

November 24, 2012

Dear County Council Members,

I write to strongly support the legislation before you to establish a stand-alone, public private Early Care and Education entity based in large part on the report presented by Montgomery Moving Forward (MMF). I applaud the leadership taken by Councilmembers Albornoz, Navarro and Rice for introducing the legislation and thank Councilmembers Huckler, Friedson, Glass, Jawando, Katz and Riemer for their enthusiastic support.

As the former Executive Director of the Universities at Shady Grove, I had the opportunity to work closely with leaders in MCPS and Montgomery College, and I understand the challenges in insuring that all children have the opportunity to succeed in their education and life goals. I believe that all youth have nascent talents and are naturally curious when they enter our school system. But there are striking differences in preparation and readiness, particularly for students of color and whose families have limited resources to support their early development. And I learned from my work on MMF how critical these early years are for the cognitive, social and emotional development which lay the foundation for education and life success. I know you recognize these challenges and understand how important it is to level the playing field so all children can realize their potential and enjoy a higher quality of life.

I am a founding member of MMF. And through its analyses, convenings, examination of best practices, and stakeholder discussions, I saw the deep commitment across our community to invest further in early child care and education. I also learned about the complexity of the tasks, the diversified funding streams and programs and the many different stakeholders. I came to understand that an inclusive approach was required to effect systemic changes in how we planned and coordinated our efforts and linked these to community developed outcomes and deliverables. This is why I am convinced that a public private entity, taking into account all of these interests and complexities, and focused

exclusively on creating a systemwide framework for early childcare in our community is the best approach.

I have had the great pleasure to work with all of you over the years and participated in your efforts to strengthen our county's education system and take bold and progressive steps in equity and social justice. The actions you take now will have profound impact on the lives of young children. I appreciate so much your dedication and focus on early child care and education through the establishment a public private entity to systemically address delivery and outcomes and transform our county,

Very respectfully and with great admiration,



Stewart Edelstein, Ph.D.

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