

MARYLAND ASSOCIATION OF NONPUBLIC SPECIAL EDUCATION FACILITIES

Inside This Issue...

- 2 From Our President
- 3 Celebrating Student Success
- 5 School News
- 9 Of Note



Maryland Association of Nonpublic Special Education Facilities

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MANSEF CONFERENCE DRAWS 1800 TO THE BALTIMORE CONVENTION CENTER - DEBBIE PHELPS HEADLINES

Friday, November 1, 2013 at the Baltimore Convention Center, Deborah Phelps, educator and motivational speaker, addresses the crowd of 1800 special educators at the biannual MANSEF Conference. Ms. Phelps is widely recognized as an innovative, energetic and talented master teacher with more than three decades of teaching experience. The proud mother of three children, she galvanized the audience and inspired them to value the teaching profession.

This one day of professional development provided an excellent opportunity for special educators, administrators, direct care staff, parents and advocates working with children with special needs to gain valuable training and spend time with colleagues in the field. We express our thanks to the Maryland State Department of Education and our public school colleagues who helped support the day's festivities. We had over 60 workshops, many focused on the implementation of the Common Core State Standards. We also thank the many vendors who participated: Autism Spectrum Alliance, College Living Experience, Envision Technology, Family Matters of Greater Washington, Fitness for Health, Goucher College, Joseph Gorin and Associates, Loyola

University, Partlow Insurance, Melmark, Morgan Stanley, Staffing Plus, TAMAH, League for People with Disabilities, The DEMOS Group, Therapy Source and Weinfeld Education Group. The day was a huge success.







A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Dear Colleagues,

As I welcomed over 1800 attendees to the 25th MANSEF conference, my immediate thought was WOW! Now this might not seem profound but certainly appropriate as I considered the impact of these individuals. These 1800 attendees serve 3500 students at 93 schools and over 16 counties, including many out of state students. These 1800 attendees are a part of the continuum of services for special education students who often come to the MANSEF schools after struggling in other settings. These 1800 attendees represent the many individuals who work hard to support our students' success. We shared the moment with our partners from MSDE, Marcella Franczkowski and Cynthia Amirault as well as former State Superintendent and friend of MANSEF, Nancy Grasmick. They represent the many collaborative MANSEF partnerships working together to provide our students the best education for their special needs.

WOW was also appropriate for the conference itself that provided an opportunity to celebrate, showcase our students and learn together. We were entertained by students from the Harbour School who demonstrated their talents in two separate performances. The Children's Guild delighted us with a Michael Jackson rendition that had everyone cheering out loud. Lynn Canterbury created the power point that showcased our MANSEF student celebrations. Not only was I impressed with the student performances but also with the obvious caring and support of the faculty and staff as they guided them through the show.

Debbie Phelps, mother of Michael Phelps, and a long time educator spoke of teachers who made a difference in her life. What was obvious in her motivational talk was that the teachers she remembered, who changed her life, who helped her grow, identified her talents, took a personal interest in her learning and ultimately believed she would succeed. There were lessons for all of us in her inspirational words.

No event is successful without commitment and hard work. Thank you to Dorie Flynn for her leadership in making the MANSEF conference a special day. Thank you to Alison Hunt, conference chairperson, and the conference committee who did an amazing job of selecting the presenters, organizing the student exhibits and attending to the many details necessary for a successful event. The art show coordinated by Anne Luers and educational festival coordinated by Leslie Fabian showcased our students' talents. Thank you to the presenters who made the day a worthwhile learning experience. Additional thanks to Brooke Wesley who coordinated the basket raffle that raised over \$1,000 for the Michael Cardin Scholarship Fund and the Kennedy Krieger Color Guard.

During this season of giving thanks, I am thankful that MANSEF serves as the collective voice and essential resource for the non-public special education community to champion the continuum of services for students with special needs.

Kindest regards,

Patricia Ritter

MANSEF President

MANSEF CELEBRATES STUDENT SUCCESS



youth in Transition

In 2011, **Nicholas A.** came to the Youth In Transition School (YIT). When he initially enrolled, he was apathetic about school, as he believed it was too late for him to earn a diploma. Upon reviewing credits with him, the YIT staff noticed his outlook was much brighter. YIT custom-designed a schedule for him, helping him meet any and all requirements needed to complete his high school diploma as well as pursue his passion to become a mechanic.

