

Montgomery County Commission on Child Care



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October 1, 2014

The Honorable Isiah Leggett
Montgomery County Executive

Council Members
Montgomery County Council

The Honorable Craig Rice
President, Montgomery County Council

Citizens of Montgomery County

Dear Mr. Leggett, Mr. Rice, Council Members and Citizens:

The Montgomery County Commission on Child Care is pleased to submit its 2013-2014 Annual Report. Commissioners this year have been deeply engaged on behalf of the children and families of Montgomery County in meetings with County officials, collaborations with County agencies and workgroups, and in conversation with child care providers. We have testified in public forums to raise awareness about the need to increase funding for the Working Parents Assistance Program, improve the process for access to child care in public spaces, and monitor the impact on child care providers from the implementation of the State's new EXCELS Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS).

Throughout this year I have been struck by the dedication and deep commitment that this group of volunteers brings to their work on behalf of children and families. Commissioners are made up of a variety of stakeholders and experts in the child care and early childhood education field including: County parents, business representatives, child care providers, Montgomery County Public School staff, Montgomery College staff, and representatives from the County and State agencies that impact child care. As a group, our collective knowledge and expertise allows the Commission to discuss, analyze, and problem solve child care issues and provide a comprehensive perspective for feedback, improvements, and solutions to County officials and citizens.

In working with this current group of Commissioners and in conversation this year with past Commissioners and early childhood experts across the public and private sectors, there is a common conversation thread that emerges related to addressing the current state of child care and family services in Montgomery County. "We looked into that before" or "we made that recommendation last year" or "we tried that approach a few years ago" are common phrases that get uttered when speaking about the need to address pressing funding and service delivery needs for ensuring the availability and delivery of quality child care for all children and residents of Montgomery County.

Now is the time for action. The cost of child care is continuing to increase yet State and County funding to support child care has remained relatively flat or been cut. Parents of virtually all income levels are struggling to afford child care, with more and more families at the lower end of the income spectrum left with no options other than to

resort to unregulated and/or substandard care options for their children. In this year's report, we urge you to enhance the Working Parents Assistance Program (WPA) by increasing the amount of subsidy payments and revising the income guidelines to reflect the increased cost of living in Montgomery County.

We must be transparent and consistent. The child care delivery system in Montgomery County is a patchwork of businesses, organizations, and family run operations of many different configurations, including non-profits and for-profits, single and multiple sites, in-home and center- or school-based, independent and subsidized (by religious, governmental, or corporate entities). Similarly, providers are governed by a series of disparate guidelines and processes from Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS), Health and Human Services (HHS) and the Office of Community Use of Public Facilities (CUPF). The overwhelming feedback from child care providers is that the processes for managing the use of public space for child care are not transparent, well-funded, or well-managed. We recommend the County immediately work to better align the standards and processes that govern child care and school-age care in public space to ensure that families receive quality and reliable care.

We must invest for our future. The body of research is large and compelling. Early care and education experiences are critical to ensuring that children have the foundation for school readiness and the basis for lifelong learning and success. Continued professional development for child care providers is needed to advance the knowledge and skills of the employees who deliver these important experiences to the children in their care. The Staff Qualifications and Professional Development criteria established as part of Maryland EXCELS, the State's newly mandated Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS), includes academic and educational requirements that will layer additional training costs onto an already burdened child care financial model. We recommend that the County develop and implement a plan to increase available funding to help subsidize the professional development for child care workers to meet State mandated EXCELS requirements and continue to raise the quality of child care in our programs.

We believe that these are important steps to address the issues we are facing with child care in Montgomery County. It must be an immediate priority to make quality child care and early childhood education available and affordable for all children and families. Money spent on child care and early childhood education is an investment in our social and economic future. Let us turn the talk to action and work to make an immediate impact on the lives of our youngest citizens and their families.

The Commission greatly appreciates your consideration of its recommendations and priorities when making policy and budget decisions.

Sincerely,



Michelle Green
Chair

The Commission on Child Care

Vision

Access to quality, affordable child care for all Montgomery County families.

Mission

To advise the County Executive and County Council on the development, implementation, and effectiveness of government policies, programs, and services that enhance community support for quality, affordable, and accessible child care.

Purpose

Section 27-62 of the Montgomery County Code provides authority for the Commission on Child Care to “advise the County Executive and County Council on the development of policies, programs, and services that enhance community support for high quality, affordable, and accessible child care.”

