

**APPROVED NOVEMBER 27, 2018**

Montgomery County Community Action Board Meeting  
October 23, 2018  
1401 Rockville Pike, Room 3603

**MINUTES**

**CAB Members Present:**, Mary Bennett, Valerie Chatfield-Smith, Lisa Conlon, Jackie Dennard, Lisette Engel, Gail Gunod-Green, Laura Irwin, Tiffany Jones, Agnes Leshner, Myriam Paul, and Zelda Wafer-Alonge

**CAB Members Absent:** Isaac Osei Asare, Alejandro Becerra, Stacy Coletta, Ron Jennings, Pamela Lockett, Steve Ruffin, and Mike Subin

**Guests:** Beverly Coleman, Will Kenlaw (DOT), and Monica Ortiz

**Staff:** Charlene Muhammad, Aizat Oladapo, and Leah Goldfine

**Call to Order:** The meeting was called to order at 7:05 pm.

**Consent Agenda:** Mary moved to approve the consent agenda and Lisette seconded the motion. All Board members voted in favor. The consent agenda included the minutes from the September 25, 2018 CAB meeting, meeting evaluations summary from the September 25, 2018 CAB meeting, Executive Director's report, VITA summary report, Head Start report, P card statements and grant updates (email only), Contracts report, Staff Liaison's report (email only), CAB testimony for Bill 34-18 – Minimum Wage – Definition of Employer (email only), CAB testimony for the Annual HHS Committee Worksession for BCC leadership (email only), Advisory Committee on Consumer Protection report (email only), Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee report (email only), and a presentation on the Inclusive Multi-Generational Park in Long Branch (email only).

**Presentation by Monica Ortiz, Policy Officer for Early Care and Education**

Monica provided updates on the Kirwan Commission's recommendations. The Early Childhood Coordinating Council will submit comments to the County Executive, to be incorporated into the County's response. MCPS will respond the full Kirwan Commission report, which includes recommendations about Pre-K – 12<sup>th</sup> grade.

Board members received slides providing an overview of the new Quality of Care Cost Modeling Study and Monica shared an overview. For this study, contractors used the Federal Provider Cost of Quality Calculator to develop an automated tool that allows providers to enter their information and discover the average costs in the County – the Cost Estimate Model for Montgomery County. The report includes appendices that highlight international child care models, options for special populations, and information regarding improving quality for diverse learners. The report can be useful for providers, stakeholders, legislators, and policy developers. CAB can utilize this tool in its

advocacy work. Legislators need to be aware of the costs of child care and the challenges private providers face.

Monica highlighted the cost analysis portion of the report, which includes the expenditures for providers to offer quality care. Many providers are not earning a profit or are barely breaking even. The costs associated with obtaining a certain level of EXCELS certification are very high. There is a great deal of staff training involved and a high turnover rate for many providers. Many providers cannot afford to receive the higher EXCELS rating needed to qualify for child care subsidies. Some providers can become accredited instead, but many cannot afford either option.

Monica discussed the differences between the state Child Care Subsidy and the County's Working Parents Assistance (WPA) program. The state recently increased the income guidelines for its subsidy. Everyone who previously qualified for the WPA now qualifies for the state subsidy. The WPA could be used as a supplement to the subsidy, but the County has yet to determine how the WPA will change. The County Council was scheduled to discuss the WPA at a worksession on October 30.

There are ways to reduce the burdens placed on private providers who need to meet the EXCELS requirements and to reduce overall costs for child care. Easing restrictions on the use of public facilities (County buildings) could reduce facility costs for providers. Tax incentives for employers who provide on site child care or subsidies for employees' child care is another option. Offering tax incentives for EXCELS-rated providers could also be an option.

**CAB Updates:**

The Board members discussed the CAB response to the recommendations of the Kirwan Commission Early Childhood Education Working Group. Lisette, Mary, and Tiffany volunteered to serve on an ad hoc committee to review the recommendations and draft the Board's response before the next CAB meeting.

Board members reviewed draft comments opposing the proposed changes to the "public charge" rule. The comments would be posted online on the portal established by the federal government. Gail moved to oppose the proposed changes and to approve the Board's comments as written. Lisa seconded the motion and all voted in favor.

The Board reviewed a response to the Office of Legislative Oversight report on the County Council Grants process, which Mary drafted. The response provided general recommendations because the committee members did not want to submit recommendations that would negatively impact the CAA partner organizations. A motion was put forward to support the draft letter and submit it to County Council. Agnes seconded the motion and all voted in favor.

Leah reminded the Board members that they are invited to attend the first CAI workshop on November 3.

**Head Start Updates:**

In addition to the written Head Start report Board members received in their packets, Charlene reported that the County Council would discuss Head Start and Pre-K at a worksession on October 30. This worksession will include a discussion of changes to the WPA program. Charlene noted that 22 schools need to go through EXCELS certification to continue to receive state funds. MSDE can assist with some of the expenses.

**Contracts:**

In addition to her written report to the Board with updates on the CAA contracts, Aizat provided updates on the Food Council. The Food Council is currently seeking 501 (c) 3 status. The Council is offering eight mini grants for organizations conducting food recovery. The Montgomery County Food Resource Directory is now available in Spanish. The Council is looking into standardizing reporting for food and nutrition providers. The Department is hosting listening sessions for Judy Center parents at TESS and for Early Head Start families at Family Services, Inc. The listening sessions will be conducted in Spanish and English and will gather information about food insecurity for young children.

Aizat shared a presentation about the CSBG National Performance Indicators. The new CSBG Annual Report includes four modules, each of which includes National Performance Indicators. The NPIs gather data about each CAA's outcomes. Aizat shared examples from Module 3 – Community Level (Food Security and VITA) and from Module 4 – Individual and Family Level (Head Start, VITA, the contractors, TESS, and the CAI).

**Announcements:**

Laura noted that she recently participated in the annual County Council HHS Committee Worksession for Boards, Committees, and Commissions. She encouraged ongoing collaboration with the other BCCs with similar priority issues.

Lisa invited the CAB members to the annual Pre-K/Head Start Stakeholders Recruitment and Registration Meeting on November 28 from 9 – 11 at Rocking Horse Road Center. Leah will send details to the CAB via email.

**Adjourn:** The meeting was adjourned at 8:45 pm.