Nick graduated from Youth In Transition School in 2013. He went on to the Jiffy Lube Certification Program and passed the test through the **Jiffy Lube University**. He is now certified in Orientation & Safety, as a Courtesy Technician, and as an Upper & Lower Bay Technician.

At YIT, Nick was a top student in the Auto class, developed coping skills, and gained job experience. According to his Mother, YIT gave Nick a second chance and due to his relationship with his automotive teacher, he truly became a "go-getter." Nick has returned home, holds a full time job, and is working towards receiving his driver's license.

Villa Maria School

On Tuesday, September 3, 2013, the **Timonium Optimist Club** recognized **Sam Brubaker** with its **Student of the Month Award.** Sam, along with his parents, Charles and Christine Brubaker, and his therapist, enjoyed dinner and an opportunity to meet club members before the awards ceremony.

Sam is an 8th grade student at the Villa Maria Dulaney Valley campus. Sam was recognized for the tremendous social, emotional, and academic progress he has made since coming to the school. Sam is a member of the Student Council and the school's softball team. He is a talented artist and recently has started writing stories. Outside of school, Sam stays busy with his ice hockey team. **The Baltimore Saints.**

Sam was a natural choice for this honor, given his recent successes and care for others. The Optimist Creed challenges us to "Forget the mistakes of the past and to press on to the greater achievements of the future" and to "Wear a cheerful countenance at all times and give every living creature you meet a smile." This epitomizes Sam and why school staff chose him for this special recognition.

Above left: National Director of Young Marines, Mike Kessler, student Bob Nobles and 1st Sgt. Vivian Price-Butler

Far right: Student Bob Nobles and Indy Car Driver Zach Venach

Kennedy Krieger High School

Central Maryland Young Marines

from Kennedy Krieger High School program received an invitation to attend the Baltimore Grand Prix on Sunday, September 1, 2013. The invitation included free passes to all events, seeing several awesome cars and an opportunity to go into the pits! **Bob Nobles**, a Young Marine Sargent at the high school and his family attended with **1st Sgt. Vivian Price-Butler**.

While at the race, Bob, a senior at Kennedy Krieger High School had the opportunity to meet Indy Car driver 19 year old **Zach** "**Ziggy" Venach.** The National Young Marines have partnered with Venach, an honorary Young Marine.



The Foundation School of Montgomery County

Therapy Dogs International to bring in pet therapy teams The Foundation School of **Montgomery County has** contracted with Therapy Dogs International to bring in pet therapy teams to augment the clinical services elementary/middle students receive.

The dogs and their handlers have taught students how to properly greet a dog, give commands, do tricks, and give treats and positive reinforcement. Students read stories to the dogs and learn about the training that therapy dogs receive. Students have learned to be assertive by standing tall when giving commands and the importance of self-control.

We hope to replicate this very successful program in our Largo school this school year.



Schoolyard Habitat project grows successfully

> SCHOOLYARD HABITAT

Students and staff were pleasantly surprised by

Welcome to our Schoolyard Habitat

the amazing growth that took place within our habitat during the summer break. Our butterfly and vegetable garden exploded with color. Crayfish, frogs, water-spiders, and fish found a new home in our pond. Our students can't wait to go outside and see what new and exciting growth has occurred.

While it appears to be an amazing, over-night occurrence, our habitat has been evolving over the past five years. It began when biology teacher, Kate Horter, desired to have an outdoor science lab for our students. Our vision for a schoolyard habitat was born as students and staff developed a business plan to support it. Soon after, long-time staff member **Beverly Goering** attended a Schoolyard Habitat workshop at the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Additional support and guidance from Karen Kelly Mullin, Principal Consultant with the Willow Oak Group, LLC, turned our dream into a reality.

High Road Academy's Schoolyard Habitat provides hands-on classes that encourage students to be mindful of their environment. Students are not just reading about wildlife, they are creating homes for wildlife within our Schoolyard Habitat. Our habitat projects include a greenhouse, pond, fountain, pallet-vegetable gardens and a butterfly garden. The habitat provides food, water and shelter for a variety of birds, amphibians, reptiles, small mammals and other wildlife. Our students not only have the opportunity to learn about wildlife and the environment, but they can also conduct scientific experiments without even leaving the school grounds.



