

Montgomery County Early Childhood Coordinating Council

Report 2016-2017



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MEMORANDUM

March 21, 2018

TO: The Honorable Isiah Leggett; Montgomery County Executive
The Honorable Hans Riemer; President, Montgomery County Council

FROM: Michelle Martineau Green; Chair, Early Childhood Coordinating Council
Charlene Muhammad; Vice-Chair, Early Childhood Coordinating Council

SUBJECT: The Early Childhood Coordinating Council 2016-2017 Report

The Early Childhood Coordinating Council (ECCC) is pleased to submit its 2016-2017 report. The role of the ECCC is to monitor, advocate, and make policy recommendations for developing a comprehensive, coordinated early care and education system that supports school readiness and provides support to state and local initiatives.

The ECCC is comprised of a variety of stakeholders and professionals with expertise in the early childhood field including: County parents, business and foundation representatives, child care providers, Montgomery County Public School staff, Maryland State Department of Education staff, Montgomery County Libraries and County Government representatives. Our collective knowledge and expertise about the early care and education system, the importance of school readiness, and children and families in Montgomery County allows the ECCC to examine, discuss, problem solve, and provide a complete perspective to County officials.

The ECCC was formed in 2015-2016 from the work of the prior Early Childhood Advisory Council (ECAC) which was initially established at the request of the State Department of Education. County Council Bill 13-15 established the current coordinating council. The work of the ECCC during 2016-2017 has been focused on supporting the development and release of the County's Early Care and Education Strategic Plan. Released in January 2017, the plan identifies the moral and economic imperatives for making investments in early childhood. It also positions the County to build on its current contributions and policies to help ensure that high quality early care and education is available to all children to be ready for school success.

We wish to recognize and thank those who participate in our meetings for their commitment and perseverance in doing this work. We look forward to continuing the important work of this council and continuing our relationship with public officials at the County and State.

Early Childhood Coordinating Council

The Montgomery County Early Childhood Coordinating Council (ECCC) was formed through County Council Bill 13-15 in May 2015 with membership transferred from the Early Childhood Advisory Council (ECAC) in the spring of 2016. In 2016-2017 the ECCC held 8 meetings including a half day retreat in May. ECCC Committees meet as part of the full ECCC meetings and as needed between meetings to accomplish the work of the ECCC. The mission of the ECCC is to monitor, advocate and make policy recommendations for developing a comprehensive, coordinated system of early childhood education that supports school readiness, and provides support for state and local initiatives.

Meetings

The full Council met on the third Wednesday of each month, at 1401 Rockville Pike in the Early Childhood Training Center from 9:00am-12:00pm. All meetings are open to the public. A significant portion of the ECCC's work is accomplished through Committees. Committee meetings take place at full ECCC meetings. In the past year, the ECCC had three standing committees: Community Engagement, Family Engagement and Social Emotional. All committee meetings are open to the public.

Please call 240-777-1867 or visit

<http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/HHS-Program/CYF/ECAC/ECACIndex.html>

Early Childhood Coordinating Council Membership 2016 - 2017

Barbara Andrews

Ex-Officio – Appointed
DHHS Division of Early Childhood
Services

Jennifer Arnaiz

Ex-Officio - Appointed
Montgomery County Child Care
Resource and Referral Center

JoAnn Barnes

Ex-Officio – Appointed
Director of the Department
Montgomery County Department
Of Health and Human Services

Rosalba Bonilla-Acosta

Public
Montgomery County Commission
on Child Care Liaison

Stephanie Brant

Ex-Officio – Invited
Montgomery County Public Schools
Elementary School Principal

Robin Chernoff

Ex-Officio – Appointed
Montgomery County Collaboration
Council

Deann Collins

Ex-Officio – Invited
Montgomery County Public Schools
Superintendent Designee

Amy Cropp

Ex-Officio – Invited
Montgomery County Public Schools,
Division of Prekindergarten, Special
Programs, and Related Services

Richard A. Crump

Public
Local Business Community

Michele Dean

Ex-Officio - Invited
Montgomery County Public Schools
Prekindergarten Teacher

Carl Eggleston

Ex-Officio – Invited
Maryland State Department of
Education
Office of Child Care, Region 5