Meetings

The full Commission meets on the third Wednesday of the month at 7:00 p.m. at the Juvenile Assessment Center, 7300 Calhoun Place, Suite 600, Rockville, MD 20855. All meetings are open to the general public.

A significant portion of the Commission’s work is accomplished through the Executive, Programmatic Issues, Public Policy, and Membership Committees. Volunteers from the general public are invited to assist the committees. Committee meetings take place on the first Wednesday of the month at 7300 Calhoun Place, with the Programmatic Issues Committee and Public Policy Committee meeting concurrently at 6:30 p.m., and the Executive Committee meeting at 7:30 p.m. All meetings are open to the public.

Please call 240-777-4659; TTY 240-777-1009 for more information regarding full Commission and Committee meetings.

Membership

The Commission has 18 voting members and five to seven non-voting members appointed by the County Executive and confirmed by the County Council. Membership includes parents, center and family child care providers, and representatives from the business community, general public, and government agencies with interests in child care. The Commission is supported through staff effort from the Montgomery County Department of Health and Human Services.

Commission Year 2013 - 2014

Voting Members

Parent Representatives

Suzanne Freed Auerbach
Sandra Cortez
Hillary Fitis
Tamiaka Thomasson

Child Care Provider Representatives

Shernet Dixon-James
Nuri Funes
Michelle Green
Mimi Hassanein
Bernadine Occhiuzzo
Shaun Rose

Business and General Public Representatives

Laurence Fabre-Welmond
Richard Patterson
Aurora Sanchez
Mindy Thiel
Shakeemah White

Maryland Municipal League Representative

Monica Sanchez

Non-Voting Members

Barbara Andrews, Montgomery County Department of Health and Human Services
Pamela Dunn, Montgomery County Planning Board
Carl Eggleston, Maryland State Department of Education, Office of Child Care
Claudia Simmons, Montgomery County Public Schools
Felicia Turner, Montgomery County Department of Health and Human Services
Carol Walsh, Montgomery County Collaboration Council for Children, Youth, and Families, Inc.

Staff

Mary Gies, Program Manager, Early Childhood Services, Montgomery County Department of Health and Human Services

Membership

Commission Year 2014 - 2015

Voting Members

Parent Representatives

Sandra Cortez
Brigid Howe
Hillary Fitis
Edward Krauze
Tamiaka Thomasson

Child Care Provider Representatives

Rossana Espinoza-
Thorndahl
Nuri Funes
Michelle Green
Diana Holzberger
Bernadine Occhiuzzo
Nicole Queen
Shaun Rose

Business and General Public Representatives

Rosalba Bonilla-Acosta
Linda Janulis
Barbara Warman

Maryland Municipal League Representative

Monica Sanchez

Non-Voting Members

Barbara Andrews, Montgomery County Department of Health and Human Services
Pamela Dunn, Montgomery County Planning Board
Carl Eggleston, Maryland State Department of Education, Office of Child Care
Claudia Simmons, Montgomery County Public Schools
Vacant, Montgomery County Department of Health and Human Services
Vacant, Montgomery College
Vacant, Montgomery County Collaboration Council for Children, Youth, and Families

Staff

Vacant, Program Manager, Early Childhood Services, Montgomery County
Department of Health and Human Services

Recommendation #1

Enhance the Working Parents Assistance Program (WPA) by increasing the amount of subsidy payments and revising the income guidelines to reflect the increased cost of living in Montgomery County. Supplement the State Child Care Subsidy rates for County residents so that those who qualify receive a subsidy that is equivalent to the WPA rates.

The State's Child Care Subsidy Program was established to help the working poor be able to better afford child care for their children. In recognition that the cost of living was higher in Montgomery County than in other parts of Maryland, the County established WPA to supplement the State program. For many years, the Commission has been advising the County that while child care costs have continued to rise, WPA subsidy amounts and income qualification levels have not kept pace. As a result, many of the County's working poor make too much to qualify for WPA. Those who do qualify receive a subsidy amount that is woefully insufficient for them to be able to afford care for their children. Specifically, the 2014 County Council-convened WPA Workgroup Report states that an average single parent with two children in care would have to pay over 60% of their gross income on child care and **that is after** receiving a WPA subsidy for both children.

