ECAC Meeting  
Thursday, February 12, 2015  
9:00 – 11:00  
Notes

**Members Present:**  
Barbara Andrews  
Rosalba Bonilla-Acosta  
Stephanie Brant  
Jody Burghardt  
Amy Cropp  
Patsy Evans  
Kim Grant  
Michelle Green  
April Kaplan  
Carol Legaretta  
Lauren Moskowitz  
Meredith Myers  
Linda Owen  
Debra Poese  
Tobi Printz-Platnick  
Natasha Ramberg  
Hilda Richards  
Claudia Simmons

**Staff Present:**  
Verna Washington  
Sarah Wilch-Spamer

**Guests:**  
Vickie DiSanto  
Lisa Davis  
Kim Pins

**November Meeting Minutes:**

- Motion from Lauren Moskowitz to accept the minutes from the November 13, 2014 meeting  
- Second motion: Tobi Printz-Platnick  
- Vote: 18 in favor  
- Resolved: Motion Carried; Accept the minutes from 11/13/14
General Update:

- Documents including WPA have been posted to the MCPS website
- The DHHS site is in the process of being set up to include the information
- **Literacy/Pediatric Outreach Committee:**
  - Focus Groups:
    - Natasha and Barbara attended the professional learning institute at MSDE
    - Prince George’s county has been working on Pediatric Outreach for 5 years
    - Pediatric Offices:
      - Resources needed
      - Marty Grant has been training Pediatricians on use of the screening tool
    - ECAC Letterhead has been developed
    - ECAC Committee’s work is aligned to Marty Grant’s
      - What do you need? How can we help you?
      - Working to take over the outreach in and around Gaithersburg
      - Accompanied Marty to gain recognition and build relationships with the pediatric community
  - **Media and Outreach Campaign:**
    - Focused on reaching out for ChildLink (the call in referral number in DHHS for anyone who has questions or needs information about services for children birth to 5)
      - Provide information to child care providers or parents on child mental health issues
      - Building the library of referrals
      - Barbara will send out data on where we are so far this year with calls to ChildLink
        - Possible explanations for the reduction in calls:
          - Drop in birthrates?
          - Families calling 311 instead?
    - March is the goal for developing the design for the bus campaign:
      - The most expensive is the driver’s side of the bus
      - The inside of the bus is free or of little cost
      - We can target busses on specific routes in the county or we can do a cross-county campaign on all busses
      - Messages will be bilingual (English and Spanish)
  - **Family Engagement Committee:**
    - 11 Focus groups total:
      - Food and children’s books were provided to participants
      - ECAC members received handouts focusing with initial focus group analysis
      - ECAC will resend the link to Head Start Parent Engagement Framework
    - Early Childhood Kennedy Cluster project:
      - Focused on reaching out to parents
      - More people trained on facilitating Parent Cafes
Maryland Family Network (MFN) is the only organization that provides training for table hosting/facilitating of Parent Cafés

A late spring training for facilitators is planned

More parent cafes are planned for the Gaithersburg area

**Early Childhood Symposium:**
- First year that ECAC is planning the Symposium
- There is a $10.00 charge this year
- Neal Horen from Georgetown is the keynote speaker
- Montgomery County Collaboration Council is handling the registration for the Symposium
- May need assistance with the registration table
- Family Services will offer CEUs/ and PAUs from the R&R

**Gaithersburg Project Update:**
- Shifted some funds to provide materials for providers
- More than half of the programs are faith-based have elected not to be part of Maryland EXCELS

**Focus Groups:**
- Focus Groups Completed with Parents, MCPS Early Childhood Teachers, Child Care Providers
- Total of 11 Focus Groups
- Focus Groups each included 3 questions, facilitated, charted and notes taken; A brief survey
- Themes:
  - Children need self-help skills, social/emotional skills and independence
  - Much happens in children’s lives before age 4
  - Parents need information on DAP and they need support
  - Social/Emotional skills are crucial to readiness, including experience in groups, self-help skills, self-regulation

**Next Steps:**
- **Committee Analysis by April**
- **Written Report on Focus Groups by July**
- **Committee Review of Demographics Report**
- **Committee Review of ECAC Work to Date**
- **Committee Recommendations complete by June Meeting (discussion at April 2nd retreat)**
  - Lauren Moskowitz: Literacy/Pediatric Outreach Committee
  - Michelle Green: Family Engagement
  - Linda Owen: Media and Outreach Campaign

**WPA Discussion:** TABLED UNTIL NEXT ECAC MEETING
Lisa Davis (Early Childhood Coordinator Howard County Public Schools, [HCPS]) and Kim Pins (Howard County Community College), Howard County ECAC:

