

MEMORANDUM

February 10, 2015

TO: Health and Human Services Committee
Education Committee

FROM: Vivian Yao, Legislative Analyst 

SUBJECT: **Discussion – Evaluating major school construction projects for the inclusion of dedicated child care space**

The Health and Human Services (HHS) and Education Committees will discuss how major school construction projects are evaluated for the inclusion of dedicated child care space.

The individuals expected to participate in the conversation include:

- Uma Ahluwalia, Director, Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS)
- JoAnn Barnes, Acting Chief, Children, Youth and Families, DHHS
- Pofen Salem, Office of Management and Budget
- Deborah Szyfer, Senior Planner, Division of Long-Range Planning, Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS)

During discussion of the FY15-20 Capital Improvements Program (CIP), the Joint Committee requested that DHHS work with MCPS and the Department of General Services (DGS) to review the list of schools recommended by Councilmember Riemer (©1-2) to determine whether child care facilities will be proposed as CIP amendments. The schools identified by Councilmember Riemer were Ashburton, Burtonsville, S. Christa McAuliffe, and Judith Resnik Elementary Schools. Committee members also wanted to discuss the HHS process for evaluating whether major school construction projects should include child care facilities.

Responses to Council staff's questions are included at ©3-10.

Child Care in Schools CIP Project

The Child Care in Schools Project has been part of the CIP since 1987. The project encourages child care providers to offer high quality child care in communities where they might now otherwise be financially able, due to high numbers of subsidies and low-income parents.

DGS collaborates with MCPS to manage the design and construction of the dedicated child care facilities.

The current child care suite described in the Program of Requirements (POR) for the Child Care in Schools CIP Project is large enough for 20-24 two to four year olds, and is generally not large enough to be licensed for infant and toddler care. Older sites in some schools have several classrooms and an office, can hold more children, and offer infant and toddler care. Information describing child care space required by State licensing regulations is attached at ©6.

A list of child care programs operating in public space managed by DHHS is attached at ©9. Council staff notes that not all of the listed school sites were developed pursuant to the Child Care in Schools CIP Project. The approved FY15-20 project provides for the construction of child care suites at Wheaton Woods and Brown Station Elementary Schools.

Assessment Process and Criteria

The determining of the sites to be recommended for dedicated child care facilities begins with MCPS providing a listing of potential elementary schools undergoing major school construction. DHHS identifies those schools on the list that meet the criteria for placing a child care facility at the site. DHHS has used the following criteria to identify sites:

- FARMS data for school or for zip code for County Building Site (recent use of 60% or higher FARMS rate criteria);
- ESOL data for school or zip code for County Building Site;
- Determination if school is a Title I school or if County Building is in Title I School Community;
- Number of licensed child care programs in the zip code (family child care and center care);
- Number of Child Care in Public Space Programs in the zip code;
- Number of public Pre-K and Head Start Programs including any Early Head Start Programs; and
- Number of programs accredited and number enrolled and published in Maryland EXCELS.

DHHS emphasizes the need to evaluate the number of existing child care programs in a given area carefully to avoid detrimentally impacting existing providers in a given area by artificially lowering the market rate for services. Placing a new school-based, County-subsidized, center-based program could draw demand away from other center and family-based child care providers in the area.

Demand information reviewed by DHHS comes from databases outside the Department's control including self-reported demand for care available through the Maryland Family Network (MFN) LOCATE database and information from the Child Care Demographics Report. DHHS explains that it does not work with large data sets or have the staffing to update census data on a quarterly basis to allow for accurate child counts in the County or by zip code. The Department recommends working with Park and Planning and MCPS to evaluate potential child care expansion sites based on population growth and student enrollment projections. **The**

Committees may be interested in understanding when this cross-agency effort will begin or yield recommendations for expansion. Can the work be completed expeditiously with existing resources?

