

Montgomery County Early Childhood Coordinating Council

Report 2017-2018



Table of Contents

Letter from the Chairs.....1

Early Childhood Coordinating Council (ECCC).....2

ECCC Membership.....3

ECCC Highlights 2017-18.....4

MEMORANDUM

March 20, 2019

TO: The Honorable Marc Elrich; Montgomery County Executive
The Honorable Nancy Navarro; President, Montgomery County Council

FROM: Michelle Martineau Green; Chair, Early Childhood Coordinating Council
Barbara (Dede) Marshall; Vice-Chair, Early Childhood Coordinating Council

SUBJECT: The Early Childhood Coordinating Council 2017-2018 Report

The Early Childhood Coordinating Council (ECCC) is pleased to submit its 2017-2018 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 2017-2018 has been focused on monitoring the development and release of plans and materials related to Early Care and Education initiatives from commissions and groups at the State and local level including the Commission on Innovation and Excellence in Education (i.e., Kirwan Commission) and Montgomery Moving Forward (MMF). In addition, the ECCC has been reviewing the use and availability of funds to support county parents through the Working Parent Assistance (WPA) program.

We wish to recognize and thank those who participate in our meetings for their commitment and perseverance in doing this work.

As the County proceeds with its recently announced Early Care and Education Initiative we look forward to being deeply engaged as an important partner in the planning and implementation of programs and supports designed to advance the early learning for our county's children. As community leaders with deep expertise about existing county resources and programs, ECCC members will ensure that resources and funding are used efficiently and targeted to supports that will yield the best outcomes for children and families.

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: Workforce Development, Systems Group and ECE Liaison Group. 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 2017 - 2018

Barbara Andrews
Ex-Officio – Appointed
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

Lynn Cavanaugh
Ex Officio – Invited
Montgomery County Public Schools
Prekindergarten Teacher

Robin Chernoff
Ex-Officio – Appointed
Montgomery County Collaboration
Council

Deann Collins
Ex-Officio – Invited
Montgomery County Public Schools
Superintendent or 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

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
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

Mary Manning-Falzarano
Ex-Officio – Invited
Director, Infants and Toddlers Program
Montgomery County Department
Of Health and Human Services

**Barbara (Dede) Marshall – ECCC Vice
Chair**
Ex-Officio – Invited
Public Institution of Higher Education

Carrie Meyer
Public
Organization of Child Care Directors

Charlene Muhammad – ECCC Vice Chair
Ex-Officio – Appointed
Montgomery Community Action Agency
Head Start Administrator

Meredith Myers
Public Local Providers of Early Childhood
Education
and Development Services

Bernadine Occhiuzzo
Public
Local Provider of Early Childhood
Education and Development Services

Mary Ellen Savarese
Public
Parent Representative

Paula Sayag
Public
Local Interfaith Community

Charisse Scott
Public
Montgomery County Council
Parent Teacher Associations

Rebecca Smith
Ex-Officio – Appointed
Community Health Services

Marcia Tivoli
Public
Local Provider of Early Childhood
Education and Development Services

Louise Tolin
Ex-Officio – Invited
Montgomery County Public Schools
Division of Early Childhood Programs and
Services

Vivian Yao
Ex-Officio – Appointed
Montgomery County Council

Mónica Ortiz
Staff
Early Childhood Coordinating Council

ECCC 2017-2018 Highlights

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.

Through its regularly scheduled meetings and committee work, the ECCC accomplished the following key activities:

Monitored the recommendations from the State’s Kirwan Commission, Working Group 1, Early Childhood Education. As the Kirwan Commission worked on finalizing its report, the ECCC discussed and highlighted how this State framework might align with the unique challenges and needs of the children, families in Montgomery County. The Kirwan Commission’s draft recommendations propose expanding high quality preK to four year olds based on a sliding scale and three year olds from low income families; assessing all children to identify those who need supports to be ready to succeed in school; and expanding Judy Centers, Family Support Centers and the Maryland Infants and Toddlers Program for children ages 0-5 and their families.