It is past time to take meaningful action. We cannot continue to allow our youngest children to fall through the cracks. Our County has long been falling behind in its support of child care and early childhood education (ECE). Costs continue to increase and the State's underfunded mandates, like Maryland EXCELS, are exacerbating this problem. The County's minimum wage increase is further escalating costs. For example, many child care workers currently make less than the new minimum wage. Child care business owners, who operate on very thin margins, will now have to pass along the cost of higher wages to families through additional tuition increases. While these governmental initiatives have a noble goal of increasing quality standards in child care and self-sufficiency for County workers, the reality of the economic model supporting child care budgets is that programs cannot simply absorb these costs and remain solvent.

"It is past time to take meaningful action. We cannot continue to allow our youngest children to fall through the cracks."

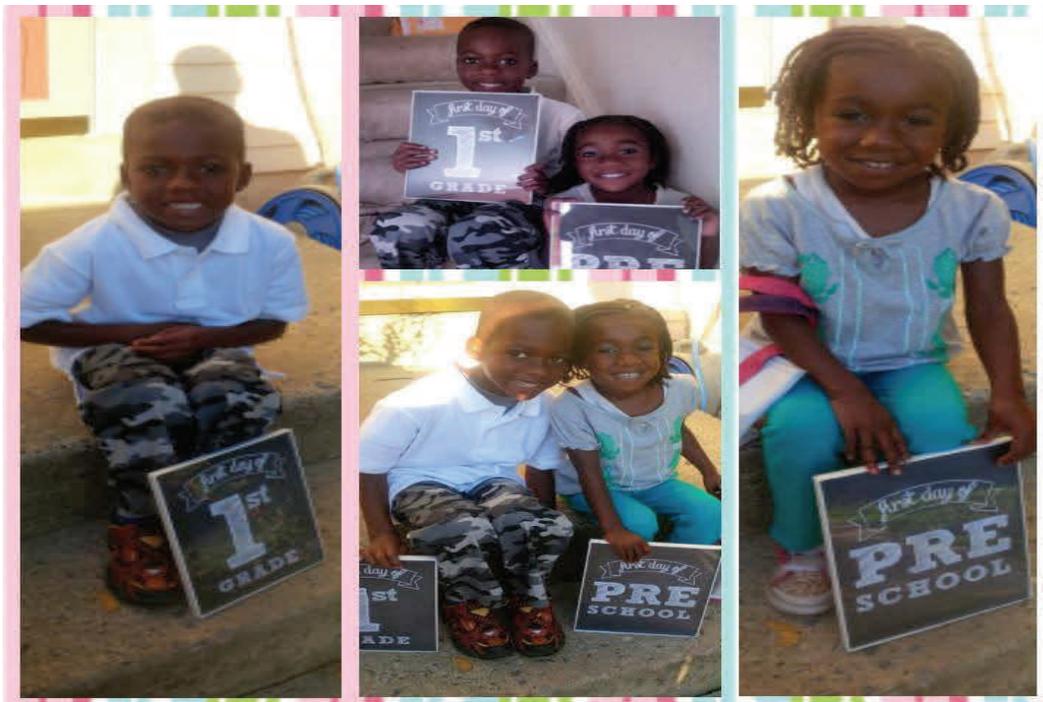
Child care providers, many of whom are non-profit providers simply trying to serve the needs of families, are struggling as they try to meet governmental demands that increase costs. At the same time, more and more families are telling providers that child care is no longer affordable for them. When County families cannot afford the cost of quality care, County children can end up in substandard, unlicensed care that does not foster their development, that does not help prepare them for academic success, and that may be unsafe. The status quo contributes to increases in the educational "achievement gap" and hinders the economic growth of the County. As we have discussed in prior reports, more and more research is showing that investments in quality child care not only have a great economic return on investment, but better prepare children for academic success so that it is less likely they arrive for kindergarten already lagging behind their peers.

Recommendation #1 cont...

Enhance the Working Parents Assistance Program (WPA) by increasing the amount of subsidy payments and revising the income guidelines to reflect the increased cost of living in Montgomery County. Supplement the State Child Care Subsidy rates for County residents so that those who qualify receive a subsidy that is equivalent to the WPA rates.

The 2014 WPA Workgroup recommended increases to both the subsidy amounts and the income qualification levels. The Commission supports these increases. The County Council considered the question of whether these increases create a disparity for the poorest County families who qualify for the State program and who would not be getting a comparable increase in their subsidy amount. In order to address this policy concern, the Commission recommends that the County supplement the State Child Care Subsidy to bring these families up to the same level as their WPA counterparts. However, if the County decides not to supplement State subsidy amounts, it should still move forward with enhancing WPA. Montgomery County has the ability to improve access to quality care for our County's families and should seize this important opportunity.

