

# **Montgomery County Commission on Child Care**



## **Annual Report**

**2022-2023**

**Montgomery County, MD**

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# The Commission on Child Care

## Vision

Access to high-quality, affordable child care for all Montgomery County families.

## Mission

To advise the County Executive and County Council on the development of government policies, programs and services that enhance community support for high-quality, affordable and accessible child care.”

## Purpose

Sections 10A-4 and 10A-5 of the Montgomery County Code provides authority for the Commission on Child Care to “to advise the County Executive and the County Council on the development of government policies, programs and services that enhance community support for high-quality, affordable and accessible child care.”

## Meetings

The full Commission meets on the fourth Wednesday of the month at 6:30 pm. The CCC takes a summer recess during the months of July and August and reconvenes in September. All meetings are hosted virtually via Microsoft TEAMS with the exception of the Annual Planning Retreat which was hosted in person in June. In compliance with the Open Meetings Act, all meetings are open to the general public.

A significant portion of the Commission’s work is accomplished through the Executive, Programmatic Issues, Public Policy, and Membership Committees. Volunteers from the general public are invited to assist the committees. Committee meetings take place on the fourth Wednesday of the month as a part of the full commission meeting.

A meeting schedule for the Commission on Child Care can be located at this [link](#). The Microsoft TEAMS virtual meeting links can be found on the [Montgomery County Calendar](#).

## Membership

The Commission has 17 voting members and six to eight non-voting members appointed by the County Executive and confirmed by the County Council. Membership includes parents, center and family child care providers, and representatives from the business community, general public, and government agencies with interests in child care. The Commission is supported through staff effort from the Montgomery County Department of Health and Human Services.

### Commission Year 2022-2023 Membership

#### Voting Members

- Dr. Gearline Bryan, Representative, Business and General Public
- L'Ornya Bowie, Representative, Business and General Public
- Tracey Clay, Representative, Child Care
- Allison Fialkov, Representative, Parent
- Elka Forbes, Representative, Child Care
- Brandon Howard, Representative, Business and General Public
- Jennifer Penrose, Representative, Parent
- Tara Phillips, Representative, Child Care
- Nagwa Rizk, Representative, Business and General Public
- Lesley Romanoff, Representative, Child Care

#### Non-Voting Members

Jennifer Arnaiz, Montgomery County Department of Health and Human Services  
William Polman, Montgomery County Community Use of Public Facilities  
Vacant, Montgomery County Planning Board  
Laurie Moran, Maryland State Department of Education, Office of Child Care  
Yvonne Iscandari, Montgomery County Department of Health and Human Services  
Verna Washington, Montgomery County Public Schools  
Vacant, Montgomery County Collaboration Council for Children, Youth, and Families, Inc.

#### Staff

Erin Stillwell, Program Manager, Early Childhood Services, Department of Health and Human Services

# 2022-2023 Policy Priorities

During FY 23 the Commission worked to advance its mission through a focus on the following priorities:

## Priority 1:

Develop recommendations on the [Early Care & Education Initiative \(ECEI\) Action Plan](#) in an effort to support the County's child care system with a specific focus on equity.

## Priority 2:

Focus on the sustainability of the early care and education workforce by providing recommendations on ways to attract and retain professionals to commit to early childhood education as a long-term career option.



# Recommendations

The mission of the Commission on Child Care is to advise the County Executive and County Council on the development, implementation, and effectiveness of government policies, programs, and services that enhance community support for quality, affordable and accessible child care.

We all can agree that the Covid-19 pandemic not only illuminated how critical, but vulnerable the early care and education workforce is to the well-being of our children and the financial stability of parents and caregivers. Despite the recognition of the vital role child care providers play in the support of other industries, much work remains to properly support the child care workforce. We need to continue working to build and strengthen an early care and education system that recruits, supports and retains a qualified and diverse workforce that can serve all children and families.

Since 2019, the Commission on Child Care has been researching, examining and pursuing feedback on ideas for creating a more sustainable early care and education workforce. In 2022, the Commission was afforded the opportunity to participate in a series of community forums on the topics of sustainability, workforce and compensation. From this stakeholder input and other informative work over the past three years, the Commission has found the following two themes continually rising to the top of the conversation: 1) Compensation and Benefits and 2) Pathways to Career Advancement.



# Recommendations-Continued

## Compensation and Benefits

- **Offer a competitive salary to staff in the ECE workforce. The field cannot compete with salaries and benefits offered by the public school system so there need to be other ways to entice people to enter and remain in the field.**
- **Provide benefits such as paid leave, paid time off to attend trainings, health insurance and retirement benefits.**
- **Provide staff health and wellness supports such as mental health consultations and paid wellness days.**

## Pathways for Career Advancement

- **Examine and amend the State's requirement for continuing education and training requirements as such requirements are challenging for early childhood educators to meet due to time constraints and cost.**
- **Strengthen career supports and compensation for early childhood educators that are skilled to work with populations of children that are traditionally underserved (i.e., children with special needs, linguistic diversity, etc.).**
- **Identify ways to leverage apprenticeship programs and high school child development programs as a pathway for career opportunities in early care and education.**

With neighboring jurisdictions taking significant steps to support child care as a common, social good, Montgomery County should be implementing innovative ideas to remain competitive in the local labor market and promote equity with other education sectors.

In FY24, the Commission on Child Care plans to host a summit where we will convene child care providers, advocates and other leaders and early care and education experts from neighboring jurisdictions. The Commission's goal for this event is to share learnings, explore collaborations, and study potential successes our County could implement. We look forward to sharing our findings with the County Executive, County Council, Early Care and Education Initiative Steering Committee and other valued stakeholder groups.

# 2023-2024 Policy Priorities

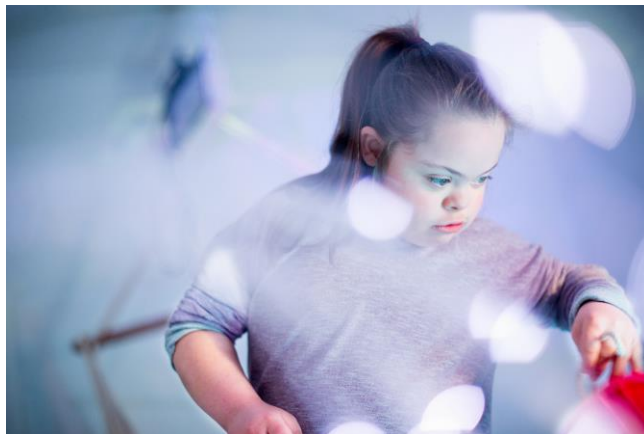
During FY24 the Commission will work to advance its mission through a focus on the following two priorities

## Priority 1:

Develop recommendations on the [Early Care & Education Initiative \(ECEI\) Action Plan FY24-27](#) in an effort to support the County's child care system with a specific focus on equity.

## Priority 2:

Focus on the sustainability of the early care and education workforce by providing recommendations and hosting a collaborative event on ways to attract and retain professionals to commit to early childhood education as a long-term career option.





Marc Elrich, County Executive  
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***To learn more about the Commission on Child Care, please visit:  
[www.montgomerycountymd.gov/ccc](http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/ccc)***