

**ECAC Retreat**  
**Thursday, April 2, 2015**  
**9:00 – 11:00**  
**Notes**

**Members Present:**

Barbara Andrews  
Carl Eggleston  
Patsy Evans  
Jacqueline Grant  
Michelle Green  
April Kaplan  
Dede Marshall  
Lauren Moskowitz  
Meredith Myers  
Linda Owen  
Tobi Printz-Platnick  
Claudia Simmons  
Portia Willis

**Staff Present:**

Sarah Wilch-Spamer

**Guests:**

Vickie DiSanto

**Convene/Introduce New Members:**

- Introduction of new member

**Action:**

- Executive Committee Nominations
  - Responsibilities of the Executive Committee were discussed
  - Patsy Evans, Michelle Green, Dede Marshall, Lauren Moskowitz, and Linda Owen were nominated to the Executive Committee and all accepted.

**Action:**

- Executive Committee Vote
  - Motion to accept slate by acclamation
  - Motion carried
- Overview of the Morning—Barbara Andrews

### **WPA Discussion:**

- Pasty Evans, Michelle Green, Linda Owen, and Claudia Simmons provided an overview of the work done by the 2014 Working Parents Assistance Program (WPA) Workgroup. The workgroup was formed in response to a request by the County Council to examine the program. Through its work, it “determined actions needed to reduce out-of-pocket child care expenses paid by low-income families served by the WPA program”.
- The actions recommended by the workgroup include:
  - Revise the WPA Income Guidelines using current Federal indices
  - Revise WPA Subsidy Tables to increase the subsidy voucher amounts and lower the out-of-pocket expense required to access quality child care
  - Implement the proposed WPA Income Guidelines and Subsidy Tables, immediately
  - Revise COMCOR
  - Increase outreach efforts
  - Develop a briefing paper for the Montgomery County Delegation to the General Assembly to advocate at the State level for increases to the State Child Care Subsidy Program income guidelines and voucher amounts
- The complete WPA Workgroup 2014 Report is available online at [http://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/uploadedFiles/departments/earlychildhood/WPA,%20Workgroup%20Report,%20final%20\(4.17.2014\).pdf](http://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/uploadedFiles/departments/earlychildhood/WPA,%20Workgroup%20Report,%20final%20(4.17.2014).pdf)

### **Action:**

- ECAC members voted to send a letter of support for the WPA Workgroup to the County Council and County Executive. Michelle Green, Patsy Evans, and Linda Owen will create a letter to be signed by ECAC members.

### **State ECAC Update:**

- Claudia Simmons provided an overview of the March 12, 2015 state ECAC meeting:
  - State and federal PreK Update—in November, the state asked providers and school systems to sign on to be subcontractors on a federal preschool expansion grant for children whose family income level was at 200% of poverty. In Montgomery County, five elementary schools (Bel Pre, Weller Road, Broad Acres, Washington Grove, and Clopper Mill) were selected based on FARMS rate of 65% or above. The full grant is \$14,248,904; 290 children in Montgomery County; 2,811 children in Maryland. It was suggested to have Tracy Yost from the state come to further discuss the grant and the rationale behind the eligibility requirements.

### **Additional Updates:**

- MCPS Reorganization:
  - Search for School Superintendent and for Assistant Superintendent of Elementary Schools and Assistant Superintendent of Secondary Schools
  - Division of Early Childhood Programs and Services has been eliminated—the program’s work has been moved to Division of Title One Services. These changes will take effect on July 1, 2015.
- County Budget Update:
  - County government at budget deficit; under a hiring freeze and procurement freeze unless a waiver is submitted for items that are 100% grant-funded.
  - Starting Kennedy Cluster in July with half as much money—will focus on parents and parent engagement (Parent Cafes); Portia Willis is doing outreach in this regard
  - \$50,000 reduction to Montgomery County Child Care Resource and Referral Center’s funding for business supports for child care providers
  - Child Care Resource and Referral Network facing 8% cut due to Child Development Block Grant monies and the end of the RTT-ELC Grant money
  - Each department had to offer items to reduce spending; will know more in May
- Head Start, Community Action Agency:
  - Budget will most likely be flat-lined for upcoming fiscal year

### **Committee Reports:**

- Attendance at the committee meetings is low; please remember this is where much of the ECAC work takes place and attendance is important.
- Literacy/Pediatric Outreach: Bernadine Occhiuzzo provided an overview of the work being done, including visitations at various pediatric offices to inform and educate them on the importance of assessments for young children. MSDE will soon require all licensed providers to use developmental screening tools; training on one of the tools, the Ages and Stages Questionnaire (ASQ) will be provided. Claudia Simmons asked the committee to provide a list of the pediatric offices that have been contacted.
- Media & Outreach Campaign: Campaign graphics were shown. There will also be posters inside the buses. The bus campaign is scheduled to run May through August in Gaithersburg, Wheaton, and Silver Spring, and may expand to other communities later. The committee continues to explore social media outreach options and ChildLink is in process of creating a Facebook page. Portia Willis is leading the Ride-On bus campaign.

**Discussion:**

- Committee Focus Groups and Demographics Report Analysis:
  - Committees were asked to review the information gathered through the focus groups, Demographics Report, and Geo Maps in order to develop recommendations.
  - As discussed at the February meeting, the common thread throughout the focus groups was children are coming to school without basic social/emotional skills
  - Other common themes: children lacking in self-help skills; language, e.g. parents are not talking with children much; discussion about MCPS; the need for stronger communication between child care community in schools and child care community in child care; immigrant families talked about the need for schools to be a community hub and they need more information on how the school system here works.
  - A consolidated summary of the focus group survey data was created by Michelle Green and distributed to the membership.
  - Suggested Recommendations to share with the County Executive and Council included: building the connection between child care providers, pediatricians, and parents; importance of getting information to parents early on; facilitating parent forums similar to those held by the Howard County ECAC; importance of health and wellness of children; and elevating the visibility/presence of the ECAC to the Council and County Executive. Additional suggestions should be given to Barbara.

**Announcements:**

- Early Childhood Symposium:
  - *The Road to Success: Engaging Families to Promote Social and Emotional Readiness for School*; Keynote Speaker is Neal Horen, Ph.D.
  - Save the Date email has gone out
- Montgomery County Infants and Toddlers:
  - Preparing for Family Fair this summer in Silver Spring
  - MCPS Infants and Toddlers staff will be on hand to perform assessments throughout the fair. Barbara Andrews will send information out to the membership.

**Adjournment:**

**12:00 PM**

**NEXT MEETING: June 11, 2015 9:00-11:00**

**LOCATION: Johns Hopkins University-Rockville Campus; A&R Building, Room 112**