



Early Childhood Coordinating Council
Wednesday, March 17, 2021
Virtual Meeting
10:00 am-12 pm
Meeting Minutes
Approved

Members Present: Barbara Andrews, Jennifer Arnaiz, JoAnn Barnes, Stephanie Brant, Jody Burghardt, Robin Chernoff, Amy Cropp, Richard Crump, Liran Laor, Mary Manning-Falzarano, Lauren Martino, Charlene Muhammad, Taniesha Woods Myles, Jade-Ann Rennie, Kimberly Rusnak, Charisse Scott, Rebecca Smith, Louise Tolin, Vivian Yao

Members Absent: Cindy Chichester, Joan Glick, Carrie Meyer, Bernadine Occhiuzzo, Paula Sayag, Lynnette Weaver

Guests: Leah Bradley, Michelle Gallipoli, Andrew Lett

Staff Support: Sarah Wilch-Spamer

Jody Burghardt called the meeting to order at 10:01 a.m.

Convene Meeting: Jody Burghardt welcomed members and guests. Roll call was taken, 19 members were present. 14 voting members were required for quorum. The meeting minutes from February 17, 2021 were approved unanimously. Motion: Richard Crump, Second: Taniesha Woods Myles.

COVID Vaccine Update/Parent Concerns – Jennifer Arnaiz and Taniesha Woods Myles: In February the Montgomery County Child Care Resource and Referral Center (MCCCRRC) prioritized child care programs serving children with special needs through Montgomery County Infants and Toddlers (MCITP) or Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) Preschool Education Program (PEP). MCCCRRC now moving into the general population of child care and working with Holy Cross Health to vaccinate center staff. The County is vaccinating family child care providers. Two additional vaccine clinics are scheduled for family providers on March 18 and March 20, 2021. Vaccinations for family child care providers are approximately halfway complete. Holy Cross Health is working to accommodate center staffing with vaccine appointments to ensure child care ratios are maintained. If clinics continue as planned, child care provider vaccinations should be complete by the end of April. Concerns were raised on the lack of vaccine for young children and concern there may be some families who choose to not send children back to child care, particularly by families from certain racial and ethnic groups that have been disproportionately affected by COVID. Concerns were also raised regarding apprehensions of child care staff to return to work. There was discussion regarding targeted outreach and support to address those concerns. A Facebook Live event in partnership with the Latino Health Initiative is scheduled for March 22, 2021 for families and child care providers to provide additional information on the vaccine and the practices in place to help keep children safe. The Black and Brown Coalition is also working to provide information and awareness in underserved communities and communities of color regarding the Vaccine. The monthly Town Hall meetings for child care providers presented by MCCCRRC continue to be successful. Child care restrictions were lifted as of Monday, March 15, 2021.

MCPS In-Person Learning – Charlene Muhammad and Amy Cropp: Threes and fours are scheduled to return to in-person learning on April 7, 2021, based on parent preference. Many of the threes and fours will continue virtual learning. Louise Tolin reported that just 30% of pre-K/Head Start students would return to in-person learning. Some school age children receiving special education started in-person learning on March 1, 2021 and PreK classes started on March 15, 2021. All Special Education services are direct; however some are staying home. Speech, PT, and OT remain virtual. Infants and Toddlers remain virtual for now.

Overview of ECEI Action Plan – Barbara Andrews: Barbara provided an overview of the Early Care and Education Initiative.

The Steering Committee has shifted to a Recovery Committee to manage PPE and cleaning supplies and other pandemic recovery pieces. The initiative is beginning to focus on year one items that were not completed due to the pandemic while also working on year two items. Year three of the Action Plan begins on July 1, 2021. The focus of the initiative has shifted to sustainability and access & affordability.

County Executive's Budget – Barbara Andrews: The County Executive's recommended budget was released on March 15, 2021 and includes a \$5 million increase to the Early Care and Education Initiative—a large percentage of the increase is in Working Parents Assistance Program (WPA). Also included are the development of an online portal and application for families for WPA, Montgomery College scholarships, and other smaller pieces to support child care programs as we come out of the pandemic. There have some been additions to the Early Childhood Services (ECS) budget, including additional merit positions and Healthy Families Montgomery is included in the budget. The recommended budget is available on the County website.

LECAC Grant Update – Jody Burghardt and Taniesha Woods Myles: Books have been selected in Spanish and English and the procurement process has started. Jody and Taniesha will reach out for volunteers to assemble the kits.

Legislative Update – Barbara Andrews: Barbara testified at the State Senate on the Go FCC pilot which is modeled on Montgomery County's family child care recruitment and retention project. A Montgomery County provider and a representative from Maryland Family Network (MFN), also testified.

Member Announcements, Updates and Commentary:

- ECCC meetings will switch to Zoom in April. Taryn will send a Microsoft Teams meeting cancellation and a new invitation will go out to all.
- Early Head Start has applied for the Expansion Grant of 72 slots; the goal is to purchase Early Head Start slots in Child Care in Public Space programs. If the grant is awarded it will be a partnership between Early Head Start, ECS Child Care in Public Space, and Sheppard Pratt (formerly FSI).
- Charisse Scott participated in an MCCPTA call with Imagination Library and they are looking for additional affiliates in the region. ECS has a contract with Imagination Library and the Children's Opportunity Fund, Greater Washington Community Foundation also supports them.

Action: Barbara Andrews will review the contract with Imagination Library and include the Children's Opportunity Fund when discussing possible additional affiliations.

Action: Charisse Scott will connect MCCPTA contact with Barbara Andrews regarding app prototype for families.

Action: Lauren Martino will connect with Leny Bautista regarding books procurement.

Action: Michelle Gallipoli will send links and information shared in the chat to the group.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:35 a.m.