The ECCC met with the Honorable Councilmember Craig Rice who is the working group chair of the Kirwan Commission related to early childhood. The ECCC provided the following feedback on the framework for the Kirwan Commission’s consideration:

The implementation plan must be developmentally appropriate for children and families and built on a foundation of mutual respect for the collective expertise that exists both in Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) and with private child care providers. There must be a shared vision for early care and education goals and outcomes for all young children with targeted training, resources and services to ensure inclusion for all children and access to diverse choices in public, private and faith-based delivery models.

The level of funding to achieve workforce supports for the educational and credential workforce criteria proposed in the recommendations will be significant. The proposed requirements for EXCELS Level 4 or 5 and Certified Teachers in UPK classrooms is concerning as the supply of programs and qualified workforce does not exist to support current needs and could take a decade or more to develop.

The timeline for UPK implementation should not be based on family income levels as currently presented in the recommendations. A successful phase-in of UPK must address workforce readiness, length of day and number of months of service and the availability and affordability of wraparound care to complement working parents’ schedules.

Funding streams for UPK must carefully consider existing child care subsidy programs and other funding for early care and education services. Montgomery County’s entire system of birth to 5 early care and education is in desperate need of increased funding for all ages. The diversity of the

population and availability of local infrastructure must be thoughtfully leveraged in order to build a system that will serve the unique needs of children and families in Montgomery County.

Monitored the impacts to the County's Working Parents Assistance program (WPA). In August 2018 the State issued an update to voucher rates and eligibility income levels in its Child Care Subsidy (CCS) program. The CCS program expansion resulted in many families in Montgomery County receiving notice from WPA that they must transition to the State CCS program. The ECCC monitored the impacts of this transition and sought data from the Department of Health and Human Services related to the number of families that were impacted by the transition and recommended that the transition date be extended from October 31, to December 31 to minimize disruption in care for families.

Reviewed results of the Quality of Care Cost Modeling Study. The Policy Officer for Early Care and Education presented the report from the Quality of Care Cost Modeling Study to members of the ECCC at the meeting in October 2018. The two components to the study, the report with recommendations and the customized Montgomery County (MC) Cost Modeling tool for center-based child care were reviewed. The customized MC Cost Modeling tool will provide stakeholders with a usable instrument that incorporates State Child Care Scholarship (CCS) and Working Parents Assistance (WPA) reimbursement rates and demonstrates transparency on how numbers are calculated to reveal the true expenditures which go into child care operations. It incorporates several scenarios encompassing each level of EXCELS do demonstrate the increasing costs related to high quality services. Discussion around the Cost Modeling study ensued, with much focus on challenges that continue to exist in pay scale for teachers and rents through the DHHS Child Care in Public Space (CCIPS) program.

Reviewed the implementation status of the County's Early Care and Education Strategic Plan. A Strategic Plan was released in December 2016. The County's budgets since the release have not fully funded the key findings and recommendations in the plan. The ECCC received periodic status reports from the DHHS Policy Officer on the status of the Strategic Plan's implementation.

Initiated a forum for effective communication and coordination between stakeholders. Montgomery Moving Forward (MMF) has selected Early Childhood as its key initiative systems change and there are many other Boards and Commissions that have a focus on Early Childhood. Building a seamless system of early care and education from birth through age eight requires connections across a variety of diverse stakeholders including MCPS, DHHS, CUPF, community providers and parents and requires that priorities and resources be aligned. The ECCC met with Sharon Friedman and Meredith Bowers from MMF on two occasions during the 2017-2018 year to obtain updates on MMF's Call to Action. In addition, the ECCC sent a correspondence to MMF requesting that a video that MMF had produced in conjunction with its project launch be removed from MMF's public portal. Several scenes in the video were not reflective of developmentally appropriate practice and MMF agreed with the ECCC that closer collaboration on any future video content would help ensure that key MMF stakeholders better understand the importance research behind and requirements for developmentally appropriate practice for young children.