



## Washington County Early Childhood Advisory Council December 9, 2015 Meeting Minutes

The meeting was held at the Center for Education Services (CES), 10435 Downsview Pike, Hagerstown, and was called to order at 12:00 pm.

Attendees: Dori Yorks, Will Godwin, Charles Wainwright, Kandyce Dorsey, Teresa Shifler, Emily Jones, Jeff Ridgeway, Kelsey Green, Dana Pentoney, Kathy Powderly, Kathy Embly, Heather Glass, Kathy Forrest, Jamey Nystrom, David Hanlin, Dawn Orndoff, Stacy Henson, Andrea Semler, Paul Frey, Terri Gwizdala, Kathy Saxman.

The session was recorded after receiving approval from the group.

### Welcome and Check-In

Dori Yorks and Teresa Shifler welcomed the group and posed the check-in question, “If you could move the needle on one Early Childhood Education need within the next year, what would it be?” Responses included:

- Finding a funding source for Ready Rosie
- Improving the expectations/knowledge of child development for parents of children from birth-five (4 responses)
- Getting children and families out of poverty
- Education resources for parents – better communication (2 responses)
- Awareness of what the community is doing
- Awareness of the importance of school attendance
- More availability of services for 0-5 population (2 responses)
- Supports for parents, not just academic
- Find out what are parent’s goals for their children – we need to understand our population
- Centralizes resources

### Business

Terri Gwizdala reviewed the proposed revision of goals for ECAC to reflect new assessment and requirements under the LMB grant. Recommended additional changes included:

- Clarification of reporting period to be specific to the 2015-2016 grant period
- Creation of more SMART goals, specifying recommendations and expected percentages in outcomes, specifically regarding
  - Rephrasing the first goal statement
  - Identifying initiatives with other organization regarding parent engagement activities

- Delineating number of providers currently participating in MD EXCELS and targeting percentage goal for increasing level and/or new provider sign-ups
- Identifying a target date for the Single Point of Entry and Universal Release of Information initiatives

The subgroup, which consists of ECAC members from WCPS, United Way, Head Start, The Hub, HCC Children’s Learning Center, The Judy Center, The Family Center and ECAC, will re-group to address these changes. An invitation was extended for other ECAC members to join this group.

#### Updates on LMB grant activities

##### Single Point of Entry Initiative

- Dori provided an overview of how the SPE could work, including the need to identify an agency to take lead on the project. The vision is to provide a service where families had one phone number/website/combo combination thereof to contact that would “triage” the family concern and direct them to the most appropriate service provider. One goal would be to reduce the duplication of services.
- A preliminary meeting was held with members from Head Start, WCHD, Judy Center, Family Center, and ECAC; a second meeting is scheduled for December 21<sup>st</sup> at 3:00 at the Family Center.
- An agency intake questionnaire was distributed to gauge agency’s interest as well as to determine services offered and capacity.
- A sign-up form was also distributed for agencies wishing to join the committee.
- Dawn Orndoff stated that there is a perception that this type of initiative would decrease the number of referrals, but indicated the opposite would be true; the number of referrals should increase as families are not moved from provider to provider without actually benefitting from services offers.

##### Professional Development

- A Learning Parties Training of Trainers was held on December 3<sup>rd</sup>, with 18 community members in attendance.
- A Parent Café Facilitator training will be offered in Washington County on Feb. 23 and 24. More information will be forthcoming about this training.

##### Program Collaboration Agreements

- These are agreements with ECAC partners to share information and/or resources in order to help meet Council goals.
- Agreements are in place with 5 agencies, with agreements with additional agencies being developed.

##### New Work Teams

- Single Point of Entry
  - Primarily discussed earlier, a sign-up form was distributed for interested members to join the committee
- OnTrack Washington County
  - Some members of the group were not aware of the OnTrack initiative. Dave Hanlin provided an overview of this cradle to career initiative to increase the level of education (college and/or vocational training) to improve community outcomes in Washington County.

- Comments included that the goal was at least 2 years of college or vocational training for every person in the county.
- There are 3 components of the project, and ECAC serves as the chair of the Early Childhood Success Team for OnTrack.
- There is a search for an existing 501c3 to serve as the managing entity for this initiative.
- A sign-up form was also distributed for members to join this committee.
- Parent/Child Events
  - Includes conferences, Learning Parties, a collaboration with United Way and the YMCA to create an early learning festival to include Born Learning and Healthy Kids programs already in existence
  - A sign-up form was distributed for members to join this committee.
- Marketing and Sustainability
  - The LMB grant runs through June 2016
  - The work of the Council needs to be sustained, and avenues to do so need to be explored.
  - A sign-up form was distributed for members to join this committee.
- Kellogg Foundation Grant
  - This grant is available through MSDE, and has two components. The first is to increase family engagement through social media, and the second is a technology focus
    - Ready Rosie is a program that is being looked at for funding for the family engagement through social media piece of this grant
  - The Requests for Proposals have not yet been issued by MSDE. The ECAC will be applying for funding through the RfP process once issued.
- ECAC Website
  - The website went live on November 30<sup>th</sup>
  - Content is intended to provide information for anyone working with young children
  - Agencies wishing to have events and/or information included on the site should send an email to the ECAC email address

## Community Updates

- Learning Parties
  - Kathy Powderly gave a recap of parties facilitated through HARC
    - Funding through United Way, ECAC, other sources that have removed barriers that impact church's ability to offer Learning Parties
    - Expanding to Boonsboro area
    - Success story in a family who attended a LP series who is now trained to facilitate parties. She is Spanish-speaking, and will offer a series at St. Joseph's Catholic Church.
    - Additional series added in January to accommodate waiting list that resulted from October registrations.
    - Partnerships with library, including help in purchasing books and attendance at Language and Literacy series. Also partnership with Character Count and offering registration in Imagination Library.
- Community Book Drive

- Kathy Powderly provided update
  - 60 collection sites
  - More than 17,000 books collected
  - Donation by Rotary in partnership with Library that resulted in 3,400 books being donated for Reach Out and Read campaign
  - Reserve of books for Little Free Libraries
  - Partnership with Wonder Books developed this year
- Rotary Literacy Summit
  - Teresa Shifler reported that the Rotary Task Force has asked ECAC to chair the 2016 Literacy Summit
  - Proposal to combine the Literacy Summit with the Early Childhood Conference scheduled in October
    - Theme is All For One and One For All: Investing in Our Future
    - This will be a 2-day conference with the first day for businesses and community leaders, and the second for parents and educators
    - Dave Hanlin asked for a proposal on this, and will take the proposal to the Literacy Task Force
- ECE Conference
  - Terri G. gave a recap of the conference held on September 26<sup>th</sup>
- Little Free Libraries
  - 25 Little Free Libraries completed and distributed. Charters have been received and are ready for distribution
  - The Mayor of Hagerstown has requested Little Free Libraries for parks in the City
  - A member of the Boy Scouts completed an additional 5 libraries as part of the requirements to attain the rank of Eagle Scout. These will be distributed to agencies currently on a waiting list.

The next ECAC meeting is scheduled for March 9, 2016 from 12:00 -2:00 pm at CES.

The meeting was adjourned at 1:25 pm.

Respectfully submitted: T. Gwizdala