Finally, the Maryland EXCELS Quality Rating Improvement System has a tiered reimbursement system that is intended to help raise subsidy amounts and support quality child care. By helping to support child care providers participation in EXCELS through subsidizing professional development costs, as more fully described in our third recommendation in this report, there is an opportunity for Montgomery County to leverage the State's investment in higher subsidy payments through the EXCELS program. We need to be aggressive in identifying every opportunity possible to use as vehicles to help make quality child care within reach of all families in the County.



Recommendation #2

Align the standards and processes that govern child care and school-age care in public space to ensure that families receive quality and reliable care.

For several years, the Commission on Child Care has been receiving complaints from child care providers and parents in the community about the County's lack of uniform processes and procedures for bidding and rebidding child care opportunities in public space. Despite efforts by the Commission to seek improvements, the situation has grown worse, even prompting some child care providers to file lawsuits against the County in 2012. Throughout the year the Commission heard from providers and parents as well as met with representatives from the entities involved in leasing County space. We believe that the County needs to create and implement policies and procedures to resolve these issues.

Currently, the County has no consolidated management or guidelines for child care in public space. Child care providers bid for public space in facilities controlled by and/or located in Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS), Health and Human Services (HHS), and the Office of Community Use of Public Facilities (CUPF). These three entities each have different core missions.

- **MCPS:** Every student will have the academic, creative problem solving, and social emotional skills to be successful in college and career.
- **HHS:** Promote and ensure the health and safety of the residents of Montgomery County and to build individual and family strength and self-sufficiency.
- **CUPF:** Help make public facilities accessible and affordable year round for community activities.

In addition to having different core missions, each of the entities has developed different and often inconsistent processes, procedures, and standards for leasing, bidding, and rebidding child care in public space. As a result, child care programs seeking to acquire and/or maintain public space face a frustrating web of inconsistent procedures that make it extremely challenging to build sustainable, reliable, quality child care programs.

The absence of uniform standards and processes to manage the use of public space for child care impacts child care providers, parents, and children. Shared concerns include the lack of transparency with respect to some of the bid processes as well as the factors that are being used to make decisions. Providers express concern that some of the bid processes lack clear guidelines to ensure that members of the selection panels are qualified and impartial. Parents are concerned that some of the processes fail to assess and ensure providers will be able to offer consistent, quality care. Providers, parents, and school administrators struggle with the absence of a unified, clear communication plan. For example, it is unclear which entity is responsible for conveying information to parents on the outcome of the public space bid process, including the fact that their chosen child care provider may be replaced by another provider.

Recommendation #2 cont...

Align the standards and processes that govern child care and school-age care in public space to ensure that families receive quality and reliable care.

There are a host of critical issues that must be addressed including how often public space should be rebid, whether to grant priority to non-profit providers, who should serve on bid selection panels, as well as identifying standards to evaluate the quality of provider care. The overall sentiment of the child care community is that the processes for managing the use of public space for child care are neither transparent, well-funded, nor well-managed. This impacts our most vulnerable population, our County's children, by potentially reducing the quality and reliability of their care.

This past year, the County formed a workgroup to create a formal regulation and set of administrative procedures to govern before and after school child care programs in public schools. These regulations and administrative procedures will be coming before the Council for approval. However, they will not resolve all of the concerns that have been raised by the Commission, as they will only provide governance to one of the three entities in the child care in public space process and may do little to change the status quo.

The Commission therefore recommends that the County develop a set of policies and procedures for MCPS, HHS, and CUPF that:

1. Recognizes and affirms the County's commitment to use public space to promote affordable, accessible, and quality child care.
2. Appoints a member of the County Executive's Office to serve as an independent liaison to offer oversight and ensure alignment among MCPS, HHS and CUPF.
3. Requires HHS, MCPS, and CUPF to align their timelines as much as possible for their bidding and rebidding of public space dedicated to child care usage.
4. Ensures potential conflicts of interest by the selection committee are addressed by an independent review and appeal process.
5. Requires HHS, MCPS, CUPF, school principals, and child care providers to communicate any changes relevant to the usage of affected public space directly with the parents utilizing that space, as well as the families in the community that may use the space in the future.
6. Requires HHS, MCPS, and CUPF to prioritize non-profit child care providers in accordance with State law.
7. Requires HHS, MPCS, and CUPF to develop other uniform policies and procedures for funding and managing the use of public space for child care in the County as appropriate.

