



OFFICE OF RACIAL EQUITY AND SOCIAL JUSTICE


Marc Elrich
County Executive

Tiffany Ward
Director and Chief Equity Officer

MEMORANDUM

October 19, 2022

To: Jennifer Bryant, Director
Office of Management and Budget

From: Tiffany Ward, Director
Office of Racial Equity and Social Justice 

Re: Racial Equity Impact Assessment for Supplemental Appropriation #23-16 FY23
Montgomery County Government Department of Health and Human Services
(DHHS), Montgomery County Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health Support
Services (IECMHSS) Grant

- I. **FINDING:** The Office of Racial Equity and Social Justice (ORESJ) finds that Supplemental Appropriation #23-16 FY23 *Montgomery County Government Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), Montgomery County Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health Support Services (IECMHSS) Grant* has the ability to advance equitable outcomes for families with young children, particularly those who identify as Black or Hispanic/Latino, who are low-income and whose primary language is not English. This assessment will be contingent on how resources are equitably distributed to qualified childcare programs throughout the County that serve children and families who will ultimately attend Title I schools.
- II. **BACKGROUND:** The purpose of Supplemental Appropriation #23-16 FY23 DHHS, IECMHSS Grant is to provide consultation to 50 licensed childcare programs per fiscal year. The objective of the appropriation is to expand services by collaborating with the Judy Centers¹ in Montgomery County to be available to serve those in the community with

¹ "Judy Centers are not childcare centers but a comprehensive hub where families can participate in family learning experiences and receive services and support. In Title I and high-needs elementary schools in every Maryland jurisdiction, Judy Centers empowers a child's first teachers – their families – by supporting child development and early learning skills for our youngest learners from birth through kindergarten."
<https://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/departments/dtecps/judycenters/>

the greatest level of need. There are currently two Judy Center Partnership Programs in Montgomery County Public Schools located at Summit Hall Elementary School in Gaithersburg, MD, and Rolling Terrace Elementary School in Silver Spring, MD². Each of these Elementary schools is identified as Title I³ school and primarily serves low-income children identified as Black or Hispanic/Latino and whose primary home language is not English.

Supplemental information provided with this request states that by collaborating with the 50 identified childcare programs selected for this grant, recipients will be able to provide services that will build the capacity of the young child's early care and education providers and family members to promote healthy social-emotional development for children through positive interactions and healthy relationships. Consistent with the approach of the Judy Center, all services will be provided in a culturally and linguistically responsive manner while also fostering communication and collaboration between the home and early childcare setting in ways that support the child's development.

Additionally, program services will also aim to increase community awareness regarding the importance of healthy social and emotional development for school success in the County. ORESJ has previously documented inequities in educational opportunity and resources impacting students' kindergarten readiness in Montgomery County in the following Racial Equity Impact Assessments (REIAs):

1. REIA of Supplemental Appropriation #22-24 High-Quality Early Childhood Inclusion <https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/ore/Resources/Files/22-24.pdf>
2. REIA of Supplemental Appropriation #22-66 Martha B. Gudelsky Center <https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/ore/Resources/Files/22-66.pdf>
3. REIA of Supplemental Appropriation #22-77 ARPA IDEA Part B1 Grant and SA#22-78 ARPA IDEA Part B2 Grant <https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/ore/Resources/Files/22-77and22-78.pdf>
4. REIA of Supplemental Appropriation #22-75 ARPA IDEA Early Intervention Grant <https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/ore/Resources/Files/22-75.pdf>
5. REIA of Supplemental Appropriation #23-04 IFSP Infants and Toddlers Grant <https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/ore/Resources/Files/23-04.pdf>
6. REIA for Supplemental Appropriation #23-03 Therapeutic Nursery Program <https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/ore/Resources/Files/23-03.pdf>

While the REIAs referenced above provide extensive background information on inequities in early educational opportunities in the County, ORESJ recommends reviewers consider the following in efforts to ensure that young children in families of greatest need are prioritized with these funds:

² Montgomery County Public Schools. *Judy Centers*. 2022. Available at: <https://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/departments/dtecps/judycenters/>

³ Montgomery County Public Schools. *Title I Schools for 2022-2023*. 2022. Available at: <https://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/departments/dtecps/title1/schools.aspx>

- While partnering with Judy Center is advisable as their knowledge regarding working with young children and families in a culturally responsive manner is extensive, we stress the importance of ensuring that both the Judy Center and the programs that they're collaborating with are fully staffed so that disruptions in service are not incurred by families. This is especially important given the current national childcare shortage.
- The request stipulates that funding be granted to 50 licensed childcare organizations. ORESJ would ask that considerations be made for unlicensed providers—particularly those who operate in home-based settings and who have demonstrated their ability to meet the needs of young children and families in a culturally responsive manner. For some of these providers, barriers, such as the cost of obtaining licensure, would prevent them from participating in this grant opportunity. A path to licensure for these providers would be advisable and expand the current childcare workforce.
- Again, as previously mentioned, given the current national childcare shortage, ORESJ continues to stress the importance of making earnest investments in the recruitment, training, and retention of a qualified, effective, and culturally responsive childcare workforce equipped with the skills to work with low-income and BIPOC young children and their families. This includes ensuring that providers are appropriately compensated (comparable to kindergarten teachers) with an accompanying benefits package.

cc: Raymond Crowel, Director, Department of Health and Human Services
Ken Hartman, Director, Strategic Partnerships, Office of the County Executive