Recommendations for Four Elementary School Construction Projects

Executive staff has not recommended any of the four school construction sites proposed by Councilmember Riemer be included in the Child Care in School CIP project. Information on FARMS and ESOL rates; the number of licensed child care homes and centers; the number of public pre-kindergarten programs, and LOCATE demand information is provided for the Ashburton, Burtonsville, and S. Christa McAuliffe sites at ©3 and ©4, and the Department notes that Judith Resnick Elementary School already has a public space program. **The Department has not indicated what circumstances or criteria would justify adding space at a particular site.**

Council staff notes that feasibility studies have been completed for all four schools identified by Councilmember Riemer, and planning and design funding has been approved for the projects in FY17 with completion currently recommended by the Superintendent in FY19. **If the Council is interested in amending the Child Care in Schools Project to add child care facilities at the identified schools, planning and design funding would need to be programmed in FY17 and FY18 and construction funding in FY18 and FY19. The Council would need additional information on amount of planning, design, and construction costs to program and any additional operating budget staffing costs needed to manage the sites.**

Moving Forward with Developing Public Child Care Space and Making Quality Child Care Accessible

The overarching problem of how to make quality child care affordable and accessible is a complex problem, made up of complex, interrelated issues, of which developing public child care space is just one. Other issues include the availability and adequacy of child care subsidies; the expansion of pre-kindergarten programs; and supporting providers in becoming licensed and increasing their ability to provide quality services to all children including special needs, ESOL, and low income populations. If the Council wants to make substantive policy decisions on the County's use of public space to further quality, accessible child care, it would benefit from additional information including the following:

Countywide Questions

- What populations are priorities for quality child care services expansion?
- What areas in the County have the greatest unmet demand for quality child care?
- What the indicators best measure unmet demand?
- What other supports need to be in place to allow families to access services offered in public space?
- Are child care providers currently in public space reaching priority populations? What is the demographic profile of families accessing child care in public space? What families

are not able to access services delivered in public space? What barriers prevent priority populations from accessing services?

Community Specific Questions

- Within a given geographic community, what are the greatest demands for quality child care by age of child served?
- What the indicators that best measure supply and demand?
- What would happen to existing family and center providers if public space for child care is added?
- What is the optimal space for a new public facility in terms of meeting the demand for care in a given community and the economic stability of providers operating the facility? What are the range in costs for different size facilities?
- What other supports need to be provided to allow priority populations to be able to access services?

As currently staffed, it is unclear whether DHHS has the capacity or core expertise to comprehensively respond to all of these questions. The Committees may want to explore the possibility of having a consultant(s) work with DHHS and other Departments and Agencies including MCPS, Park and Planning, and the Department of Economic Development to provide relevant information.



**MONTGOMERY COUNTY COUNCIL
ROCKVILLE, MARYLAND**

HANS RIEMER
COUNCILMEMBER AT-LARGE

**MEMORANDUM
May 1, 2014**

FR: Councilmember Hans Riemer
TO: HHS Committee
RE: Adding child care facilities to more school projects

Currently, parents of all income levels face long waiting lists because of the lack of availability of child care. For the future, our county needs space that can accommodate an expansion of pre-k and universal pre-k.

A memorandum of understanding exists between MCPS and MCG for the CIP item Child Care in Schools (P649187). The MOU and CIP item provide for the placement of a large designated child-care classroom at public schools where MCPS is undertaking major construction or renovation. MCPS oversees the construction or renovation of the school, and the County arrange t o lease the child care portion of the building to a private provider.

Currently the CIP has only two schools planned for Child Care in Schools. Given the exploding need for child care in our county, we can and should do better.

The council should establish a policy that all new schools and expansions should incorporate childcare space unless it is cost-prohibitive to do so or not allowable by site conditions. I am not proposing to alter those projects that already have designs completed and/or are entering construction because they are too far along to change without unnecessary disruption. However, four projects will not begin design until FY17 or later and could potentially incorporate new childcare space. They are:

School	PDF#	Project Type	Planning Design and Supervision Beginning
Ashburton ES	P651514	Addition	FY17
Burtonsville ES	P651511	Addition	FY17
S. Christa McAuliffe ES	P651502	Addition	FY17
Judith Resnik ES	P651507	Addition	FY17

None of these schools have Child Care in Schools as part of their plans, but they could. In fact, unless it is financially or structurally impossible to do it, they should.

I ask for your support to insert this sentence in each of the above projects' description forms.

“This project shall include childcare space unless MCPS finds the inclusion is cost -prohibitive or not feasible because of site conditions. MCPS shall forward its findings to the County Council prior to commencing expenditures on land acquisition, site improvements and utilities and construction.”

Including a childcare facility will cause a budget impact for these projects. This language will cause the school to do a detailed assessment of the cost of providing the facility, and then we would expect the Council to amend the CIP items when the costs are known.

