



**IDD Commission Agenda**  
**March 21st, 2024**

**Virtual via Zoom Link:**

[https://us06web.zoom.us/j/83887697863?pwd=eZMWun2xoroaabayuBQk0mykjWObu.](https://us06web.zoom.us/j/83887697863?pwd=eZMWun2xoroaabayuBQk0mykjWObu.1)

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**Phone Call-In: +13017158592,,83887697863# US**

**Meeting ID: 838 8769 7863**

**Passcode: 887124**

**Doc 0 – IDDC Workflow Graphic**

**Doc 1 – Feb 2024 IDDC Meeting Feedback**

**Doc 2- IDDC Enabling Legislation**

**Doc 3- MDH- IDDC Letter Sent Regarding Medicaid Eligibility Issue**

**Doc 4- MDH Eligibility Issues – Response to IDDC**

**Doc 5 – MDH/DDA – Medicaid Renewal Steps**

**Doc 6 – Parent Letter Regarding MCPS Planned Cutbacks to Paraeducators and Elimination of Autism Resource Centers**

**Doc 7 - IDDC Ad Hoc Summary of MCPS Cutbacks**

**Doc 8 - IDDC Ad Hoc Letter On SB 790**

**Please make sure to review Doc 7 and Doc 8. Both these issues are time sensitive and our Ad Hoc Groups will likely be making motions to advance these items forward**

4:25 am		Gathering
4:30 pm	Chair	Welcome, Chair Quorum Determination Call to Order Approval of IDDC Meeting Minutes (Feb 2024)
4:35 pm	Chair	Announcements, Interim Actions a. IDDC Letter sent to MDH/Medicaid Regarding Redetermination Issues & Response Received b. Transiton Youth Fair at MC April 7 <sup>th</sup> . IDDC will have a table

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>c. Brookside Gardens: will be hosting a guided tour in April, please let Ms. Kahn know if you would like to attend</li> <li>d. Priority Issues to be discussed today <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. MCPS Plans to Eliminate Autism Centers &amp; Cut Paraeducations</li> <li>b. SB790 underconsideration at the GLA</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
4:45	Chair	Commissioner Feedback for February 2024 Meeting
4:50 pm	Vice Chair	CPWD Liaison Update
4:55 pm	Guest	Guest Speaker: Dr. Patrice McGhee, Chief Aging & Disability Services
5:30	AHSC - Education	Request for action on current MCPS Announced Elimination of Autism Learning Center & Drastic Cuts in Parameducators. Likely a motion to IDDC to take a position opposing this and provide public testimony at upcoming budget hearings in April
5:40	AHSC -DD Leg	Proposed IDDC letter supporting and with recommendations for SB790 Maryland Medical Assistance Program – Employed Individuals with Disabilities.
5:50 pm	Chair	<p>Workgroup and Ad Hoc Subcommittee Updates from Facilitators (5 minute each)</p> <p>Promoting Quality IDD Services (update from County on status of information gathering)</p> <p>IDD &amp; Hospital Care</p> <p>IDD Workforce Stability</p> <p><b>Ad Hoc Groups starting up:</b> Employment, Community Engagement, and Housing (to be established) In Process</p>
6:00 pm		Recess
6:15 pm	Commissioners	<p><b>Defining Priorities and Goals</b></p> <p><b>Work on defining commissioner priorities with a focus on Community Engagement, Employment, and Housing</b></p>
6:45 pm		Public Input

6:50 pm	Chair	Meeting Summary
6:55 pm	Chair	Adjournment

Meeting Accessibility Notice: Sign language interpreter services and other auxiliary aids or services will be provided upon request with as much advance notice as possible, preferably at least three (3) full business days before the meeting/event. To request any other reasonable accommodation or to advise us of any dietary considerations (for in-person meetings), please send a request to [Ahmna.Khan@montgomerycountymd.gov](mailto:Ahmna.Khan@montgomerycountymd.gov). Taking these steps will help us have sufficient time to best meet your needs.

**DOCUMENT 1**

**Intellectual & Developmental Disabilities Commission**  
**Ad Hoc Subcommittees, Workgroups, and Special Projects**  
**February 2024**

**Active Ad Hoc Subcommittees**

**EDUCATION & RELATES SERVICES FOR THOSE WITH IDD**

Primary Focus: Education and related services for those with IDD  
Ties to Enab Leg: 24-74 ( c ), 24-71 (b) 2 ( C )  
Primary Facilitator: Natori Green  
Co Facilitator: Yvonne VanLowe  
Meetings: Every 2nd Tuesday of the Month at 8pm

This group focuses on issues related to education and related services for those with IDD in both the public and private schools. It will look at funding streams, resources, programming, staffing and issues centered around transitioning youth. Related to this are ways to increase education and awareness of families with respect to available services and the need to help define a “roadmap” for individuals and families in school to understand next steps at each point

from entering the school system until transitioning out. The group will also look at related services and programs including community and recreational opportunities for those of school age.

### **DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES PUBLIC POLICY & LEGISLATION**

Primary Focus: State and county public policy and legislation  
Ties to Enab Leg 24-74 (G) (H)  
Primary Facilitator: John Whittle  
Co Facilitator: Lori Mitchell-Keller  
Meetings: To Be Announced

This group will focus on policies and legislation at the state and county level related to those with developmental disabilities. There will be a strong focus on engaging with the DDA since they are responsible for many of the services and funding streams for those with I/DD as well as other related agencies. The group will work collaboratively with the other workgroups and Commissioners to advance necessary policy and legislation.

### **PROMOTING QUALITY SERVICES FOR THOSE WITH I/DD**

Primary Focus: Defining the landscape for those with I/DD  
Ties to Enab Leg 24-74 ( E ) ( F )  
Primary Facilitator: Steve Riley  
Co Facilitator: Lisa Lorraine, Jamie Doyle, Tracy Craig  
Meetings: TBA Pending Provided Information from County

This group seeks to gather key information to aid in understanding the current landscape of services for those with I/DD. Goals of the group include 1.) Having an inventory of service provider organizations funded through the Maryland DDA that offer services to county residents. 2.) Survey providers to provide information including what types of services are offered, DSP staffing vacancy, schedule of compensation and benefits. 3.) Having an inventory of organizations including county DHHS that offer Coordination of Community Services (CCS). 4.) Inventory of Montgomery County public schools of their programs and resources. 5.) Inventory of programs and services that connect people with IDD with service provider organizations. 6.) Inventory of Montgomery County non-profit organizations that serve individuals with IDD through programs and services. The focus here is to identify areas of unmet need and identify gaps in services (i.e., housing, employment, transition, education). This information will be shared with current and future Commission Ad Hoc Subcommittees to help define priorities and needed support.

