formally presented to the public at the March 24, 2008 School Board Meeting.

Dr. Boring and Board President Brad Smith

GISD, a School District of Excellence



Goal 1: Exemplary Performance

All GISD students will demonstrate exemplary academic performance.

Goal 2: Prepared Graduates

All students will graduate prepared to transition into post-secondary education or careers.

Goal 3: Quality Staff

All positions will be filled by highly qualified candidates/professionals.

Goal 4: Quality Learning Environments & Facilities

GISD will promote nurturing, safe, and orderly environments and quality facilities for all students.

Goal 5: Positive Perceptions, Relationships, and Collaboration

Enhance and build positive perceptions, relationships and collaboration among community and staff.

Goal 6: Fiscal Accountability & Responsibility

Ensure fiscal accountability and responsibility through strategic alignment and sound stewardship of the district's financial resources.

Goal 7: Organizational and Operational Effectiveness

Improve organizational and operational effectiveness to better support the district's mission and support for the student-teacher relationship.

Texas Assists with Child Care

Earlier this fall, the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS) set out to increase awareness of the dangers of unregulated childcare by kicking off the “Don’t be in the Dark about Child Care” campaign. DFPS staff have developed several resources for parents and family members to use in selecting the safest option for young Texans. All information can be found at the following Internet address: <http://www.dfps.state.tx.us/childcare/dontbeinthedark/promo.asp>.

5 steps to Child Care Solutions

1. Search online for day care providers, 24-hour residential facilities, and adoption agencies and foster care at www.txchildcaresearch.org.
2. Enter your requirements. The search will return a list of providers who report services meeting your specifications, including their locations and phone numbers.
3. Select specific providers you’d like to research. www.txchildcaresearch.org reveals each provider’s licensing history and compliance with minimum health and safety standards.
4. Call 1-866-TX-CHILD toll-free or use www.txchildcaresearch.org to locate the child care resource and referral agency nearest you. These local resource and referral agencies can provide additional information on the programs, costs, availability, and accessibility of the individual providers.
5. Visit the day care or residential facilities you are considering. Interview the caregivers and watch the interaction between the staff and the children. Talk to parents whose children attend. Make sure the provider’s care meets your standards. Once your child is in care, stay involved and keep asking questions.

Thank you to Texas Parent to Parent, www.txp2p.org.



Summer Camps

Our Spring Newsletter is usually reserved for a complete list of summer camps available in our area to students with disabilities. Because of limited space in this issue, the Summer Camp List will be available at our new web site: www.georgetownisd.org/programs/secac, in English and Spanish. If you do not have access to a computer and would like this list sent to you, please contact Dawn Jennings at 943-5000 x6884. Leave your name, address and whether you would like the list in English or Spanish. It will be sent to you immediately!



Person- and Family-Centered Planning

“If you don’t know where you’re going, any road will get you there.”

Person-Centered Planning Can Create a Destination... And Find the Path(s) That Can Lead You/Your Child There

Person-centered planning is a broad term used to describe an intentional, deliberate approach to planning *for and with* the person with a disability, rather than waiting for and fearing the future. It is an *ongoing* process; can any of us truly plan the rest of our lives in one sitting? Because the process is fluid and continuous, it allows for changes in life’s circumstances and the needs of the individual. Those involved in the planning are people who *know and care* about the individual. They ensure that the plan accurately reflects the needs and desires of the individual. This results in a plan that truly works for that individual.

The idea of person-centered planning has evolved over the last 20 years, resulting in a variety of methods. Some of the more recognizable include Personal Futures Planning, MAPS, PATH, and Essential Lifestyle Planning. Different approaches were designed to deal with different issues (challenging behavior, the development of relationships, or gaining more of what matters to the person with the disability), but they all share a common set of beliefs:

- The person at the focus of planning, and those who love the person, are the primary authorities on the person's life direction. The essential questions are: "Who is this person?" and "What community opportunities will enable this person to pursue his or her interests in a positive way?"
- The purpose of person centered planning is learning through shared action.
- Person centered planning aims to change common patterns of community life. Person centered planning stimulates community hospitality and enlists community members in assisting focus people to define and work toward a desirable future.
- Person centered planning requires collaborative action and challenges practices that separate people and perpetuate controlling relationships.
- Honest person centered planning can only come from respect for the dignity and completeness of the focus person.
- Assisting people to define and pursue a desirable future tests one's clarity, commitment and courage.

If thinking about the future for your child is frightening or overwhelming, you’re not alone. The future concerns most parents, even those who don’t live with disability. Person-centered planning can move you (and your child) from the paralysis of fear to an action-oriented plan with hopes and dreams for the future.

<http://www.texasprojectfirst.org/PersonCentPlanning.html>

Did you know??????

