

Montgomery County Early Childhood Coordinating Council



Annual Report 2020-2021

Table of Contents

Letter from the Chair	1
ECCC Purpose & Meeting Information	3
ECCC Membership Year 2020-2021	4
ECCC Priorities 2020-2021	7
ECCC Priorities Highlights 2020-2021	8
ECCC Priorities 2021-2022	10

Letter from the Chair



EARLY CHILDHOOD COORDINATING COUNCIL

The Honorable Marc Elrich
Montgomery County Executive

The Honorable Tom Hucker, President
Montgomery County Council

Dr. Raymond Crowel, Director
Montgomery County Department
of Health and Human Services

Residents of Montgomery County

Dear Mr. Elrich, Mr. Hucker, Dr. Crowel and Residents of Montgomery County:

The Early Childhood Coordinating Council (ECCC) is pleased to submit its 2020-2021 annual 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, early childhood associations representatives, child care providers, a pediatric representative, 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 and understanding the importance of school readiness, allows the ECCC the ability to examine, discuss, problem solve, and provide a complete perspective to County officials.

The ECCC was formed from the work of the prior Early Childhood Advisory Council (ECAC) which was initially established at the request of the State Department of Education. In May of 2015, the County Council Bill 13-15 established the current coordinating council.

During 2020 and 2021, the work of the ECCC focused on three major areas:

- a. Mental health and social/emotional well-being of children, families, and the early childhood workforce
- b. Child care sustainability and systems
- c. Early Childhood advocacy at the local and state levels

Due to the ongoing impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, the ECCC continued to meet virtually to support work in the early childhood community. The pandemic has brought to the forefront the essential nature of early childhood and child care and the importance of creating high-quality, sustainable systems in the community.

The Early Childhood Coordinating Council looks forward to working with you again this year and welcomes your thoughts and input into how we can be most successful.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jody Burghardt', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Jody Burghardt
Chair, 2020-21

Early Childhood Coordinating Council

Purpose

The Early Childhood Coordinating Council (ECCC) was established by Montgomery County Bill 13-15 and serves as the local Early Childhood Advisory Council (ECAC) for Montgomery County, liaising with the State ECAC at the Maryland Department of Education (MSDE). The ECCC monitors, advocates, and makes policy recommendations for the development of a comprehensive system of early care and education (ECE) in Montgomery County that supports children entering school ready to learn.

Meetings

The full Council regularly meets on the third Wednesday of each month from 10:00 am to 12:00 pm. The ECCC does not meet in the months of July, August, and December. All meetings are open to the public and are currently being held virtually via Zoom.

A significant portion of the ECCC's work is accomplished through committees. Volunteers from the public are invited to assist with the work of these committees. The ECCC has three standing committees based on the priority areas. These committees meet on the third Wednesday of each month (excluding July, August, and December) during the full council meetings.

A meeting schedule for the Early Childhood Coordinating Council can be found at this [link](#).

ECCC Membership Year 2020-2021

Dr. Barbara Andrews

Ex-Officio – Appointed
Administrator, Division of Early Childhood Services
MCDHHS

Jennifer Arnaiz

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

JoAnn Barnes

Ex-Officio – Appointed
Chief, Children, Youth and Families
MCDHHS

Stephanie Brant

Ex-Officio – Invited
Principal, MCPS Elementary School
MCPS

Jody Burghardt – *Chair*

Public
Local Provider of Early Childhood Education and Development Services

Dr. Robin Chernoff

Public
Pediatrician

Cindy Chichester-Olivierre

Ex-Officio – Invited
MCPS Superintendent or Designee

Amy Cropp

Ex-Officio – Invited
Division of Prekindergarten, Special Programs and Related Services
MCPS

Membership-continued

Richard A. Crump

Public
Local Business Community

Joan Glick

Ex-Officio – Appointed
School Health Services
MCDHHS

Liran Laor

Public
Maryland Association for the Education of Young Children

Mary Manning-Falzarano

Ex-Officio – Appointed
Montgomery County Infants and Toddlers Program
MCDHHS

Lauren Martino

Ex-Officio – Appointed
Montgomery County Public Libraries

Carrie Meyer

Public
Organization of Child Care Directors

Charlene Muhammad

Ex-Officio-Appointed
Montgomery Community Action Agency, Head Start Administrator

Bernadine Occhiuzzo

Public
Local Provider of Early Childhood Education and Development Services

Jade-Ann Rennie

Ex-Officio – Appointed
Montgomery County Collaboration Council for Children, Youth & Families

Membership-continued

Kimberly Rusnak

Public

Local Philanthropic Community

Paula Sayag

Public

Local Interfaith Community

Charisse Scott

Public

Montgomery County Council Parent Teacher Associations

Rebecca Smith

Ex-Officio – Appointed

Montgomery County Community Health Services

Louise Tolin

Ex-Officio – Invited

Division of Early Childhood Programs and Services

MCPS

Lynette Weaver

Ex-Officio-Invited

Public Institution of Higher Education

Dr. Taniesha Woods Myles – *Vice Chair*

Public

Parent Representative

Vivian Yao

Ex-Officio – Appointed

Montgomery County Council

2020-2021 Policy Priorities

The Early Childhood Coordinating Council selected the following three priorities for the 2020-2021 year:

Priority 1: Mental Health and Social/Emotional Well-being of children, families, and the early childhood workforce

- Public awareness of available resources regarding mental health and social-emotional well-being for children and families.
- Training and technical assistance provided on the Pyramid Model on social-emotional development of children for child care professionals.