### **WORKFORCE STABILITY**

Primary Focus: Ensuring A Quality DSP Workforce  
Ties to Enab Leg 24-74 (E)  
Primary Facilitator: David Erwin  
Meetings: Monthly

## **I/DD HOSPITALIZATION & DUAL DIAGNOSIS**

Primary Focus: Ensuring A Quality DSP Workforce  
Ties to Enab Leg 24-74 (E)  
Primary Facilitator: Eric Salzano:  
Meetings: Monthly

## **In Process Ad Hoc Subcommittees**

### **COMMUNITY OUTREACH & ENGAGEMENT**

Primary Focus: Defining the landscape for those with I/DD  
Ties to Enab Leg 24-74 (A (B)); 24-71 (2) (A)  
Primary Facilitator: Jake Didinsky  
Co Facilitator: TBA  
Meetings: TBA Pending

This group has a primary goal of engaging and reaching out to the public to increase awareness, education and promote programs and venues that promote the welfare of those with I/DD.

### **EMPLOYMENT**

Primary Focus: Promoting employment opportunities for those with I/DD  
Ties to Enab Leg: 24-74 ( C )  
Primary Facilitator: Justin Hack  
Co Facilitator: TBA  
Meetings: TBA Pending

The focus of this group is to identify needs and gaps in services that pose barriers to employment for those with I/DD. A major goal is to come up with strategies, programs and recommendations that promote employment for those with I/DD.

### **HOUSING AND COMMUNITY**

Primary Focus: Promoting opportunities for housing services  
Ties to Enab Leg: 24-74 ( C ) ( F )  
Primary Facilitator: TBA  
Co Facilitator: TBA  
Meetings: TBA Pending

### **SPECIAL PROJECTS**

1. Brookside Gardens
2. MDH/Eligibility Redeterminations and Loss of Benefits
3. "My Story"
4. Transition Fair
5. Bill 33-23 (workgroup inactive for present having completed input)

Ad Hocs

PRIORITIES

Special Education & Activities

**Funding streams & supports for education**  
**Creating a roadmap for families & IDD**  
**Equity, access and advocacy during school years**  
**Balancing inclusion and need for specialized programs**

Hospitalization & Dual Diagnosis

**Improving ED visit**  
**Discharge coordination**  
**Dual diagnosis & crisis**

Promoting Quality Services

**Identifying unmet needs**  
**Looking at gaps in services and funding**  
**Ensuring quality services and programs for those with IDD**

IDD Workforce Stability

**Building a reliable , high quality 21<sup>st</sup> Century worforce through strategic investment, training and professional development, and career development**

DD Legislation & Policy

**Bill 33-23**  
**MDH/Medicaid Eligability Issues**  
**SB 790**

Community Engagement

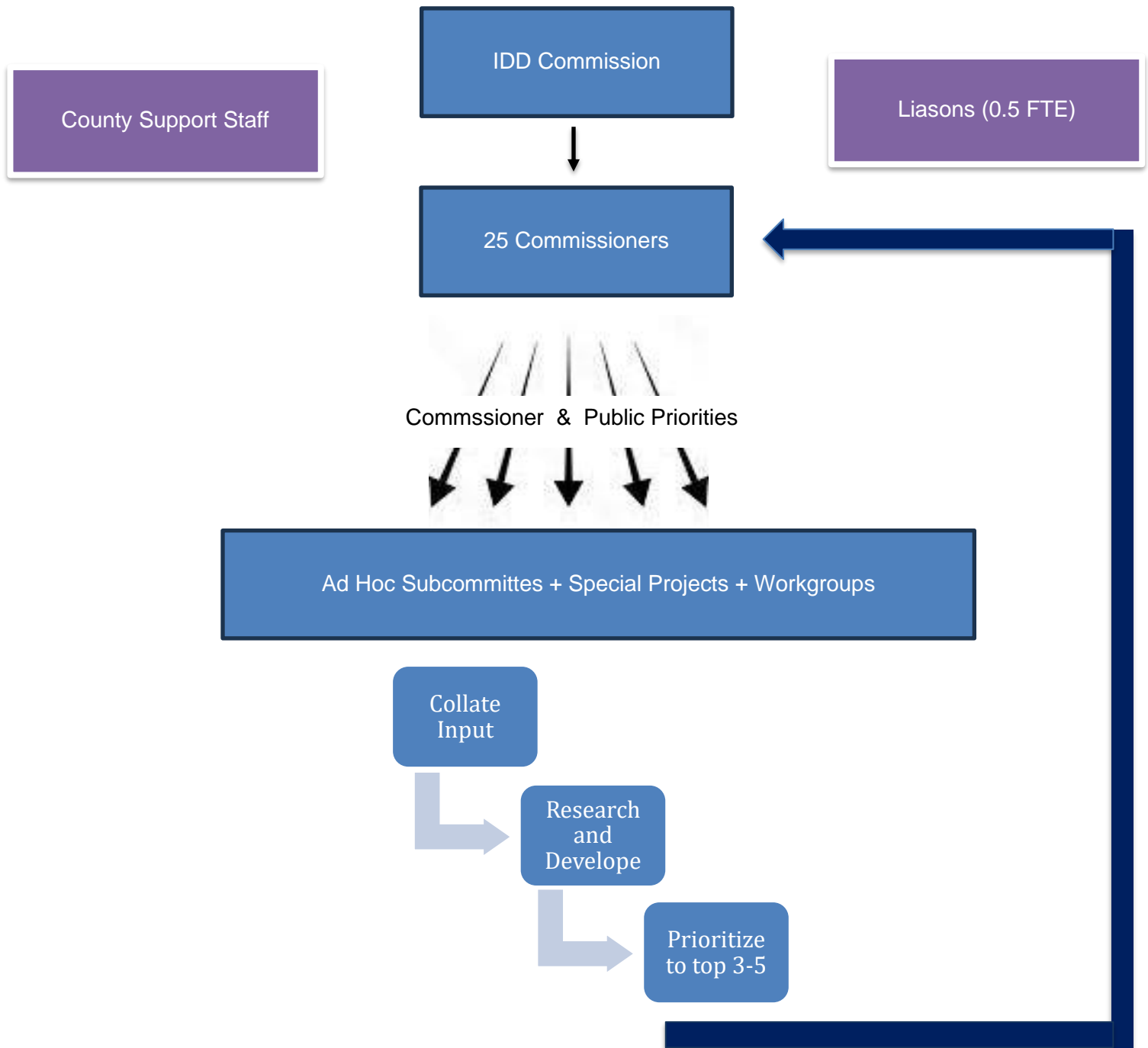
Employment

Housing



**Commissioner Input Needed**  
**What are your thoughts on priorities**

# DEFINING PRIORITIES & GOALS



March- May IDDC Meetings – Priority Discussions  
June IDDC Meeting - Groups present formal recs  
Sept & Oct IDDC Meeting – Disc, Prioritization, Ranking

