



MID-COUNTY CITIZENS ADVISORY BOARD

Isiah Leggett
County Executive

Ana L. van Balen
Director

November 24, 2014

Council President Rice
Montgomery County Council
100 Maryland Avenue, 6th floor
Rockville, Maryland 20850

Subject: Rebidding Process – Before and After School Child Care at MCPS Facilities

Dear President Rice:

It has recently come to the Mid-County Citizens Advisory Board's (MCCAB's) attention that regulations on the rebidding process for before and after school child care at Montgomery County Public School (MCPS) facilities are currently being revised. At the request of some of our board members who have shared concerns from their respective communities, we have reviewed and discussed the proposed regulations and would like to offer to the County Council information on these issues and recommendations for consideration.

During our analysis of the guidelines, we found that while the proposed language allows principals to individualize the rebidding process based on their respective school's needs, we are concerned that too much control and discretion would be granted to the principals over the selection process. This is potentially detrimental to the overall strengthened system that the regulations seek to achieve. In addition to this primary concern, we have outlined some specific matters regarding the proposed regulations which we ask you to consider as you move forward:

- We suggest that a MCPS administrator or office made responsible for the contracted services would be in a better and more informed position to help in child care provider selection, contract negotiations, and program administration throughout MCPS facilities. In addition, a single administrator or office would facilitate administrative consistency throughout MCPS, greater transparency and oversight, and promote parental involvement.

- Include parents in the selection committee and process. Currently, parent input is not required in the proposed guidelines, leaving the potential for parents who are important stakeholders to be left out of the process. In general, one could argue that parents know what is best for their children and should be included in designing guidelines that may impact the selection of quality child care.
- Establish uniformity of selection criteria for child care providers. Currently, the criteria for selection of a child care provider are not clearly identified and could be inconsistent among different schools.
- Establish a uniform evaluation process to be followed by all MCPS after a provider is selected. There is currently no periodic evaluation process to determine if the current child care provider is adequately serving the school's needs, and there are no related standards specified.
- Implement an appeals process for child care providers not selected by a school.
- Address issues of special needs and low income students. How will the child care companies address children with special needs or those from low income families?
- Establish rules and procedures for parents to file complaints against a child care provider, and establish rules and procedures to ensure timely follow-up.
- Conduct the re-selection process more often than the proposed seven years that establishes a more competitive process and promotes continuous quality improvements.
- Establish an annual report card of each child care provider to assess performance and identify opportunities for improvement.

The MCCAB realizes the complexity and importance of these proposed regulations and appreciates your consideration of the issues and recommendations contained in this letter. This is a matter that affects all children attending before and after school child care programs in our public schools.

We thank you in advance for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kieran McHargue", followed by a horizontal line extending to the right.

Kieran McHargue, Chair
Mid-County Citizen's Advisory Board