Updated information received on 2/8/15

High School Wellness Center

- Please provide a status and schedule update for the Wheaton HS, Kennedy HS, and Seneca Valley HS Wellness Centers. What is the most recent cost estimate for the projects? Where are the projects in terms of completion of feasibility studies, planning or design phase, or construction?
 - Wheaton High School – design is in progress
 - Seneca Valley High School - design is in progress
 - Kennedy High School – feasibility study was scheduled for FY15, however, the Board of Education has requested a capacity study for the Down-county Consortium high schools (Blair, Einstein, Kennedy, Northwood, and Wheaton) to address overcrowding in these high schools. This study is scheduled for FY 2016. It would be ideal to conduct the feasibility study for the Kennedy HS Wellness center in conjunction with the capacity study so the architect and engineers can study the site and program needs at one time.

Child Care in Schools

- Please explain why the Executive did not recommend that child care space be added at Resnick, Ashburton, Burtonsville or S. Christa McAuliffe Elementary Schools. What factors or standards were not met?

The Executive branch has not recommended any additional Child Care in Schools sites in the FY15-20 CIP budget. The Department's recommendation is to work in conjunction with OMB, Parks and Planning and MCPS to evaluate potential sites based on population growth MCPS student enrollment projections and inform the CIP processes for both schools and County building projects.

Resnick – We have a public space program at Resnick ES

Ashburton – Low FARMS rate (12.6%).

20817 zip code: 18 Family Child Care homes; 1 large child care home; 30 center-based programs; 0 public pre-k programs

Child Care Demographics (Maryland Family Network) demand for care **January 1, 2014-October 1, 2014**: 7 callers seeking care; 8 children need care.

Burtonsville - FARMS rate 52.2%.

20866 zip code: 28 Family Child Care homes; 5 center-based programs; 0 public pre-k programs

Child Care Demographics demand for care: 6 callers seeking care; 8 children need care. – MCPS has completed a feasibility study.

S. Christa McAuliffe- FARMS rate 50.79%.

20874 zip code: 94 Family Child Care homes; 30 center-based programs; 5 public pre-k programs

Child Care Demographics demand for care: 30 callers seeking care; 38 children need care.

**Council Question Responses: CCIPS
10/10/14**

1. The Executive branches recommendations for adding dedicated child care space at Ashburton, Burtonsville, S. Christa McAuliffe, and Judith Resnick Elementary School along with an explanation of the factors considered.

The Executive branch has not recommended any additional Child Care in Schools sites in the FY15-20 CIP budget. The Department's recommendation is to work in conjunction with OMB, Parks and Planning and MCPS to evaluate potential sites based on population growth MCPS student enrollment projections and inform the CIP processes for both schools and County building projects. Additional factors used in the decision making are noted below in #2. (Also see note at end of this document re: size of MCPS child care suite in POR and attached info. re: licensing and size of child care program.)

- **Resnick ES** - has a DHHS public child care in a portable building.
- **Ashburton ES/Bethesda** Low FARMS- 11% and ESOL- 10.6%
20817 zip code: 18 Family Child Care homes; 1 large child care home; 30 center-based programs; 0 public pre-k programs
Child Care Demographics (Maryland Family Network) demand for care **January 1, 2014-October 1, 2014**: 7 callers seeking care; 8 children need care.
- **Burtonsville ES** FARMS – 52.1% ESOL – 16.8%
20866 zip code: 28 Family Child Care homes; 5 center-based programs; 0 public pre-k programs
Child Care Demographics demand for care: 6 callers seeking care; 8 children need care.
- **S. Christa McAuliffe ES/Germantown** FARMS – 51.6% ESOL - 20.9%
20874 zip code: 94 Family Child Care homes; 30 center-based programs; 5 public pre-k programs
Child Care Demographics demand for care: 30 callers seeking care; 38 children need care.

2. An explanation about how DHHS works with DGS and MCPS to determine whether dedicated child care space will be recommended in the Child Care in Public Space CIP project.

The determination of possible sites for all the joint DHHS/MCPS projects (such as School Based Health Centers/ Linkages to Learning and High School Wellness Centers and Child Care in School sites) begins with the MCPS renovation /expansion schedule. It is much more cost effective to add these sites in conjunction with a MCPS renovation or expansion compared to building a stand-alone child care site at a school.

The CCIPS program recently hired a new program manager who has been working to further refine the criteria and determine placement of new child care sites in the future.

The program is currently leading a selection process for an additional school (Bel Pre) which will place us at 29 programs (both schools and county buildings). There are two more schools (Wheaton Woods and Browne Station) in planning stages as part of the FY15-20 Approved CIP school projects that were delayed in construction.