The Forbush Therapelytic Preschool

On July 1, 2013, the students from The Forbush Therapeutic Preschool at Towson were delighted to explore their newly finished playground addition, which includes a beautiful jungle gym and large, shaded bike path.

Students love the sensory input they receive when they play the bells attached to the jungle gym and speed down the slide. They

New playground shines in the sun

pedal or jog their way around the path, practicing

their gross motor skills while honing their abilities to yield to classmates and wait for a turn. We are looking forward to watching our students run, jump, climb, slide, and swing for years to come!

The Forbush School at Glyndon

Helping Students Make Healthy Choices

We had a busy summer at the Glyndon campus. In addition to the regular academic & CTE programming, there were several special events:

"Survivor Forbush" is a series of team-building activities. Teams were made of students varying from grade 3 through 8. Students worked collaboratively throughout the day, resulting in improved self-esteem and a sense of unity throughout the program.

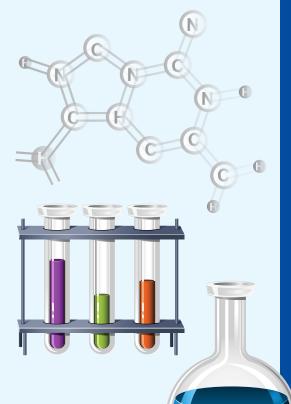
"Field Day" events were held for both the Primary and Secondary divisions. Students competed in fitness activities and organized games. Everyone had fun showcasing their skills and team spirit.

The 2nd Annual Science Fair was held August 9. Sheppard Pratt administrators put on their lab coats and judged over 40 projects from students in grades 2-12. Ribbons were awarded in many categories for students who demonstrated knowledge of science and the scientific

method. Parents were captivated by the multi-media presentations created by the students and were quite impressed with the quality of the projects and the maturity of the presenters.

The 4th Anniversary Ice Cream Social on August 9 was a treat for everyone. Families and staff enjoyed ice cream, watermelon, face-painting and outdoor games. A fine time was had by all.

In keeping with our "Healthier Life Style" Initiative for both staff and students, over the summer, the Autism program worked with the Carpentry and Horticulture teachers and built a vegetable and herb garden. There is also a one-mile course marked on campus, and staff and students are encouraged to use it daily. Classes will be challenging each other to see who can walk more miles after lunch.



Hannah More School

Hannah More School and Forbush School at Glyndon team up to meet students' needs

Hannah More School arranged to send its Spanish Instructor to Forbush School at Glyndon for one period a day so Forbush students can receive foreign language. In another partnership, Forbush sends a support staff person, along with a student, to Hannah More for two periods a day to participate in the automotive trades curriculum. Forbush staff report that this has helped the student to be more successful in other parts of their program.

In the true sense of the word "teamwork," Hannah More and Forbush School at Glyndon are working together to share resources to meet the needs of the students they serve.

SI USTED HABLA ESPAÑOL?

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Kennedy Krieger School - Fairmount

New school year kicks into gear with visit from Indy car drivers

The students at the Kennedy Krieger School Fairmount Program raced into the new school year with a visit from Indy Car drivers from the Grand Prix of Baltimore.

The Kennedy Krieger Institute partnered with an organization called **Racing for Kids**. It's a charity involving the **Indy Family Foundation** and **Riley Children's Hospital** in Indianapolis, started by former Indy Car driver and team owner **Robbie Buhl**. As part of it, Indy Car drivers visit children with medical or developmental issues in an effort to make a difference. This was the second year for the partnership.

Nine drivers were at the school. **Hunter Reay**, **Scott Dixon**, and their colleagues met students, signed autographs, and answered the many questions the students had prepared. Racing for Kids also arranged for a car to be at the school. Students had the opportunity to sit behind the wheel of a real formula one race car. The day brought many smiles and a deeper connection to a major Baltimore event.

The Katherine Thomas School

Two new Programs offer individualized Attention

The Katherine Thomas School (serving students with moderate to severe language and learning disabilities and/or mild to moderate autism) is offering two new programs for students who need intense. individualized attention. The **STRIDE Program** is for students in grades K-5, and the EXCEL **Program** is for students in grades 9–12. They are designed to meet the needs of students who also display difficulties in other areas (perspective-taking, engagement, attention, regulation, group process and social interactions), and who require intensive support to succeed academically and socially. Interdisciplinary teams serve classrooms with a goal of successfully transferring students into less restrictive environments.