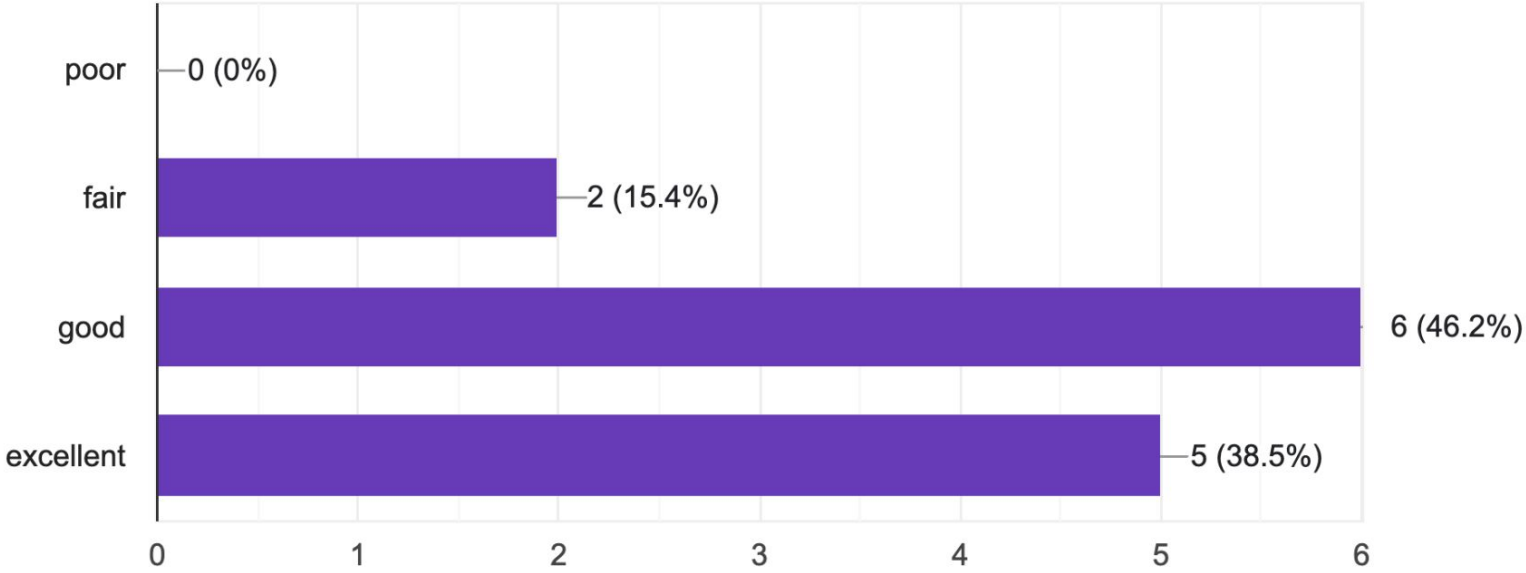
# IDDC Meeting Feedback

**Meeting #5- February 2024**



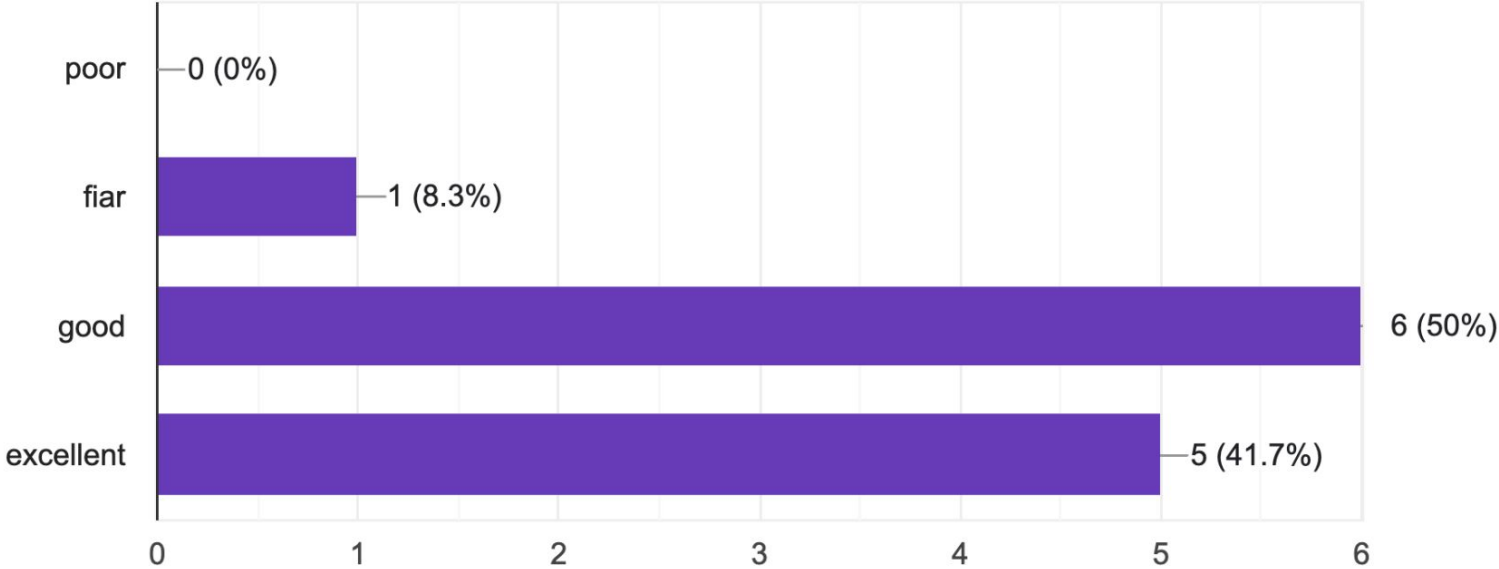
# How would you rate the overall quality of yesterday's meeting?