Recommendation #2 cont...

Align the standards and processes that govern child care and school-age care in public space to ensure that families receive quality and reliable care.

The Montgomery County Commission on Child Care includes child care providers, parent representatives, and members of the public and local business community. The Commission would welcome the opportunity to partner with HHS, MCPS, and CUPF in the development of a uniform set of policies and procedures to better manage the use of public space for child care. However, the Commission believes that at this point, the Montgomery County Executive and County Council need to take the lead in developing and supervising the implementation of the policies and procedures for HHS, MCPS, and CUPF to follow. This is the only way to ensure that the process for managing use of public space for child care is managed in a consistent and fair way to foster affordable, quality child care for the County.



Recommendation #3

Develop and implement a plan to increase available funding, at Montgomery College and the County Resource and Referral Center, to help subsidize professional development for child care workers that will meet State mandated EXCELS requirements.

Maryland EXCELS is a Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS) that was implemented by the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) in 2013. Maryland EXCELS awards ratings to registered family child care providers, licensed child care centers, and public pre-K programs that meet increasingly higher standards of quality in key areas. Maryland EXCELS has started as a voluntary program designed to increase parent and provider awareness of the elements of high quality early care and education, recognize and support providers who are meeting those standards, and educate families and the community about the importance of high quality child care. In January 2015, Maryland EXCELS will become a mandatory program, versus an aspirational goal, for any provider that accepts any State funding, including funding for child care subsidies.

Maryland EXCELS recognizes MSDE licensing as the very first rating level in its quality rating rubric. Programs progress through five ratings of quality, from one to five checks, by meeting a series of standards related to the following main content categories:

1. Licensing and Compliance
2. Staff Qualifications and Professional Development
3. Accreditation and Rating Scales
4. Developmentally Appropriate Learning and Practice
5. Administrative Policies and Practices

Maryland EXCELS is a block rating system which requires that all standards within each check level be completely met in order to qualify for that check level rating. As programs move up through the check levels, the expectations for each content area become more rigorous.

The Commission on Child Care worked throughout the past year to monitor the implementation of Maryland EXCELS by Montgomery County based child care providers in an effort to understand the impacts, both intended and unintended, from EXCELS on child care. Specifically, the Programmatic Issues Committee of the Commission met with more than 110 child care providers by conducting focus groups with both the Organization of Child Care Directors (OCCD) and Family Child Care Association (FCCA) to obtain feedback about the implementation of EXCELS in Montgomery County. Collectively, these child care providers serve several thousand children a day across the County in diverse center and home based care programs.

Recommendation #3 cont...

Develop and implement a plan to increase available funding, at Montgomery College and the County Resource and Referral Center, to help subsidize professional development for child care workers that will meet State mandated EXCELS requirements.

Many told us that they had not yet registered with Maryland EXCELS because, as one family child care provider put it, “I don’t need one more thing to do.” The complexity of the EXCELS rating scales and the perceived volume of required documentation were also cited as barriers. The most significant issue, however, related to concern that the Staff Qualifications and Professional Development criteria established as part of the Maryland EXCELS rating system will layer additional costs onto an already burdened child care financial model. Because of the “all or nothing” block rating approach in EXCELS, many programs delivering high quality care will not be able to rank above a three on the five check rating because their existing, experienced staff do not have the academic or professional qualifications to meet the education requirements in EXCELS. Providers were concerned that the preponderance of quality rating scales already in use in other consumer industries (e.g., hotel ratings, restaurant ratings, etc.) would hurt their child care marketing efforts. As one provider stated, and others adamantly agreed, “In many consumer minds, a one [star] means poor quality and five [stars] means expensive.”