6 Stepping Stones November 2013

Villa Maria School

Villa Maria Students' Gardening Project

This summer, as part of their therapeutic groups, Villa Maria School at Pot Spring students completed various community service projects. Therapists Cat Palanker and Jesse Fask led these projects, which allowed students to practice social skills such as cooperation, teamwork, turn taking, and conflict resolution strategies. The children expressed pride in completing these tasks and in helping others.

In addition, students wrote letters to our active duty military personnel stationed overseas, conducted a car wash to raise funds to improve the school's front garden, and created and planted a front garden, improving the school's curb appeal greatly.

The children raised \$200 through the car wash for this project, and also received a gift for special projects from Kevin Keegan, Director of Child and Family Services, a generous donation from the Timonium Home Depot, and mulch provided by the Environmental Services department. With these resources, the children were able to plant a variety of flowering shrubs and perennials, install edging, and create a garden path using recycled rubber stepping stones.

John Steurnagle, Supervisor of Environmental Services, expressed gratitude to the children for their hard work. He shared that he was impressed at how their project looked professional. To thank them, he gave them a "Welcome" flag with a solar light to greet visitors day and night to the school. He also provided a sign that reads "Landscaping Project Completed by Villa Maria Students," so everyone will know about the hard work the children invested in their school.

We are all proud of the excellent work the students have done for their school and community this summer! We also know that the lessons they learned in caring for others will continue to bloom, just like their garden, for many, many years to come.





New swings bring smiles

Harbour School

New Playground Brings Smiles and Therapeutic Benefits

A new playground was installed over the August break at The Harbour School at Annapolis. The lower and middle school students really enjoyed playing on the new equipment their first day back. The lower school, middle school, and occupational therapy teams designed the playground, which is completely accessible. Equipment was selected to coordinate with developing motor and fine motor skills of students.

School pups win Restaurant Contest

Candi and Snap, The Harbour School therapy puppies, won a Dog Days of Summer contest at an Owings Mills restaurant. Their photo was "liked" more than any other contestants. Candi and Snap have won a gift card to the restaurant, which they will be able to use in the restaurant's outdoor seating area. Candi & Snap

Patriotic Parade Kicks off School Year

Each year The Harbour School at Annapolis and The Harbour School at Baltimore hold a patriotic parade at the beginning of the school year in July. Students create floats with very limited supplies. Floats must adhere to

the theme for the year. At the Baltimore campus, this year's theme was Celebrate Your Independence. The judges included Dr. Jacobs, Vicky Almond, Chairperson of the Baltimore County Council, State Senator Delores Kelly and Owings Mills Times reporter, Norma Bosley. The top prize was won by Ms. Wenrich's high school homeroom.

Transition Team Receives Governor's Volunteer Service Certificate

The Transition Team at The Harbour School at Baltimore received a Governor's Volunteer Service Certificate for extraordinary volunteer service at Maryland Public Television. Our students have provided many hours of volunteer service at Maryland Public Television, and we look forward to continuing our relationship with the station. Kristin Cook of MPT nominated the Transition staff. Volunteer job opportunities are part of the sequence of work experiences for all Harbour School students.

Students Construct new Storage Shed

Landscaping and woodshop classes have completed construction of a new storage shed. They added electric, sealed the floor, installed gutters and built shelving for tools and equipment in the shed. The new storage shed replaced a much older shed that the students took down. Participants learned useful construction skills in completing this project.

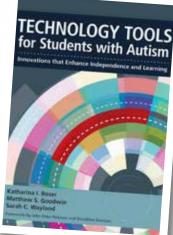






lyymount Staff Contribute to new book for students with Autism

lvymount staff, Monica Adler Werner, Kate Nagle, Chris Bendel and Bonnie Beers contributed to the newly published book, Technology Tools for Students with Autism. The lyymount team wrote the chapter: Bringing a School Up to Speed: Experiences and Recommendations for Technology Implementation. The book, edited by lyymount parent Sarah Wayland, focuses on the great promise that technology offers for helping students with autism learn, communicate, and function effectively in the modern world. It provides an in-depth guided tour of technologies that support learners with autism to fully



Cover of new book

participate in their classroom and community, with critical guidance on integrating with the universal design for learning framework and creating effective professional development.

