



Montgomery County Council

For Immediate Release

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Councilmembers Mike Subin, Marilyn Praisner, and Tom Perez Announce the Release of a Study Examining Adult English as a Second Language (ESL) Service Delivery in Montgomery County

Councilmembers Mike Subin, Tom Perez and Marilyn Praisner announced the release of a long-awaited study examining Adult ESL service delivery in Montgomery County. The Councilmembers were joined by Dr. Jerry Weast, Superintendent of Montgomery County Public Schools, Dr. Charlene Nunley, President of Montgomery College, and a diverse group of stakeholders, community leaders, and county residents.

Council President Mike Subin commended the College for coordinating the study. "I am, as usual, enormously grateful to Montgomery College for taking on the responsibility of shepherding this study for us. The results of this comprehensive review give us the information we need to develop the county-wide literacy program that meets the needs our citizens," Subin said.

Councilmember Marilyn Praisner said, "This report gives us a great opportunity to bring together the many valuable, but disparate efforts in the adult literacy area into one coherent and effective approach." Ms. Praisner was one of three councilmembers who commissioned the report last year.

Councilmember Subin announced that he has appointed Councilmember Tom Perez to chair a newly created Task Force on Adult Education. "The education dialogue understandably focuses on our children," said Perez. However, we must be equally vigilant about providing adequate educational opportunities for our adults. Providing quality adult education programs is a crucial workforce development issue. It is also essential to closing the achievement gap in our public schools."

The Task Force's first assignment is to review the report on Adult ESL service delivery and devise an Adult ESL action plan. Councilmember Perez noted: "This study is a critical first step and provides important food for thought on Adult ESL service delivery. Our task force will build upon this report and develop a strategic plan for ensuring that we deliver the highest quality service to as many people as possible. Learning English is a necessity for people seeking well-paying jobs."

The demographics of Montgomery County have changed significantly in the past decade. Montgomery County's immigrants come from at least 161 countries around the world and speak at least 122 other languages in addition to English. These other languages include Amharic, Arabic, Chinese, French, Guarani, Hebrew, Hindi, Korean, Laotian, Portuguese, Russian, Spanish, Swahili, Thai, Urdu, Vietnamese and many more. "In order to meet the needs of our growing and changing demographics, it is imperative that we invest our resources in our future," Perez said. ###

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