Please identify the criteria considered and the timeline for making decisions.

Criteria listed below are what DHHS has used in the past to determine possible new sites for Child Care In Schools space.

- FARMS data from MCPS for school or for zip code for County Building Site
- ESOL data from MCPS for school or zip code for County Building Site
- Determination if school is a Title I school or if County Building is in Title I School Community
- Number of licensed child care programs in the zip code (family child care and center care)
- Number of Child Care in Public Space Programs in the zip code
- Number of public Pre-K and Head Start Programs including any Early Head Start Programs
- Number of programs accredited and number enrolled and published in Maryland EXCELS

How does DHHS determine whether the availability of high quality child care in the school community is adequate to meet the demand for services?

DHHS does not work with large data sets and we do not have statisticians to update census data, which would need to be done on a quarterly basis for any accuracy of child counts in the County or by zip codes. ECS does not have a data system that tracks this type of information and all of our information, including those listed below, come from databases outside of our control : MCPS and the Maryland Family Network (MFN) LOCATE Database and Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) database. Information on both demand for care and on slots in child care programs available from the LOCATE database, as well as the Child Care Demographics Report are all self-reported information.

The Department would like to begin to work in conjunction with Parks and Planning and MCPS to evaluate potential sites based on population growth and MCPS student enrollment projections and inform the CIP processes for both schools and County building projects.

How does DHHS weight criteria like FARMS, mobility and ESOL rates in determining whether is include dedicated child care space at a given site.

FARMS and ESOL rates are only two of the criteria that are used to recommend adding a Child Care space to a school or other county building. As for the FARMS criteria, the program recently used 60% or higher FARMS to decide about an Early Childhood Services community project. Title I schools are defined by the Federal Government as those with 40% or above FARMS rates. Many, but not all, of the DHHS CCIPS programs are in Title I elementary schools.

Has the Department considered other factors including available staffing and resources in making recommendations for the program in recent years?

It is important in determining criteria and making decisions that the number of existing child care programs in the area be carefully considered so that we do not introduce unfair competition to the market place (i.e. - a County subsidized program next to or down the street from a program paying market rate).

3. What resources (staffing and funding) are needed to manage DHHS's Child Care in School's program on an annual basis?

Current Staffing: 1 Program Manager I and time spent by the ECS Administrator (often ¼ time)

What are the incremental costs for increasing sites to the program? For a slowly growing program, a Program Specialist II position is needed to assist with committee processes for re-bids and selection processes; assist with data; assist with support for programs. For a large increase in number of programs we would need additional staff.

Child Care facility maintenance is addressed through DGS LOE projects or operating funds. For example, DGS is planning for maintenance projects at Lone Oak and Clara Barton Day Care Centers in FY16. In addition, HHS has a \$20,000 in the Early Childhood Services budget to provide some playground maintenance and upgrades.

4. What requirements are placed on providers who are selected to manage dedicated child care space?

Providers seeking DHHS Public Space submit an extensive application during a selection process for a new or vacated public space site and are interviewed if their score is 70 points or above as determined by a selection committee. Every 7* years child care sites are rebid and providers in the space, as well as new providers bidding for the space, go through the same process as a selection for a new site.

*new license term – aligned with CUPF

Providers in public space are required to:

- Become accredited (State or National) within 3 years of the selection or re-bid process
- Enroll in Maryland EXCEL's and publish a rating within one year
- Actively seek and enroll 20% of their program as subsidy payment families
- Provide priority enrollment for County Employees seeking child care

Additionally, providers put considerable resources into the facilities so as to improve the physical environment and the quality of the program

5. Please provide a list of County-owned property being leased for child care and bid out through the DHHS led process and identify which sites were built as part of the Child Care in Schools CIP project. Attached – listed by MCPS/County sites

Child Care Suite (MCPS sites) design and POR:

The current child care suite, as outlined in the POR for MCPS child care in public space-is only large enough for 20-24 two to four year olds and generally is not large enough to be licensed for infant and toddler care. Some sites have been licensed for 18 month olds to age 4 (this is partly dependent on if a separate playground is built or if the program shares the pre-k playground). Older sites in some schools have several classrooms and an office and the site can hold more children and can include infant and toddler care. It has been suggested by MCPS (James Song) that we increase the amount of space that DHHS builds in some schools and change the POR. Attached is information from Licensing and ECS re: small, medium and large child care center sites and the space required by State licensing and COMAR.