Staff and students appear in OSSE-sponsored Training Film "The Best Me I Can Be" "The Best Me I Can Be" is a film that highlights the efforts of D.C. students, parents and schools to increase the involvement of youth with disabilities in their IEPs, and prepare them to take a more active role in planning their futures. Ivymount School was one of five local schools (and the only non-public school) that participated in the filming and production.

lvymount Transition Specialists Amy Alvord, Sharon Nickolaus, and Kathryne Carter were filmed working with three students and sharing their perspectives on the importance and

> success of involving them in their IEP planning early on. Ivymount Post-High School Students Chanel Davis, Tony Scott, and Nathan Taylor were featured sharing their unique IEP goals and plans using technology and supports such as PowerPoint, iPads, and other strategies.

The film was debuted at the Kennedy Center on September 27, and received a standing ovation by education stakeholders including DCPS and OSSE leadership. "The Best Me I Can Be" and other resources will soon be available at www.ossesecondarytransition.org.



At the debut of "The Best Me I Can Be"





Medical-Legal Partnerships (MLPs)

Improving the health and quality of life of children with disabilities requires not only medical intervention, but also supports related to social, educational, and environmental demands. Clinicians serving individuals with disabilities are often the first to recognize environmental factors that affect health outcomes. Yet many of the problems with the greatest impact on the health of these children are, in fact, legal problems (e.g., denial of public benefits and failure to provide an appropriate educational program). The need for legal assistance in resolving these issues has created a new interface between medicine and law, one in which advocates and attorneys have become vital members of the new interdisciplinary healthcare team through medical-legal partnerships (MLPs).

A growing number of these MLPs have made legal care part of quality, basic healthcare, and have successfully integrated advocates and attorneys into the healthcare team. The medicallegal partnership model, which began at Boston Medical Center in 1993, has been adopted by 282 healthcare institutions across the country. Advocates and attorneys in medical-legal partnerships work with healthcare professionals to provide legal care at the patient, clinic, and systemic levels. They work with clinicians to recognize and address health-harming legal needs such as poor housing conditions or a denial of services to which a patient is legally entitled. Medical-Legal Partnerships strengthen the ability of clinical practices to respond to chronic legal problems incorporating advocacy tools into the clinical model. In addition, they work to leverage the twin expertise of health and legal professionals to improve local, state, and federal laws and regulations that impact the health of vulnerable populations.

Project HEAL (Health, Education, Advocacy, and Law) is a community-based program of the Maryland Center for Developmental Disabilities at Kennedy Krieger Institute in Baltimore. Despite the national MLP movement, Project HEAL remains the only comprehensive MLP in Maryland. Project HEAL exclusively serves children with intellectual disabilities, developmental disabilities, and mental health concerns in matters specifically related to the child's disability (e.g., special education matters, Supplemental Security Income appeals, and simple family law matters).

Since its inception in 2005, Project HEAL advocates and attorneys have provided confidential and comprehensive advocacy and legal services to thousands of patients through a

multifaceted approach. Services include representation (i.e., attorneyclient relationship in a civil legal matter); limited representation (i.e., brief advice, document review, information and resources, pro bono referrals); case consultations with healthcare professionals, trainees, and educators; professional training for healthcare professionals, trainees, and educators; community trainings for consumers and families; community outreach; mentoring; and legislative advocacy.

Access to the vast knowledge of Project HEAL advocates and attorneys has been invaluable to the clinicians at Kennedy Krieger Institute and beyond. In eight years, Project HEAL attorneys have provided 1,600 case consultations to healthcare professionals. Project HEAL attorneys have also reached 1.575 healthcare professionals through more than 75 professional trainings addressing a variety of civil legal topics, including special

education law, public benefits, guardianship and less restrictive alternatives to guardianship, and discipline for students with disabilities. The high demand for trainings and consultation