13 responses



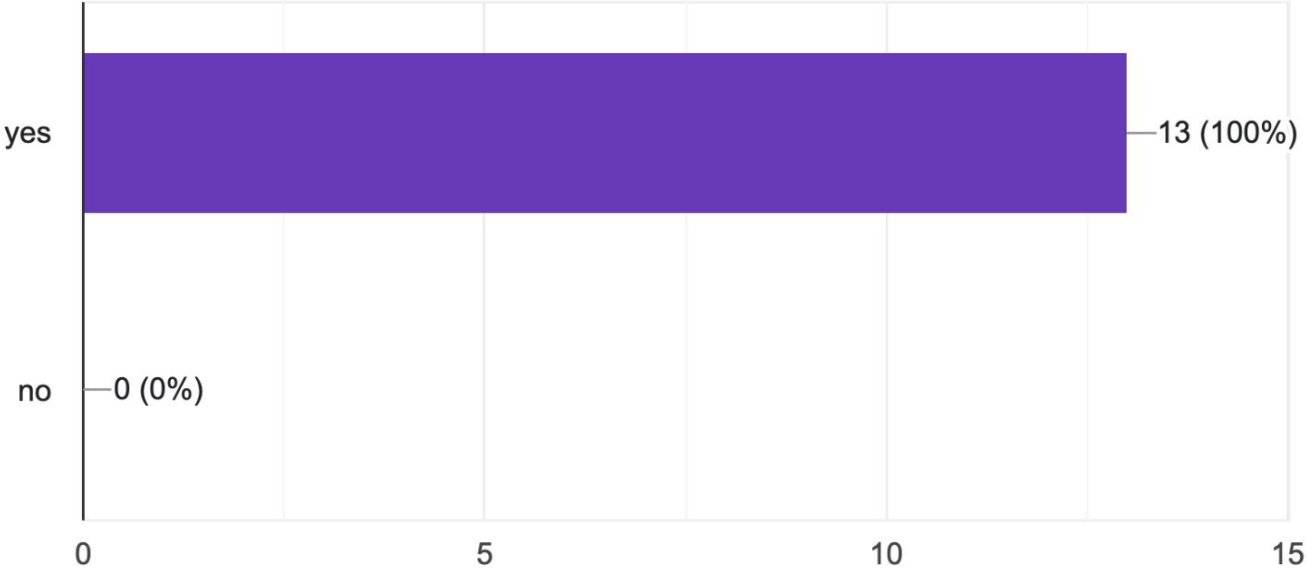
# How would you rate the quality, informational contents, and usefulness of the invited speaker(s)

12 responses



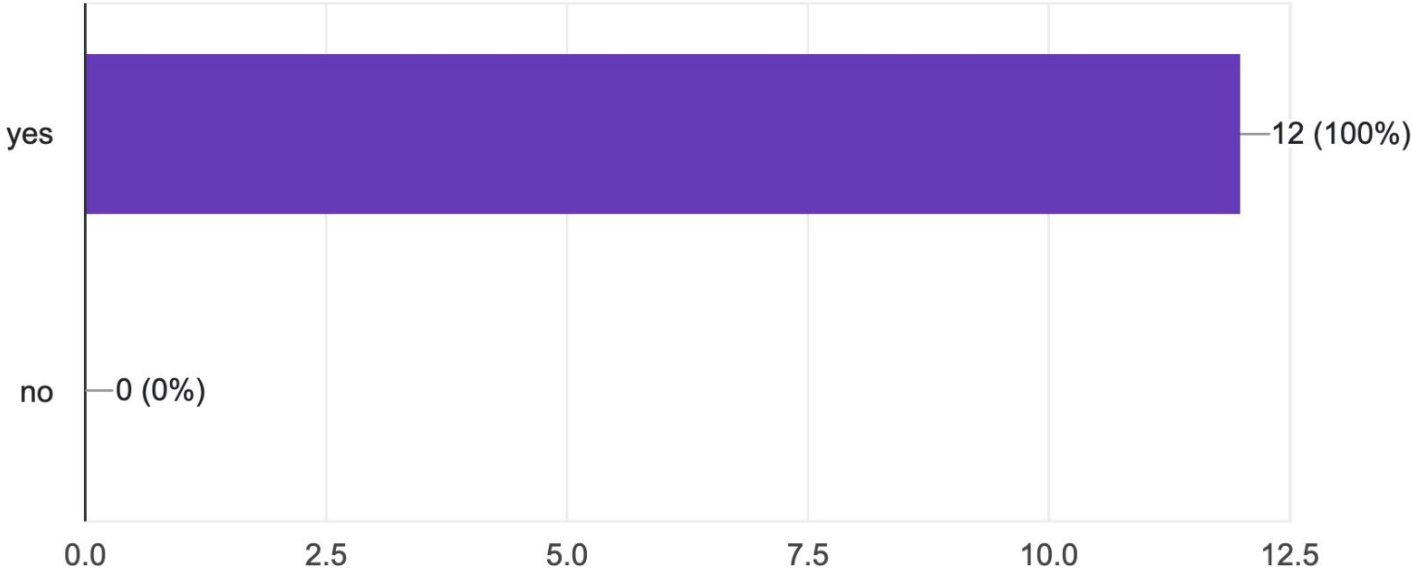
# Did you feel the meeting was conducted in a respectful, professional and inclusive manner?

13 responses



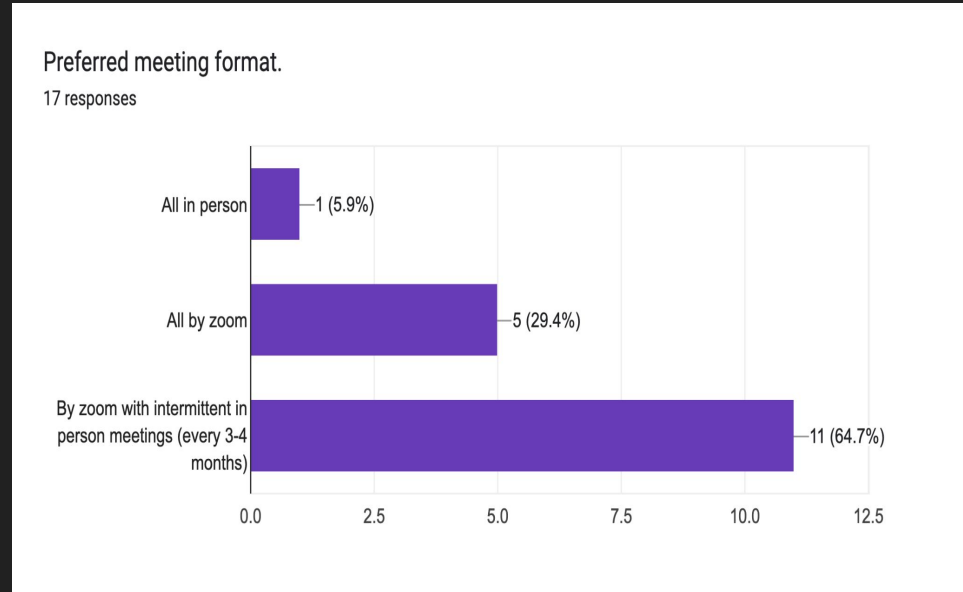
# Did you feel you had ample opportunity to provide input?