- **Formation of Transition Group:**
  - Found that there was nothing to support parents with the transition process other than the typical “Open House” or “Fliers”
  - List of Partners:
    - Office of Children’s Services
    - Community College
    - Early Intervention Services
    - Public Libraries
    - Regional Office of Child Care
    - Public School Kindergarten Teachers
    - Public Pre-Kindergarten
    - Non-Profit Organizations
    - Judy Centers
    - Private Child Care Centers
    - Family Child Care Association
    - Community Businesses
    - Private Nursery Schools
    - MSDE
    - Head Start
    - Early Childhood Consultants
  - Established relationships with elementary schools:
    - Four pilot child care centers send a list of where their children articulate to in the county
    - Held a “Winter Mixer” to connect with principals and elementary schools to talk (2007 – 2008)
  - Facilitated a forum with wider stakeholder group including politicians and other community members
  - What it isn’t:
    - Forced
    - Hierarchical
    - Static
    - Bureaucratic
    - Biased
    - Competitive
    - Ego-Based
    - Slanted
    - Destination
    - Sporadic
    - Finished
    - Exclusive
  - What it is:
    - Collaborative
Visionary  
Connected  
Non-judgmental  
Evolving  
Shared  
Ongoing  
Child-Centered  
Family Centered  
Focused  

Transition Workgroup: Focus  
- Goal – Enhance each Howard County child’s opportunity for school success.  
- Objective – Establish a smooth passage for kindergarten transition for young children coming from the home setting and/or from an early care and education setting.

Maryland Model for School Readiness (MMSR):  
- Data analysis  
- Kept track of the data  
- Focus on Domains of Learning  
- Devoted a 3 year period to groups of stakeholders receiving an MMSR presentation and explaining their unique role in interfacing with families and/or developing programming  

Focus on:  
- Articulation/Communication  
  - Advertisement/Awareness  
    - Where are these children? Who are we not reaching  
      - Grocery Stores  
      - Offices  
      - Dr.’s Offices  
  - Discovery Fair during the Week of the Young Child focusing on the MMSR Domains  
  - Community Forum/Focus Groups  
  - Share Professional Development Day in HCPS including the child care partners  
  - Transition Timelines  
  - Common Language to develop consistent expectations:  
    - School Readiness with developmentally appropriate targets  
  - Learning Progress/Articulation Form from child care providers based on the MMSR indicators/domains (worded in more user-friendly language):  
    - Gathered feedback from Kindergarten Team Leaders and Child Care Directors:  
      - Time consuming  
      - Self-Help skills rather than cognitive skills
Revised the form based on feedback
  o Collected centrally in the spring and distributed to kindergarten teachers around the system
  o Includes parental consent form
  o Encourages communication between parties

Countywide Parent Workshops:
  o Planned for 5 different times in different locations during the spring
  o Provided a toolkit to take home to use with their children after completing a feedback form

Creative Outreach:
  o Columbia Mall
  o McDonald’s (fliers in Happy Meals)
  o Library summer programs for school readiness

Regional Approach:
  o Schools are community brokers to help communicate to align services and promote school readiness

Elementary School Buy-In and Commitment

Continued Challenges:
  o Community partnerships/discussions within each local community – TWO WAY conversations;
  o Certain community stakeholders to be more involved (e.g., pediatricians, health department, social services, faith community);
  o More buy-in and engagement of early care and education staff (both private and public) at the ground level;
  o Ways to deal with the need for constant reinvestment in the initiative due to turnover of staff (e.g., teachers, agency heads).

Transition to Executive Committee:
  o Moving away from the initial Steering Committee to the Executive Committee (EC) model
  o Casey Training and a yearlong commitment is necessary in order to be part of the EC:
    o Linda Owen and Michelle Green have been asked to be part of this training
    o Send Barbara Andrews more nominations for additional EC members / you may nominate yourself by 2/20/15

Committee Assignments/Work:
  o ECAC Members received the yellow handout to prepare for the April 2, 2015 ECAC Retreat:
    o Continue existing work related to implementation grant
- Examine and discuss focus groups initial analysis applying your own perspectives from the Work/Organizations you represent on the ECAC. Use the Demographics Report and the Geo Maps to inform your perspectives.
- Develop recommendations based on the data and discussion above and from the perspective of your committee and bring to the April 2 retreat.

Adjournment:

10:55 AM

NEXT MEETING: April 2 mini-retreat 8:30-12:30
Hopkins Rockville Campus
9605 Medical Center Drive, Building Room 121