PBIS Recognizes MANSEF Schools

The Every year, PBIS Maryland recognizes schools that implement the critical features of PBIS with fidelity. Schools that are recognized have demonstrated a culture that emphasizes the four integrated elements of PBIS: 1) data decision making; 2) measurable outcomes; 3) research-based best practices; 4) and systems that efficiently and effectively support implementation of these practices. Academic and behavioral improvements are reviewed as indicators of student outcomes. There are three levels of recognition: Bronze, Silver and Gold. The recipients of PBIS recognition last year for MANSEF include:

Arrow Fair Meadow – Gold Frost School - Bronze Gateway School - Bronze Forbush Glyndon – Gold **Jefferson at Finan** – Gold Kennedy Krieger - Bronze St. Elizabeth School - Gold The Children's Guild -Baltimore - Bronze The Children's Guild -**Prince George** – Gold

Congratulations to all of our MANSEF schools!



MANSEF on the Move

MANSEF recently exhibiting at the Military Child Care Coalition Two million American children have been affected by the challenges of military deployment since 2001. For most this includes repetitive separation from parents and other loved ones, and for many it includes learning to live the "new normal" necessitated by injury, illness and loss. These children reside in every community in America. Children whose parents are active in any of the branches of the military often have a rather nontraditional educational experience. These children transfer schools often and sometimes attend school overseas. Although military children may not be educated in the U.S., they are still entitled to a Free, Appropriate Public Education (FAPE).



MANSEF Executive Director Dorie Flynn With U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan



Medical-Legal Partnerships (MLPS) continued from page 9

with Project HEAL staff suggests that in an effort to meet the complex needs of their patients, healthcare professionals desire and benefit from resources on social, educational, and occupational legal issues affecting individuals with disabilities.

Through access to Project HEAL advocates and attorneys, clinicians and families can more effectively navigate the complex systems in which individuals with disabilities live, work, and learn. Between 2005 and 2013, Project HEAL attorneys have represented over 480 low-income families and children with disabilities, with 93 percent of the cases involving special education matters. The incorporation of advocacy and legal services directly into the pediatric clinical setting provides an innovative and efficient mechanism to improve outcomes for children with disabilities, especially for those families who might not otherwise have access to legal services. Legal advocacy within the clinical setting ensures that comprehensive recommendations are implemented effectively in the home, school, and community, further contributing to the overall health and improved quality of life of the children and families we serve.

This article was written by Alison Zisser, PhD, a post-doctoral fellow within the Department of Behavioral Psychology at Kennedy Krieger Institute, who volunteered more than 90 hours with Project HEAL.

For more information about medical-legal partnerships, please visit the National Center for Medical-Legal Partnership at http://www.medical-legalpartnership.org/

For more information about Project HEAL, please call 443-923-4416.

On October 26, 2013 MANSEF exhibited at the *Transitioning Youth Resource Fair* at Montgomery College in Rockville. Montgomery County Executive Isiah Leggett stopped by for a visit with Executive Director Dorie Flynn.





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Above: Catholic Charities team Left: Senator Ben Cardin's team Right: Deborah Phelps, Michael Phelps and Hilary Phelps

Legislative Update

MANSEF supported House Bill 1161 Establishing the Commission on Special Education Access and Equity. The commission must study the extent to which parents and guardians of students with disabilities are made aware of their rights under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and State law and regulations relating to children with disabilities and potential ways to improve the awareness of these rights.

The commission must also study disparities and potential methods for eliminating any disparities based on race, national origin, and limited English proficiency (LEP) in the following areas:

- knowledge of and access to special education services;
- rights under IDEA;
- access to and participation in Individualized Education Program (IEP) mediation and appeals; and
- access to and participation in free and reduced-price meals.

MANSEF Executive Director Dorie Flynn at the Bill Signing with Delegate Al Carr, Also, the commission must study the effects of workload, caseload, and paperwork requirements related to the special education process on the ability of educators to provide a free and appropriate public education, and potential methods for mitigating these factors. Further, the commission must study concerns about equity between the parties in special education due process hearings and potential methods for improving the process, the State and local costs of all proposals considered or recommended by the commission, and any other issues related to access and equity in the provision of special education services.



Montogomery County District 18

MANSEF is committed to creating optimum educational opportunities in the least restrictive environment for all Maryland children with disabilities through: ADVOCACY, NETWORKING, COLLABORATION and INFORMATION/RESOURCES.



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