

**SPECIAL EDUCATION**  
**PARENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING**  
**Thursday November 20th, 2025**  
**11:00am - 12:00pm**

## **Welcome and Introductions**

### **Attendees**

#### **PAC Members**

- Kendall Newhouse (Portage)
- Latrieva Boston (Parchment)
- Angela Gross (Kalamazoo Public Schools)

#### **Directors/Administrators/Assistants**

- Angela Telfer (KRESA)
- Pat Simpson (KRESA)
- Shelly Hawthorne (KRESA)
- Anne Gordon (Southern Service Area)
- Molly Ray (Eastern Service Area)
- Rikki Saunders (Central Service Area)

#### **Guests**

- Beth Kohler (Special Education Mediation Services)
- Chad Howard (Administrator, KRESA Transition Services)
- Tasha Harrison (Career Connect Campus, Student Success Coordinator)



## Guest Speakers

- Chad Howard, Administrator, KRESA Transition Services
  - Transition Services provides programs and services for students 18-26 who have not yet obtained diplomas and still have needs related to their preparation for post-school adult life
  - Transition Services has two campuses with about 200 students and 70 staff members
  - Services look different for each student based on their needs and can include help with job skills and work-based learning, independence, community participation and more.
  - As a student enters and goes through high school, the IEP team determines whether or not a student will follow a diploma track or a certificate of completion. Once a child graduates with a diploma, school based services are no longer available, but local districts and KRESA Transition Services help students work with connections to community agencies
  - Students who attend KRESA Transition Services may take school buses to school, but Transition Services also works with Kalamazoo Metro (both the bus system and the Metro Vans) to help students learn those systems for independence. Some students may go directly to work sites
  - [Chad.howard@kresa.org](mailto:Chad.howard@kresa.org) for more info.
- Tasha Harrison, Career Connect Campus, Student Success Coordinator
  - Tasha works with special populations including IEPs, 504s, Multilingual, Foster Care
  - Students are bused from their local district, or they can drive themselves to the Career Connect Campus and the offsite regional or dual enrollment classes under Career and Technical Education
  - Students do not receive a traditional letter grade, but rather a rating based on progression of skills. Skill ratings are translated into letter grades for transcripts
  - Tasha is working to increase access and opportunities for special populations
  - Tasha works with local districts to support students. For classes through Kalamazoo Valley Community College, Tasha helps families





access the Student Services to apply for accommodations that are available there.

- All CCC classes have an instructor as well as a technical assistant.
- EFA teachers receive accommodation information for their students at the beginning of the year, and Tasha will help support their administrator if issues or questions arise to get those addressed or supported elsewhere.
- Parents are invited to tour during Orientation at the beginning of the year and also during conferences. In the spring, there will also be visits set up specifically for students with IEPs and 504s to understand what is available at the CCC.
- Many CCC classes have math, reading, and writing requirements in addition to the hands-on portions so it's important to understand the requirements when making choices about what might be appropriate for each student. Tasha can help parents understand those requirements.
- Most often CTE classes start during 11<sup>th</sup> grade, but there are some 10<sup>th</sup> graders as well.
- There are 25 programs and each has 24 spots in the morning session and 24 spots in the afternoon. There are waitlists for some programs.
- Applications open December 1<sup>st</sup>. The application shows interest, but families would still have the opportunity to decline if they decide it doesn't work. Applications are on the KRESA website. Applications are put in in December for the following school year. Spots are prioritized for 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> graders. All programs are currently one year, but there is a work-based learning option for the second year if students are interested. CCC has work-based learning coordinators to help with that decision and placement.
- Students can do one class junior year and another senior year.
- Tasha's email is [tasha.harrison@kresa.org](mailto:tasha.harrison@kresa.org) if anyone has additional questions



## Future Meeting Agenda Items

- Need Speakers for January and May
  - Use of behavior supports (January)
    - What does behavior support look like in elementary vs. high school
    - Do behavior supports vary based on district?
- Ability to access extracurricular programs (already discussed)
- At January meeting, get ideas for May
- March meeting is the PAC Awards preparation

## Directors Reports

Molly Ray - Eastern Service area

- Work-Based Learning – unpaid but on-the-job training and many students do end up with paying jobs following their work-based learning. Some districts provide adult support
  - Sites inside high schools to start building skills that could help them prepare for the outside work experiences
  - Starts as early as 9<sup>th</sup> grade
  - For students who will be going to KRESA Transition Services, districts work closely with the KRESA team to help ease the change
  - Consider students' preferences and interests when planning placements and experiences
  - Length of time is based on semester/trimester schedule and then have the option to change job sites. They can do more than one year and can change jobs or stay at the job site based on preferences and needs.

Anne Gordon - Southern Service Area

- Same as ESA – job sites in the community including Celebration Cinema and Zeigler motorsports. About 45 students currently working in community locations and others working at placements in the high schools



Rikki Saunders - Central Service Area

- Working on Revamping their systems
- Placements in High Schools as well as community based locations
- 400+ students who attend the CCC including around 100 that have disabilities. KPS has assigned teacher consultant support for their students attending CCC to help with accommodations
- Staff attend conferences for additional learning and they are excited about doing some place-based learning to increase learning opportunities in the community and public spaces including outdoor spaces
- Connect students to different community resources that might match their interests
- KPS Transition Services located at Phoenix HS that helps students still working on their high school diploma or those who have a certificate of completion. Those who work for a diploma would be receiving their diploma from Phoenix, which is an alternative program, so has different graduation requirements. Some students have left school and then returned. They will support students up until 26 if needed.

Shelly Hawthorne - KRESA

- Yearly monitoring activities to ensure transition plans are compliant
- Alvin Littel, Transition Coordinator, oversees the monitoring and then works with districts to help them improve in targeted areas and improve their transition plans to help improve outcomes as students end their school careers, whether that's in high school or through transition services

Angela Telfer - KRESA

- Chad explained our services through KRESA and Angela supports that program
- If you think your student may be a candidate for KRESA transition services in the future, Chad can help set up visits or tours to get more info and understanding



## Additional Items

- March meeting is an in-person dinner meeting where the team reviews the PAC Award nominees and decides on winners. The meeting is held at KRESA Service Center. Kristin will be working on updating the nomination form and sharing that with everyone.
  - What can be done to get more nominations from districts that don't usually have many nominations, like some of our smaller districts?
    - What things have been done in the past? KRESA communication team has made social media posts and info; posted on KRESA website; shared with local districts so they can share the information however they wish;
    - Kristin can monitor how we are doing with nominations for each district and then reach out to those districts that might be lacking to do some targeted support with those districts and their parent groups
    - QR Codes on Flyers during Parent/Teacher Conferences? Will depend on when those are scheduled if they fall within nomination window
    - Put links or info in Parent Newsletters?
- Future Meetings – Instead of paying for a Zoom subscription, future meetings will be held via Microsoft Teams which KRESA already has access to without additional fees

## Meeting Adjourned