Our district has quite a few Special Ed staff members trained in facilitating Person-Centered and Family-Centered Planning. If you feel that this is an area that you would like to explore for your student or family, contact our GISD Transition Coordinator, Susan Upshaw, at 943-5000 x6688 or upshaws@georgetownisd.org. Susan will discuss the specifics with you and help coordinate the initial meeting.



Waiting Lists You Must Know About

Medicaid Waiver Programs are the best long-term help for children and adults with disabilities in Texas! Call NOW to get on the years-long waiting lists!!

Medicaid Waiver Programs - General Information

- Medicaid Waiver Programs have **8 - 10 year waiting lists!**
- Eligibility based on child's income (not the parents).
- Purpose: to keep a person with disabilities living in the community instead of a nursing home or institution.
- Services may include nursing care, attendant care, respite, therapies, adaptive aids, medical equipment, home modifications, service coordination, pre-vocational services, community living supports, supported employment, assistive technology and more.
- Family **MUST** keep their contact information current: call waiting list numbers.
- More information: http://www.dads.state.tx.us/news_info/faqs_fact/index.html.

CLASS (Community Living Assistance Support Services)

- Serves individuals with physical disabilities and related conditions occurring before the age of 21. Individuals with mental retardation may be eligible, but not when the primary diagnoses is MR.
- (877) 438-5658 for information and to get on the waiting list.

MDCP (Medically Dependent Children's Program)

- Serves children and youth under 21 who have significant medical disabilities.
- (877) 438-5658 for information and to get on the waiting list.

HCS (Home and Community-based Services)

- Serves children and adults who have mental retardation and certain related conditions (includes Autism); must meet functional requirements for MHMR group homes.
- For Austin/Travis Co, (512) 483-5800; for other counties, call (512) 794-9268 to find the nearest MHMR center.

CBA (Community Based Alternatives)

- Serves individuals over the age of 21 with physical disabilities, must meet medical necessity for nursing home care.
- For information and to get on the waiting list, call (512) 438-4882.

DB/MD (Deaf-Blind Multiple Disabilities Program)

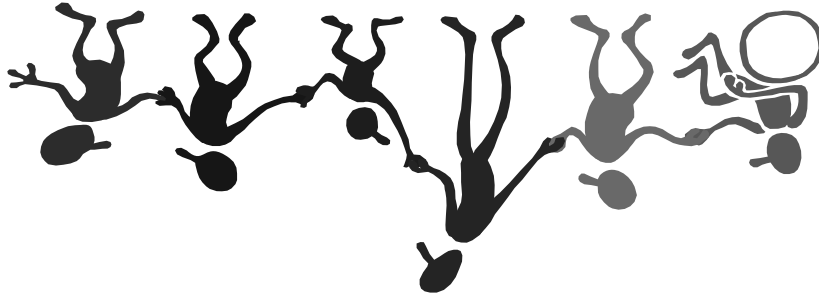
- Serves individuals who are deaf and blind and have additional disabilities, over the age of 18 years; must meet functional eligibility requirements for MR group homes.
- For information and to get on the waiting list call (877) 438-5658.

TxHmL (Texas Home Living)

- Serves children and adults with mental retardation; must meet functional eligibility requirements for MR group homes.
- For Austin/Travis Co. call (512) 483-5800.

Many thanks to Dr. Rosemary Alexander, Austin ISD





Georgetown Independent School District
Special Education Director
603 Lakeway Drive
Georgetown, TX 78628
(512) 943-5000 x 6043

Special Education Community
Advisory Council (SECAC)

SECAC News

Our mission is to strive to promote excellence in special education through collaboration and outreach with united voices of family, staff and community.

SECAC Members:

Parents:

Nancy Brannon
Sheila Cunningham
Kristin Gonzalez
Dede Harper
Anne Hudson
Dawn Jennings
Rita Morgan
Jill O'Neal
Suzanne & Brian Payne
Joy Sansom
Tracy Tucker
Jennifer VanBuren

GISD Staff:

Karen Baker (Sp Ed ARD Facilitator)
Stephanie Blanck (Sp Ed Director)
Tia DeVoll (Sp Ed Teacher)
Beth Farris (Sp Ed Teacher)
Regina Gilchrist (Asst Sp Ed Director)
Annette Jones (AU Behavior Specialist)
Susan Upshaw (Transition Coordinator)

Community Members:

Dr. Sherry Adrian (Southwestern Univ)
Bill Sattler (Georgetown City Council)
Joan Schroeder (ROCK)

We welcome parents, staff and community members who would like the opportunity to share ideas/comments/concerns with our Council or would like to consider membership. SECAC meets on the last Tuesday of every month (except December & July) at the GISD Central Office (603 Lakeway Drive) from 5:30 - 7:00 PM. Please contact Dawn Jennings at jenningsd@georgetownisd.org for more information.