Priority 2: Child Care Sustainability and Systems: Integrating a broad approach to the sustainability of child care as an industry, as a workforce, and as a provider of enriching and educational experiences for young children.

- Develop actionable recommendations that focus on the direct support of child care programs to aid in the industry's recovery from the economic and enrollment effects of the COVID-19 Pandemic.
- Support the development of a local "LOCATE" service to increase community members' knowledge about child care options, improve access, and connect families with available child care providers.
- Support the use of and make future recommendations for the Working Parents Assistance program to address the developing needs of families in the community.
- Continue to promote current and alternative pathways for early childhood credentials at Montgomery College and other higher education institutions.

Priority 3: Advocacy: Focusing on communication with MSDE, as well as allowing the ECCC to shift its areas of focus to address a broad range of topics and needs as they come up throughout the year. This will also allow the ECCC to support different groups, projects, and initiatives in the service of a building a more comprehensive ECE system. Montgomery Moving Forward (MMF) will be a primary partner of the ECCC on advocacy.

- Partnering with Maryland Family Network and other organizations across the state on the Pritzker funded Building Better Beginnings prenatal through three project.
- Licensing regulations revisions, temporary and permanent.
- Training regulations revisions.

2020-2021 Priorities Highlights

ECCC Priority Highlights during FY 21:

- Distributed over 300 early learning kits to families enrolled in the Family Involvement Center and Early Head Start programs
- Actively participated in committees for the [Building Better Beginnings](#) prenatal through age three project
- Chair, Vice Chair and ECCC members participated in MMF Advocacy, BASICS and Equity Committees
- Informed the work of the [Early Care and Education Initiative](#) (ECEI)
- Identified the need for a local “LOCATE” to connect families with ECE services
- Members provided feedback and recommendations on the proposal for the Early Childhood Coordinating Board (ECCB)
- Chair, Vice Chair and Staff of ECCC were interviewed by members of Montgomery Moving Forward (MMF) regarding their recommendations for an early care and education coordinating entity
- Offered recommendations for the future use and structure of the Working Parents Assistance program
- Advocated for continued support and recovery of child care programs, both at the County and State levels
- Encouraged utilization of the Pyramid Model with Family Support Workers and families enrolled in MCPS Head Start and PreK programs

Members of the ECCC also received regular updates on the response and recovery efforts being instituted by Early Childhood Services and supported these efforts. Members of the ECCC helped distribute updates to the early care and education community, specifically around the following areas:

- Coordination of vaccinations for child care providers
- Continued licensing training for child care providers throughout pandemic via online opportunities
- Communication on over 360 town halls and online chats with early educators throughout pandemic
- Implementation of **GO FCC!** (Growing Opportunities for Family Child Care) campaign during pandemic which added 30 newly registered family child care providers

2020-2021 Priorities Highlights- Continued

- Provision of technical assistance/business supports to child care providers to assist with the application of State Relief Funds
- Supported the hiring of a communications company to assess child care needs of families. Three phase approach: gathering data, analyzing data, and messaging to families to encourage choosing regulated care. Focus on social emotional development, safety of providers, and promotion of LOCATE database
- Implementation of an 18-hour (3 module) Pyramid Model for Preschool training to 41 early care educators



2021-2022 Policy Priorities

Early Childhood Coordinating Council selected the following three priorities for the 2021-2022 year:

Priority 1: Mental Health and Social/Emotional Well-being of children, families, and the early childhood workforce

- Increase public awareness of available resources regarding mental health and social-emotional well-being for children and families.
- Advocate for increased opportunities for training and technical assistance to child care professionals on social-emotional development to address the ongoing impact of the pandemic.
- Support the implementation of a public awareness campaign specifically focused on parents and caregivers.

Priority 2: Child Care Sustainability and Systems: Integrating a broad approach to the sustainability of child care as an industry, as a workforce, and as a provider of enriching and educational experiences for young children.

- Develop actionable recommendations that focus on the direct support of child care programs to aid in the industry's recovery from the economic and enrollment effects of the COVID-19 Pandemic.
- Support the development of a local "LOCATE" service to increase community members' knowledge about child care options, improve access, and connect families with available child care providers.
- Continue to promote current and alternative pathways for early childhood credentials at Montgomery College and other higher education institutions.
- Provide recommendations and advocate for increased compensation for early childhood educators to create a more sustainable workforce.

Priority 3: Advocacy: Focusing on communication with MSDE, as well as allowing the ECCC to shift its areas of focus to address a broad range of topics and needs as they come up throughout the year. This will also allow the ECCC to support different groups, projects, and initiatives in the service of building a more comprehensive ECE system. Montgomery Moving Forward (MMF) will be a primary partner of the ECCC on advocacy.

- Partner with Maryland Family Network and other organizations across the state on the Pritzker funded *Building Better Beginnings* prenatal through age three project.

2021-2022 Policy Priorities- Continued

- Advocate for a competency credential and career ladder to allow for more providers to participate in PreK for All as proposed by Kirwan.
- Address licensing regulations revisions, temporary and permanent.
- Advocate for training for regulations revisions.
- Advocate for an equity focus within the early care and education workforce and the children and families served including an intentional focus on engaging families from across the socioeconomic spectrum as well as members from underrepresented communities including Black, Indigenous, and People of Color.





Marc Elrich
County Executive

Dr. Raymond Crowel
Director, Department of Health and Human Services

JoAnn Barnes
Chief, Children, Youth and Families

To learn more about the Early Childhood Coordinating Council, please visit this [link](#)

Language translation and alternative formats of this report can be made available upon request.

Montgomery County does not discriminate on the basis of disability in employment or in the admission or access of its programs or services.