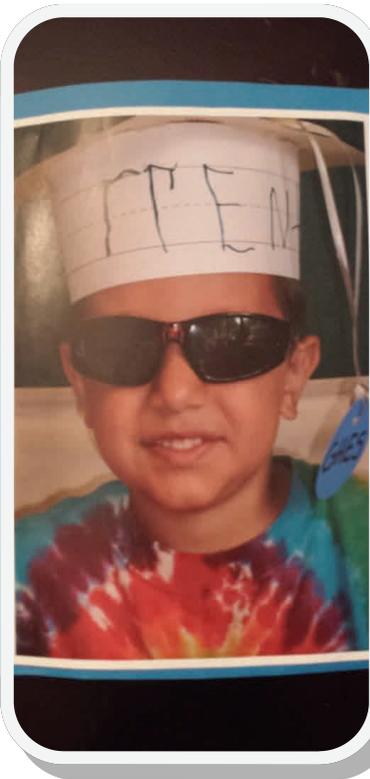
“My staff don’t have the time or money to go back to college so my ranking in EXCELS will be too low and families will stay away,” was also frequently voiced as a concern. Providers are worried about how to pay for the professional development and training requirements needed to support a quality workforce as defined in EXCELS. Most saw tuition increases for parents as the only viable option as a means to fund the desired educational achievement. For many families in Montgomery County, child care is already unaffordable. Tacking on additional costs in order to subsidize educational achievement goals will further exacerbate an already challenging situation for families struggling to afford care. While unintended, one of the potential consequences of this State mandated initiative could result in quality care being unaffordable and out of reach for all but a small number of Montgomery County’s families.

Maryland EXCELS does not recognize an experience equivalency for child care workers and equates higher levels of quality to higher levels of education and credentialing attainment; not time on the job or years of experience. For a workforce that already struggles to meet annual professional development training and credentialing requirements, the added burden of acquiring Early Care and Education degrees in order to demonstrate workforce competence is a significant concern.

Recommendation #3 cont...

Develop and implement a plan to increase available funding, at Montgomery College and the County Resource and Referral Center, to help subsidize professional development for child care workers that will meet State mandated EXCELS requirements.

Using MSDE's current staff credentialing pathway as a guide, a recent analysis demonstrates that an aspiring child care worker that seeks to move through a college track and obtain the required degrees and certifications to meet the highest educational and experience requirements would need to invest more than 1,800 hours in the classroom and \$35,600 in tuition costs. These levels of commitment in both time and money are significant barriers for staff, particularly those who are



working while trying to advance their education. The same study found that employers would incur more than \$25,000 in wages to support the more than 1,800 class hours if they made a return to school mandatory for their child care workers. Taken together, it is easy to understand why child care providers are concerned about the incremental cost and complexity that Maryland EXCELS could add to their already challenged financial and operating models.

The Commission understands that the County Executive and County Council cannot change or stop initiatives that are mandated by the State. However, the County should put a plan in place to increase available funding at Montgomery College and the County Resource and Referral Center to help subsidize the professional development, education, and vocational costs for child care workers and child care providers that enroll in EXCELS and work to move up the EXCELS quality continuum. As MSDE continues toward its goals for mandatory EXCELS participation for all registered child care providers, Montgomery County would not want to find itself in a situation where child care providers and workers alike determine that it costs too much and takes too much time and effort to deliver a system of quality child care for the County's families. Similarly, providing additional funding for professional development and education will help to ensure that quality child care is attainable and affordable for families; particularly those in greatest need of income and other supports.

Commission Activities

2013-2014

Guest Speakers, Presentations and Collaborations with Other Groups:

- The Public Policy Committee met with Steve Rhode and Arna Griffith of the Maryland Family Network (MFN) who discussed how to best use the data collected by MFN to advocate for increased funding for the Working Parents Assistance Program (WPA). (September 18, 2013)
- Met with Uma Ahluwalia, Director, Montgomery County Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) and discussed WPA, the need for increased funding vs. realistic expectations considering the budget climate and the need for investments across the continuum of care, and child care in public space. (September 18, 2013)
- The Programmatic Issues Committee met with Ona Whitfield and Vicki DiSanto, Maryland EXCELS Quality Assurance Specialists, to discuss the implementation of EXCELS. (October 2, 2013)
- Met with Shirley Brandman and Rebecca Smondrowski from the Montgomery County Board of Education about child care and school readiness, the MCPS Strategic Planning Framework, and child care in public space. (October 16, 2013)
- Participated in a meeting with the Health and Human Services Committee of the County Council about funding for child care subsidy programs, the structure of child care in public space in Montgomery County, and the benefits and challenges related to Maryland EXCELS and universal pre-kindergarten. (November 20, 2013)
- Participated in a meeting with Liz Kelley, Director, Office of Child Care (OCC), Division of Early Childhood Development, Maryland State Department of Education to discuss staff and technology needs within the OCC, the roll-out of EXCELS, Preschool for All, and regulations for school-age child care. (January 15, 2014)
- The Programmatic Issues Committee met with 60 members of the Office of Child Care Directors (OCCD) to obtain feedback about the implementation of EXCELS. (January 16, 2014)
- The Programmatic Issues Committee met with 50 members of the Family Child Care Association to obtain feedback on the implementation of EXCELS. (April 7, 2014)