Christine Freeman

Ex-Officio – Appointed
Montgomery County Public Libraries

Joan Glick

Ex-Officio – Appointed
DHHS School Health Services

Jacqueline Grant

Public
Family Child Care Association
of Montgomery County

Michelle Green – ECCC Chair

Public
Local Provider of Early Childhood
Education
and Development Services

I. Storm Innis

Public
Parent Representative

Liran Laor

Public
Maryland Association for the
Education
of Young Children

Barbara (Dede) Marshall

Ex-Officio – Invited
Public Institution of Higher
Education

**Charlene Muhammad – ECCC Vice
Chair**

Ex-Officio – Appointed
Montgomery County
Community Action Agency
Head Start Administrator

Mary Mulcahy

Public
Philanthropic Representative

Meredith Myers

Public
Local Providers of Early Childhood
Education and Development Services

Bernadine Occhiuzzo

Public
Local Provider of Early Childhood
Education and Development Services

Shaun Rose

Public
Organization of Child Care Directors

Mary Ellen Savarese

Public
Parent Representative

Paula Sayag

Public
Local Interfaith Community

Claudia Simmons

Ex-Officio - Invited
Montgomery County Public Schools,
Division of Early Childhood Programs
and Services

Rebecca Smith

Ex-Officio – Appointed
DHHS Community Health Services

Marcia Tivoli

Public
Local Provider of Early Childhood
Education and Development Services

Vivian Yao

Ex-Officio – Appointed
Montgomery County Council

Mónica Ortiz

Policy Officer for Early Care and
Education
Staff to the Early Childhood
Coordinating Council

ECCC 2016-2017 Highlights

The ECCC provided expertise, input, and contributions to the Otero Strategy Group and the Montgomery County Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) throughout the year as the Early Care and Education Strategic Plan for 2017 was being developed. The Strategic Plan is organized around five key goals with eighteen implementation strategies and sets forth a vision that recognizes the important contribution that quality early care and education makes to the children and families of Montgomery County and to the overall economic prosperity of the region.

Upon the release of the Strategic Plan, the ECCC invested its time and resources to review the implementation strategies and make recommendations on prioritization and funding priorities. The ECCC continued to stress that it is essential that programs that work with young children and their families address children's development and their readiness for school. Adequate resources and funding for the programmatic needs on behalf of young children must take precedence in County priorities and planning.

As noted in Goal 5 – Leadership and Financing, Strategy 16, a strong and effective ECCC made up of decision makers representing government, business, for-profit and non-profit sectors is critical to realizing the full vision of the Strategic Plan. During 2016-2017 the ECCC reflected on its membership, refocused its priorities and sought to fill vacancies. It also held a half-day retreat in May 2017 where work focused on refining goals for the upcoming year. As a result of this work, the ECCC established the following as its Priorities for 2017-2018:

- Create a birth to five forum of communication among public school, the Early Care and Education provider community, and families to create a strong system in which all children have access to high quality learning experiences; and
- Examine existing resources, and identify and frame the gaps that would build a ready workforce to maximize support to families provide by programs and services in Montgomery County.

During 2016-2017, Montgomery Moving Forward (MMF), a group designed to mobilize leaders to solve some of the County's biggest problems together, determined that early care and education was a matter that is critically important to Montgomery County and relates to its economic well-being. MMF began a six-month community engagement process and determined that Early Care and Education has a direct impact on today's employers and employees because working parents with young children need access to affordable, high-quality, learning experiences in order to be productive employees. ECCC members have been providing expertise and input to the team at MMF to help ensure that their collective impact initiative accurately reflects the current state of early care and education in the County and that the MMF education and awareness activities are aligned with the Strategic Plan for 2017.

Finally, in 2016-2017 the ECCC reconnected with its State-level ECAC counterpart in an effort to remain informed on State efforts for an agenda related to advancing early care and education initiatives, meeting federally required Child Care Development Block Grant obligations, and ensuring Montgomery County constituent needs are well-represented. Specifically related to subsidy funding for economically disadvantaged children in the County, the ECCC continued to advocate for improved funding levels and payments for families that more accurately reflect the true cost of care.