12 responses



# Suggestions By Commissioners February 2024

- ✓ Sharing of Documents Ad Hoc Subcommittees
- ✓ Clarification on timeline & workflow for defining priorities
- ✓ Explore alternative meeting formats



Bill No. 10-23  
Concerning: Health – Intellectual and  
Developmental Disabilities  
Commission - Established  
Revised: 03/21/23 Draft No. 4  
Introduced: February 14, 2023  
Enacted: March 28, 2023  
Executive: April 10, 2023  
Effective: July 10, 2023  
Sunset Date: None  
Ch. 13, Laws of Mont. Co. 2023

## COUNTY COUNCIL FOR MONTGOMERY COUNTY, MARYLAND

Lead Sponsors: Councilmember Albornoz  
Co-Sponsors: Councilmembers Luedtke, Mink, Council Vice-President Friedson, Councilmembers  
Katz, Jawando, Sayles, Fani-González, Stewart, Council President Glass, and Councilmember  
Balcombe

### AN ACT to:

- (1) establish an Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities Commission;
- (2) prescribe the membership and duties of the Commission;
- (3) provide for the staffing of the Commission; and
- (4) generally amend the law regarding the provision and coordination of services for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities in the County.

### By adding

Montgomery County Code  
Chapter 24. Health and Sanitation  
Article X, Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities Commission  
Sections 24-71, 24-72, 24-73, 24-74, 24-75, and 24-76

*The County Council for Montgomery County, Maryland approves the following Act:*

<b>Boldface</b>	<i>Heading or defined term.</i>
<u>Underlining</u>	<i>Added to existing law by original bill.</i>
<b>[Single boldface brackets]</b>	<i>Deleted from existing law by original bill.</i>
<u>Double underlining</u>	<i>Added by amendment.</i>
<b>[[Double boldface brackets]]</b>	<i>Deleted from existing law or the bill by amendment.</i>
* * *	<i>Existing law unaffected by bill.</i>

1           **Sec. 1. Sections 24-71, 24-72, 24-73, 24-74, 24-75, 24-76 are added as**  
 2 **follows:**

3           **ARTICLE X. INTELLECTUAL AND DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES**  
 4                                   **COMMISSION.**

5 **24-71. Definitions and Policy Statement.**

6           (a) *Definitions.* The following terms have the meanings indicated.

7                 Commission means the Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities  
 8                 Commission established under this Article.

9                 Intellectual and developmental disabilities or IDD means a severe,  
 10                 chronic disability of an individual that:

11                (1) is attributable to a mental or physical impairment or combination  
 12                   of mental and physical impairments;

13                (2) is manifested before the individual attains age 22;

14                (3) is likely to continue indefinitely;

15                (4) reflects the individual’s need for a combination and sequence of  
 16                   special, interdisciplinary, or generic services, individualized  
 17                   supports, or other forms of assistance that are of lifelong or  
 18                   extended duration and are individually planned and coordinated;  
 19                   and

20                (5) results in the substantial functional limitations in 3 or more of the  
 21                   following areas of major life activity:

22                    (A) self-care;

23                    (B) receptive and expressive language;

24                    (C) learning;

25                    (D) mobility;

26                    (E) self-direction;

27                    (F) capacity for independent living;

- 28                   (G) self-direction; and
- 29                   (H) economic self-sufficiency.

30       (b) *Policy statement.*

31           (1) Montgomery County is committed to creating an inclusive  
32           community for people with IDD so that they are afforded every  
33           opportunity to live a life of their choosing with the supports  
34           needed to participate fully in the life of the County.

35           (2) It is the public policy of the County to:

36           (A) promote and initiate ongoing community input to support  
37           the needs of individuals with intellectual and  
38           developmental disabilities;

39           (B) improve communication about programs and services  
40           among those with IDD and their families, advocates,  
41           support staff, public and private agencies, and the general  
42           public;

43           (C) identify service needs and inform decisions on services for  
44           individuals with intellectual and developmental  
45           disabilities; and

46           (D) work towards improving accessibility to services for  
47           individuals with intellectual and developmental  
48           disabilities.

49       **24-72. Commission Established.**

50           There is an Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities Commission.

51       **24-73. Membership; appointment; terms.**

52           (a) The Commission consists of 19 voting members and 6 non-voting  
53           members.



- 54           **(b)**    The voting members are appointed by the County Executive, subject to  
55                    Council confirmation, and must include:
- 56                    (1)    2 individuals with IDD;  
57                    (2)    9 family members, guardians, or support staff of individuals with  
58                            IDD;  
59                    (3)    7 individuals representing service providers or advocacy  
60                            organizations that [[supports]] support individuals with IDD; and  
61                    (4)    1 member of the Commission on People with Disabilities.
- 62            **(c)**    The non-voting members are designees of the following agencies:
- 63                    (1)    Department of Health and Human Services;  
64                    (2)    Department of Recreation;  
65                    (3)    Montgomery County Public Schools;  
66                    (4)    Montgomery College;  
67                    (5)    WorkSource Montgomery; and  
68                    (6)    Maryland Developmental Disabilities Administration.