Commission Activities cont... 2013-2014

Guest Speakers, Presentations and Collaborations with Other Groups cont...:

- Met with Hannah Matthews, Director, Child Care and Early Education, CLASP to discuss strategies to support child care subsidy programs, Federal child care subsidy updates, and national early childhood trends. (April 30, 2014)

Testimony and Correspondence:

- Transmitted a letter to County Executive Isiah Leggett and Council President Nancy Navarro in thanks of their support in allocating additional funding to the Working Parents Assistance Program in the FY14 budget. (July 1, 2013)
- Sent an e-mail to the Office of the County Executive in response to the draft Montgomery County Executive Regulation on Before and After School Childcare Programs in Public Schools. The message reiterated the Commission's recommendation to make a commitment to child care in public space by consolidating it into an organized program overseen and coordinated by HHS. (July 24, 2013)
- Sent a letter to the County Executive and County Council as a follow up to its letter of December 3, 2012 and the January 13, 2013 response from Council President Navarro regarding child care in public space. The letter encouraged broader organizational changes that make child care in public space a well thought out priority that supports quality child care options for families. (August 28, 2013)
- Presented the Commission's top FY15 budget priority, WPA, at the HHS Community Budget Forum. (October 14, 2013)
- Presented the Commission's top two policy priorities, child care in public space and WPA, to the Health and Human Services Committee of the County Council. (October 17, 2013)
- Sent an e-mail to Councilmember George Leventhal that included a collection of personal experiences from child care providers about child care in public space. (October 31, 2013)
- Attended the County Executive's Annual Meeting with Boards, Commissions, and Committees and engaged Mr. Leggett in a brief conversation about the need for an increased and sustained investment in child care. (March 11, 2014)

Commission Activities cont...

2013-2014

Testimony and Correspondence cont...:

- Testified at the County Council's Operating Budget Hearing, strongly recommending that the County Council change the proposed budget for Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) and allocate \$20 million over the State's Maintenance of Effort (MOE) law and provide an additional \$6 million annually to WPA. At the time, the total recommended FY15 Operating Budget for MCPS exceeded the State's Maintenance of Effort law by \$26 million, setting a new floor for school funding. (April 10, 2014)

Other Noteworthy Activities:

- Participated in Boards, Committees and Commissions Quarterly Leadership Meetings with Uma Ahluwalia, Director, HHS.
- Participated in the Child Care in Public Space Workgroup for the purpose of developing administrative procedures for the Montgomery County Executive Regulation on Before and After School Childcare Programs in Public Schools and aligning the child care in public space system.
- Participated in the Montgomery County Early Childhood Advisory Council and provided input on the development of a strong early childhood community in Montgomery County and an early childhood comprehensive plan.
- Participated in the WPA Workgroup and provided input on the criteria for determining eligibility; provider participation requirements; the process for determining subsidy awards including the possibility of a minimum subsidy floor for participants; and the possibility of updating the regulations governing WPA implementation in COMCOR.



Priorities 2014-2015

Child Care in Public Space — Continue to work to better align the standards and processes that govern child care and school-age care in public space to ensure that families receive quality and reliable care.

Early Childhood Mental Health — Research the complement of supports in place for infant and early childhood mental health services across the County and identify what professional training and support is needed for providers to successfully provide quality care for children with social and emotional needs.

Maryland EXCELS — Assess the financial impact of Maryland EXCELS on child care providers and families and identify and promote resources to support both groups.

Minimum Wage — Explore the impact of the proposed State and County Minimum Wage increases on families and child care providers and their business models.

Pre-Kindergarten Expansion — Explore the impact of the expansion of pre-K and identify resources to support providers and families.

Quality, affordable child care and the support of a loving child care staff helped this young mother obtain her high school diploma, helping her launch her family towards self-sufficiency.



Isiah Leggett, County Executive
Uma S. Ahluwalia, Director
JoAnn Barnes, Acting Chief
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Language translation and alternative formats of this report are available upon request. For additional information on the Commission, please call or write at the address and telephone numbers listed above.

Montgomery County does not discriminate on the basis of disability in employment or in the admission or access to its programs or services.

