

Montgomery County Council:

Working parents need Child Care and our center has excellent procedures to keep children and staff safe.

This is to provide feedback on the County Executive Order relative to Item 6b. Child Care. The order, as written, creates an untenable position for all child care centers in the state. By not allowing schools to return to COMAR regulations on room (Group) size but mandating that they must return to COMAR regulations on student to teacher ratios the council will inadvertently create a situation where centers must DISENROLL families.

The proposed Executive Order will force a cap of 15 people in a classroom which is currently operating at a 14:1 ratio. With the return to COMAR ratios, the centers will be forced to add a second teacher to the classrooms which will then force at least 1 child to be DISENROLLED in every classroom. Conversely, the centers, who are already under significant financial strain, could decide not to add a 2nd teacher and absorb that cost but to instead DISENROLL 4 students and operate at the COMAR required 10:1 ratio.

This situation simply cannot be permitted. I encourage the council to adapt the same return to standard COMAR regulations that the entire state is returning to both in group size and in student to teacher ratios. Our center, The Goddard School in Gaithersburg, has never closed its doors throughout the COVID crisis. They operated as an EPCC Center for the state to serve Essential Personnel. They have implemented extensive sanitizing protocols and their safety record is excellent. No children have been diagnosed with COVID throughout throughout the 8 months of this pandemic.

I oppose the proposed Executive Order because it will put families' child care situation at risk with no evidence or information indicating that it is merited.

Sincerely,  
Jennifer Cole