69    **24-74. Duties.**

70            The Commission must:

- 71            **(a)**    promote direct communication among families, support staff, private  
72                    and public organizations, and the general public regarding programs and  
73                    services for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities;
- 74            **(b)**    institute and conduct educational and other programs, meetings, and  
75                    conferences to promote the welfare of individuals with intellectual and  
76                    developmental disabilities;
- 77            **(c)**    cooperate with public and private agencies, departments, and  
78                    organizations that provide services and programs for individuals with  
79                    intellectual and developmental disabilities;

- 80 (d) advise the County Council and the County Executive on matters
- 81 involving the needs of individuals with intellectual and developmental
- 82 disabilities;
- 83 (e) review and report on current gaps in services, including issues of
- 84 childcare, education, discrimination, transition to adult services,
- 85 resource coordination, housing, transportation, employment, health care,
- 86 recreation, and recruitment of providers and direct support staff;
- 87 (f) prepare recommendations on best practices, innovations in service
- 88 areas, and information on costs associated with recommended programs
- 89 and services for individuals with IDD; [[and]]
- 90 (g) work with key organizations at the county and state level to best
- 91 advance the needs of [[county]] County residents with IDD; and
- 92 (h) advocate at the local, state, and federal levels to advance the needs of
- 93 individuals with IDD.

94 **24-75. Meetings; officers; compensation; reports.**

- 95 (a) Meetings. The Commission must meet at the call of the Commission
- 96 Chair and at least 6 times annually.
- 97 (b) Quorum. A majority of the voting members of the Commission
- 98 constitutes a quorum for the transaction of business.
- 99 (c) Officers. The Commission must elect from among its voting members a
- 100 Chair, Vice-Chair, Secretary, and other officers it deems appropriate.
- 101 (d) Compensation. A member must serve without compensation, but the
- 102 member may request reimbursement for mileage and dependent care
- 103 costs at rates established by the County.
- 104 (e) Annual report. The Commission must submit annually a report to the
- 105 County Executive and County Council summarizing its activities,

106                    needs, recommendations and the degree to which the goals of the  
107                    Commission are being met.

108    **24-76. Staff support.**

109                    The Department of Health and Human Services must provide the staff support,  
110                    including administrative and programmatic support, necessary for the  
111                    Commission to perform its duties.

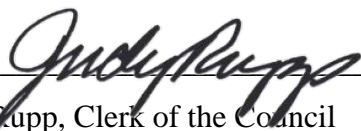
*Approved:*

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Evan Glass, President, County Council  
3/29/2023  
Date

*Approved:*

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Marc Elrich, County Executive  
4/10/2023  
Date

*This is a correct copy of Council action.*

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Judy Rupp, Clerk of the Council  
4/10/2023  
Date



## INTELLECTUAL AND DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES COMMISSION

February 27, 2024

Laura Herrera Scott, M.D., Secretary of Health  
Maryland Department of Health  
Herbert R. O'Connor State Office Building  
201 West Preston Street  
Baltimore, Maryland 21201

Dear Dr. Herrera Scott:

I am writing on behalf of the Montgomery County Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities Commission to highlight systemic issues we have identified in the Maryland Department of Health's Eligibility Redetermination Process and offer recommendations to address them. These issues require immediate action as they are significantly impacting individuals with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities in Montgomery County and across Maryland, particularly their access to uninterrupted essential services, including but not limited to routine and emergency medical care, including prescription drugs, long-term services and supports, and transportation.

We believe that collaborative efforts between the Medicaid Eligibility Determination Division, the Developmental Disabilities Administration, and the Coordinators of Community Services are essential to expedite immediate actions to resolve these issues and improve outcomes for Marylanders with disabilities. Outlined below are recommended immediate next steps that we believe will help mitigate the risks to Home and Community Based Services and medical assistance eligibility challenges faced by individuals with disabilities in accessing necessary services:

1. Provide DDA-certified Provider Agencies with a List of Redetermination Dates:
  - Furnish agencies (including Coordinators of Community Services) with a comprehensive list of redetermination dates for all individuals supported. Medicaid eligibility dates showing in *LTSSMaryland* are not consistently accurate and cannot be relied upon by provider agencies willing to facilitate the redetermination process. This listing of current and verified redetermination dates will facilitate accurate information and enable providers to collaborate with Coordinators of Community Services (CCS) agencies on the submission of

Department of Health and Human Services

redetermination packets, thereby reducing waiver ineligibility and the risk of individuals losing healthcare and long-term services and supports.

2. Pause the Redetermination Process:

- Temporarily pause the redetermination process until such time as current challenges to the system are resolved. This will ensure all individuals remain eligible for healthcare and long-term services and supports until a comprehensive resolution is determined.

3. Extend Appeals Process Timeline:

- Extend the appeals process timeline from 10 to 60 days to accommodate people with IDD, their provider agencies, and family members who may not receive timely notification of redeterminations. This extension will enable them to submit appeals within a reasonable timeframe and, critically, will allow the Medicaid Eligibility Determination Division to catch up with processing a growing number of redetermination submissions, thereby increasing the likelihood of maintaining the individual's waiver eligibility without service interruption.

4. Continue Retroactive Payment Position:

- Maintain the retroactive payment position to demonstrate a commitment to providers by ensuring reimbursement for services rendered. This will encourage providers to continue delivering services and support to individuals, ensuring uninterrupted access to necessary resources.

In addition to these immediate actions, we propose the following future action steps:

1. Ensure Accuracy of LTSS*Maryland* Information:

- Verify the accuracy of redetermination information in LTSS*Maryland* to prevent inaccuracies and discrepancies.
- Provide agencies with the ability to access the redetermination applications in LTSS*Maryland*. This enhancement will allow providers to collaborate with CCS agencies in accurately submitting documentation and/or facilitate the retrieval of information from family members or caregivers.

2. Establish a Process for Updating Authorized Representatives:

- Implement a process within CCS agencies to inform the authorized representative when there are changes in staff within CCS agencies.

3. Build Capacity Within EDD for Timely Processing:

- Enhance capacity within MDH's Eligibility Determination Department to ensure timely processing of redetermination packets and increase responsiveness as stakeholders work to troubleshoot issues.

In the immediate term, we believe these steps are essential to assuring no interruption or losses of services for Marylanders with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities. We further believe that by implementing these proposed next steps and fostering collaboration between agencies and stakeholders, we can address the systemic issues in the Eligibility Redetermination Process and improve outcomes for individuals with disabilities in Maryland.

Thank you for your attention to this matter, and we look forward to your response and to working together toward positive change.

Sincerely,

*Michael D. Greenberg*

Michael D. Greenberg, M.D., Chair  
Montgomery County  
Intellectual & Developmental Disabilities Commission

cc: Marlana R. Hutchinson, Deputy Secretary DDA  
Ryan Moran, Deputy Secretary Health Care Financing & Medicaid Director



## DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

*Wes Moore, Governor · Aruna Miller, Lt. Governor · Laura Herrera Scott, M.D., M.P.H., Secretary*

March 13, 2024

Michael D. Greenberg, MD, Chair  
Department of Health and Human Services  
Montgomery County Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities Commission  
101 Monroe Street, 2nd Floor  
Rockville, MD 20850

Dear Chair Michael Greenberg:

Thank you for the letter outlining concerns with the state's eligibility redetermination process. Please be assured that the Maryland Department of Health (MDH) is actively working to ensure that every single person who remains eligible for coverage remains enrolled.