Note: In some current programs MCPS has provided additional space if available (the provider pays MCPS for that space). Projected MCPS enrollment numbers will likely preclude this service in the future.

Child Care Center Regulations and Requirements re: Child Care in Public Space
(MCPS and County Buildings)
4/28/14

Small Child Care Center: Current MCPS child care suites – no more than 20 two to four-year-old children

General definitions:

The state does not differentiate sizes of centers in center-based care and has no definitions of small, medium or large center. Below are general definitions for the purposes of public space:

Small center defined as 20-30 children ages two-four.

Medium Child Care Center defined as 30-60 children – birth to five

Large Child Care Center defined as 60+ children - birth to five

All programs require a minimum of 35 square feet of floor space for each child in care. See information below re: what is defined as floor space – must be useable floor space.

Additionally – there can not be more than 6 children aged 6 weeks to 18 months in a group and there is a maximum of 9 children aged 18 months to 2 years per group. This affects the number of rooms required for infant and toddler care.

From COMAR Child Care Center Regulations re: square footage. Other regulations apply for indoor space. See beginning on page 15:

http://www.msde.maryland.gov/NR/rdonlyres/FF4D42D2-46A0-44E6-9CEC-546C5641F978/36145/Subtitle16_Centers_COMAROnline_eff062413.pdf

Indoor Space.

A. A minimum of 35 square feet of floor space shall be provided for each child in care, except that:

(1) A minimum of 30 square feet of floor space shall be provided for each child in a:

(a) Child care center licensed before December 1, 1971; or

(b) Nursery school holding a certificate of approval to operate or a letter of exemption from approval that was issued by the State Board of Education before December 1, 1971, and is still in effect; and

(2) A child care program currently approved by the office to operate with less square footage per child than required by §A of this regulation may continue to operate with that reduced square footage as long as the:

(a) Operator demonstrates to the satisfaction of the office the impossibility of complying with the minimum square footage required by §A of this regulation while maintaining the economic viability of the program; and

(b) Office determines that the reduced square footage does not threaten the health, safety, or welfare of any child in care.

B. In calculating the square footage of floor space provided for each child, the following may not be included:

(1) Any floor space, rooms, or areas that are not suitable or available for the daily program activities of the children, such as but not limited to columns, vestibules, and corridors, food preparation areas, kitchens, bathrooms, adult work areas, permanently equipped isolation areas or sleeping rooms, storage units, and storage space; and

(2) Furniture, except for:

(a) Children's chairs and tables which are nonfixed and multipurpose;

(b) Moveable equipment used for infant care, such as high chairs and swings;

(c) Moveable play equipment;

(d) An adult-size rocking chair or other adult-size comfortable chair;

(e) An adult-size couch; and

(f) Open shelves for children's daily activities.

C. In centers that care for infants or toddlers, diapering stations shall be included in calculating the square footage of floor space provided for each child.

D. In a small center, the space for children may include space within the family living area.

Child Care in Public Space Location Chart Sept 2014

Programs in MCPS building or on MCPS Property: 13

- Arcola ES/MCCA
- Brooke Grove ES/ MCCA
- Galway ES/Academy CDC
- Glen Haven ES/Bright Eyes
- Thurgood Marshall ES/ Bright Eyes Inc
- Page ES/MCS
- Judith Resnik ES/Bright Eyes, Inc
- RDCA-Sargent Shriver ES
- Stone Mill ES/ Academy CDC
- Takoma ES/Kids Adventures
- Veirs Mill ES/Bright Eyes Inc.
- RDCA-Woodlin ES/
- MCCA-Weller Road ES

Programs in County Building: 14

- Bethesda-Edgemoor/Wonders
- CRC Wintergreen/ RDCA
- Clara Barton/Clara Barton Center for Children
- Colesville Health Ctr./ MCS
- Bright Eyes/ Damascus
- Karasik & Family & Infant CC/ARC
- Leland/Lawton CC/Wonders
- Lone Oak Ctc/Park Street/ MCCA
- Shady Grove Life Science Ctr/Nanda CCC
- Shady Grove Metro/Kidstop KLP
- Waring Station Road/Kidstown-Iman LC
- West Diamond/The Nurturey
- Up County Gov. Ctr/Peppertree C.C.
- Little Acorns-Potomac Community Center

****Program in Department of Park and Planning Building: 1***

- Martin Luther King/ White Oak/Horizon DCA