During the Public Health Emergency (PHE), individuals who participate in the Medicaid waiver programs that are operated by the Developmental Disabilities Administration (DDA) - Community Pathways, Community Supports, and Family Supports - did not have to go through a Medicaid redetermination to keep their Medicaid eligibility, home and community-based services (HCBS), or waiver eligibility. During this time, even if a participant was no longer financially, technically, or medically eligible, they did not lose coverage or services.

Beginning in April 2023, Maryland began making Medicaid eligibility reviews again during the unwinding of the COVID-19 PHE. This process of Medicaid eligibility redetermination, or renewals, happens over time. This means that not everyone, since the onset of this unwinding process, has been up for renewal at the same time.

A majority of participants enrolled in the DDA-operated Medicaid waiver programs, such as those receiving Social Security Income (SSI), do not follow the same renewal process as other Medicaid participants. In Maryland, SSI individuals automatically qualify for Medicaid and do not have to fill out an application form. For those that do require a redetermination, notices were mailed to Medicaid participants, regardless of program participation, starting 75 days from the date of their scheduled redetermination. Participants receive multiple notices to remind them of their redetermination process. Each outlines appeal rights within, in accordance with the requirements as set forth by the Maryland Medicaid Administration and the Office of Administrative Hearings.



Chair Michael Greenberg  
March 13, 2024  
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Over this past weekend, MDH's *LTSSMaryland* system was updated to reflect accurate due dates. This automation will ensure that accurate due dates are consistently reflected across the state's enrollment systems. DDA service providers can also view the financial redetermination due date for individuals they support in *LTSSMaryland's* Provider Portal.

Regarding your concerns about individuals who may have been negatively impacted by Medicaid's waiver redetermination process, please provide us with any specific cases that you are aware of, or can share. We are sensitive to these issues and want an opportunity to research them further. Please share these cases via a secured format and direct them to DDA's eligibility liaison, Ama Owusu-Donkor at [ama.owusu-donkor@maryland.gov](mailto:ama.owusu-donkor@maryland.gov).

Thank you again for your letter. We appreciate your advocacy, and we welcome the opportunity to meet with you and your fellow commission members to discuss this matter further. Please contact Monique-Cheatham at (443)-681-8517 or [monique.cheatham1@maryland.gov](mailto:monique.cheatham1@maryland.gov) to coordinate our schedules at a time that is convenient for you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Laura Herrera Scott', is positioned above the typed name.

Laura Herrera Scott, MD, MPH  
Secretary of Health



## DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

Wes Moore, Governor · Aruna Miller, Lt. Governor · Laura Herrera Scott, M.D., M.P.H., Secretary

Dear Waiver Participant:

This letter is to let you know the steps you need to take to renew your Medicaid coverage. When you renew, we will see if you are still eligible for Medicaid and for the waiver program you are in. To renew your Medicaid, known as renewal or redetermination, is to reapply. Some also call it an eligibility review.

The Maryland Department of Health (MDH) did not require you to renew your Medicaid during the COVID-19 public health emergency from March 2020 until now. Everyone kept their coverage during this time - even if they were no longer eligible. Now everyone must renew when it is their turn.

### Get Ready to Renew

**1. Make Sure Your Contact Information is Up to Date.**

- Make sure we have your right address, phone number and email so we can reach you. To check and update your information:
  - Log in to your [MyMDThink](#) account, or
  - Contact your [Local Department of Social Services](#) for help, or
  - Work with your Coordinator of Community Services (CCS) for help.

**2. Check Your Mail. Read Your Mail.**

- Watch your mail for notices from us. You will get notices about your upcoming renewal 90 days ahead of time.
- Look for your renewal packet in your mail.
- Your Coordinator of Community Services can help you with information about your renewal date too.

**3. Complete and Return all Forms and Documents Right Away.**

- When you get your renewal packet, be sure to complete and return it by the due date. If you do not, you will lose your Medicaid and waiver coverage.

**4. Help with Your Renewal**

- Call your Coordinator of Community Services or your personal representative, which is the person you choose to help you, for questions or help with your renewal.



**Translation Services | Servicios de Traducción**

Si habla español, tiene a su disposición servicios gratuitos de asistencia lingüística. Llame a su Coordinador de Servicios Comunitarios o a su Departamento de Servicios Humanos local.

Visit our Participant Check-In webpage to learn more about renewals. Go to the page now: <https://bit.ly/3sHXQN1> or scan the QR code.



Best,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Ryan B. Moran".

Ryan Moran, Deputy Secretary  
Health Care Financing and Medicaid

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Marlana R. Hutchinson".

Marlana R. Hutchinson, Deputy Secretary  
Developmental Disabilities Administration

Good morning,

I'm \_\_\_\_\_, a Montgomery County resident. I am writing today as one of many concerned parents with students of the Darnestown Autism Elementary Learning Center (ELC). My son, \_\_\_\_\_ is a \_\_\_\_\_ grade student and has diagnoses of Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) and Attention Deficit and Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD). He has been a student at the Darnestown Autism ELC since \_\_\_\_\_ grade. We have been very pleased with the evidence-based learning with instruction tailored to children with ASD. His current classroom has the staffing and resources he needs to pursue a high school diploma.

I am writing to you to express my deep concerns regarding the recent decision to convert the Darnestown Autism ELC from its specialized focus on students with ASD to a traditional learning center. I and many other parents were taken aback by this unexpected announcement and we are perplexed as to why Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) believes altering the Darnestown Autism ELC program is in the best interest of the children it serves. The other parents and I implore the decision makers and those tasked with oversight of the school system to reconsider this decision. We also encourage revision of the processes governing programmatic alterations that will enable greater transparency and accountability to the parents, students, and taxpayers served by MCPS.

The conversion of the Darnestown Autism ELC to a traditional learning center comes with a significant reduction in staff and a marked increase in the scope of the program's responsibilities. Leadership within the Darnestown Autism ELC informed parents that the school would lose seven full-time equivalent paraeducator positions because of the conversion; yet the school would be open to a broader array of special-needs students despite the loss of staff. Currently, the Darnestown Autism ELC is the only learning center in MCPS focused specifically on students with ASD and it delivers instruction and services uniquely tailored to those students' learning profiles.

The other parents and I are very concerned about the compliance implications of transitioning these students to a new learning environment. Accordingly, we kindly request more details in writing about the factors underlying MCPS' decision to shutter the autism specific focus of the Darnestown Autism ELC including but not limited to academic, operational, budgetary, and policy considerations. We would like to please receive details of the analysis MCPS staff conducted prior to its decision to ensure that students presently enrolled in the Darnestown Autism ELC will continue to receive the services outlined in their Individualized Education Programs (IEP) with fidelity.

While the other parents and I acknowledge that some students with ASD attend traditional learning centers, we reject the premise that the Darnestown Autism ELC and traditional learning centers are functionally equivalent. In accordance with the Individuals with Disabilities in Education Act's requirements for public schools to provide a free appropriate public education, MCPS placed students at the Darnestown Autism ELC instead of traditional learning centers because it was the least restrictive learning environment for those children. Accordingly, many Darnestown students have IEPs that rely upon the availability of higher paraeducator ratios, specialized staff, and ASD-specific supports.

The other parents and I are dismayed by the lack of transparency in the lead-up to the decision to discontinue the autism specific focus of the Darnestown Autism ELC. MCPS central office staff misled the public when it made representations in both the FY 2025 Special Education Staffing Plan and a February 22, 2024 joint MCPS and xMinds "Primers on Placements" presentation that the Darnestown Autism ELC would remain an option for students with ASD in FY 2025.

We are disappointed that a decision of this magnitude is being made so late in the budget process without the benefit of public input. As we observe Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month, we seek for MCPS to recommit to Governor Moore's determination to "leave no one behind." Therefore, we respectfully ask that you work with MCPS to reconsider these changes and collaborate with the community to find solutions that prioritize the well-being and educational success of all students at the Darnestown Autism ELC.

Thank you for your attention to this urgent and time sensitive need.

Sincerely,

## Background information

**Current issue:** The Montgomery County Board of Education plans to phase out, and eventually eliminate, the Autism Learning Center at Darnestown Elementary School (DES) and to reduce paraeducator support for students grandfathered into the program by 50% effective this fall (current ratio is 1 teacher: 2 paras: up to 9 students). The DES learning center will be converted to a traditional learning center. This is a time sensitive issue as the budget will be finalized in May.

**Background<sup>1</sup>:** The autism learning center at Darnestown is the only diploma-bound elementary school program that was designed, in consultation with the Kennedy Krieger Institute, to meet the needs children with autism who can follow the MCPS curriculum, but require:

- Structured ongoing systematic behavioral interventions during transitions, as well as large and small group instruction and independent work
  - A high degree of reinforcement for compliance and escape behaviors
  - Structured teaching for transitions, following routines, and attention to task.
- Children in this program often exhibit challenging behaviors that limit their ability to be placed in general education or a traditional learning center due to the structure of the traditional LC program. A traditional LC serves children with a variety of learning, behavioral needs, and diagnoses and with an average enrollment of 15 students per class with 1 paraeducator. A traditional learning center will not be able to meet the needs of children whose profiles align with the DES autism learning center.

### Why the IDDC should be concerned:

- The prevalence of autism is increasing each year and currently 1 in 36 children have a diagnosis of autism, which is an increase of about 92% from 2012. These trends are consistent with statistics published in Montgomery County on children with autism enrolled in Special Education. From 2012 to 2022, the number of students with autism enrolled in MCPS increased by 61.4 percent, from 1,889 to 3,049 students.<sup>2</sup>
- Persistent increases in the enrollment of autistic children in the County each year remain. Moreover, due to COVID-19 lockdowns in 2020, which did not permit children to undergo formal diagnostic testing for autism, any projections of enrollment of children with autism in future fiscal years that MCPS has conducted to support decisions are likely severe underestimates.
- Collectively, these data suggest an unmet need to EXPAND autism-specific programs rather than phase them out. If the Board eliminates the DES autism learning center, there will be countless children with the same educational and behavioral support needs those currently enrolled in the program coming up behind them with no proper placement that comports with their legal rights to FAPE. The cuts to the MCPS budget are affecting the most vulnerable kids in the County.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/siteassets/district/departments/special-education/events/diploma-track-elementary-revised-5.14.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/HHS-Program/Resources/Files/A%26D%20Docs/CPWD/CPWD2023AnnualReport.pdf>;  
<https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/HHS-Program/Resources/Files/A%26D%20Docs/CPWD/CPWD2014AnnualReport.pdf>

## DRAFT

To: Members of the Senate Finance Committee

To: Members of the Montgomery County State Delegation

From: Montgomery County Intellectual and Developmental Disability Commission

**RE: Senate 790, Maryland Medical Assistance Program – Employed Individuals with Disabilities.**

Position: Support with Recommendations

The Montgomery County Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities Commission (IDDC) under local Enabling Legislation consists of people with developmental disabilities, family members, service providers, and advocacy organizations. Prescribed duties include advocating at the state level to advance the needs of people with IDD.

SB790 is vital to the state and county public policy to promote the employment of people with disabilities. Significant state and local resources are allocated every year to support people to become employed, which then puts the employed person at risk of losing their Medicaid health insurance as well as Medicaid home and community-based supports (HCBS), based on Medicaid income test requirements. The EID provides an effective way to achieve what people with disabilities need, namely, employment, health insurance, and community-based services. Indeed, the Maryland Department of Health, Developmental Disabilities Administration has established Maryland as an Employment First state for people with disabilities.

SB790 removes the age cap so that people 65 years and older are eligible for EID eligibility, and reduces the premiums paid to enroll in the program by ending the marriage penalty.

The EID program is under-utilized, complicated, and not well known across the state. Access and the application process is challenging and long. More initiatives for public awareness, application assistance, public and equity outreach are essential to meet the policy goals of employment first for people with disabilities

Therefore, the IDDC recommends:

1. Establish provisions of robust public awareness and public outreach in keeping with the State Employment First mission as well as equity.
2. That local and state agencies have EID trained staff to assist people to understand and apply for the EID program
3. That the EID State-Based Coalition of disability advocates includes an appropriate number of people with disabilities.

Thank you for your consideration. The Montgomery County Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities Commission strongly supports SB790 and request the Maryland General Assembly Elected Officials vote in favor of the Bill.

Sincerely;

Michael Greenberg

Chair

IDDC