

**Office of Child Care (OCC)
Advisory Council
Meeting Minutes
August 23, 2018**



AGENDA ITEMS	DISCUSSION OUTCOME	
Attendees	Council members:	Les Hall, Brian Morrison, Elizabeth Huffman, Paula Montgomery, Jennifer Nizer, Chris Peusch, Patsy Warnick, Jacqueline Grant, Shay Gurry, Ed Haden, Sharon Holloway-Gentemann, Jenifer Arnaiz
	Guests:	Fatima Whitmore, Sonia Pruneda-Hernandez, Debbie Moore, Beth Morrow, Madie Green, [Willie P?], Flora Gee, Chris Swanson, Ellie Lichtash, Christle Sheppard-Southall (AG's office)
	MSDE Staff:	Lindi Budd, John Lamb, Michelle Young, Nicole Johnson, Latanya Taylor, Agneatha Wright, Jena Smith, Andrea Zabel, Cyndi Lessner, Manjula Paul, Louis Valenti, Judy Walker, TJ Bennett
Welcome And Opening Remarks	<p>Chris Peusch called the meeting to order.</p> <p>Jenn Nizer welcomed everyone and apologized that the other meetings for 2018 had been canceled. She explained that she just started at the time of the first meeting and needed time to acclimate to her new position.</p> <p>The second meeting was canceled and combined with the State ECAC meeting to discuss Maryland's draft State Plan and gain input from our advisory groups, constituents and partners.</p>	
Review Guidelines/Goals of Council	<p>The purpose of the OCC Advisory Council is to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advise and counsel the Office of Child Care; Review regulations proposed by state agencies regulating child care; Review issues and problems relating to care of children and suggested priorities for consideration by the Office of Child Care; and Identify interdepartmental issues of importance to child care providers and users that should be addressed by the Office of Child Care and other state agencies. <p>The Council meetings are "open" meetings but not "public" hearings. Anyone interested in attending may do so, however the meetings are not the forum for the public to share general thoughts or complaints. The purpose of every Council meeting is an opportunity for the Office of Child Care to share information relevant to child care and to seek the advice and counsel of the 30 OCC Advisory Council members.</p> <p>The Agenda for each meeting is set prior to the meeting in consultation between the Department and the Chairperson for the Council. A Council member wanting to have an item considered for the agenda should make the request no later than one week prior to the meeting by contacting TJ Bennett, tabatha.bennett@maryland.gov, or Chris Peusch, mscca1@comcast.net. The Department will share information, as specified on the Agenda set for the meeting.</p> <p>After all items on the Agenda are concluded, the Council meeting will be opened to "Other Business." This will allow for a more generalized discussion of items not necessarily related to those on the Agenda. To ensure an equal amount of time for participation, each speaker will be asked to limit their thoughts and comments to no more than three minutes. Comments made during this time should be succinct, specific and of interest to the Council members.</p>	

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	Places at the table are reserved for Council members. Therefore, non-members attending the meetings should sit at the tables indicated for guests. After the meeting has started, and if there are spaces available at the table, guests may feel free to join the Councilmembers at the Council table.
Director's Report	
Fingerprinting	<p>TJ reported that MSDE has spent approximately \$500,000 reimbursing child care providers for getting fingerprinted. According to Louis that translates into 166,000 people getting fingerprinted since the reimbursement process began.</p> <p>We have extended the due date for providers to submit reimbursement requests. They have until November 1, 2018 to get fingerprinted and until December 31, 2018 to submit the reimbursement requests. It does not matter which letter of the alphabet the provider falls under for the extended deadline.</p> <p>However, please remember that providers are only eligible for one reimbursement. We've been receiving multiple reimbursements from some centers and family providers. We are returning those as ineligible for a second reimbursement.</p> <p>We are still receiving a lot of incorrect submissions that we need to send back for corrections.</p> <p>With regard to the State Plan, we are asking for an extension to come into compliance with the out-of-state background checks and with the National Sex Offender Registry (NSOR) requirement. MSDE sent a letter to the Maryland State Police to ask them if they would be willing to partner with us on the NSOR requirement and we are still waiting for a response.</p> <p>Many other states are in much worse shape when it comes to the background check requirements. There are some states that excluded entire populations from the need for a background check and they are still working to change their regulations/statutes.</p> <p>Our accounts payable office has a backlog of submission requests. They are working on requests that we submitted to them at the end of April/May now. Once they complete their work with those requests, they must still go to the Comptroller's Office. The Comptroller's Office has up to 30 days to issue payment – from the date they receive the request from our accounts payable office. The Division used some of their CCDF funding to hire a temporary employee to assist accounting in processing the backlog.</p> <p>Jenn reported that OCC is looking into centralizing the criminal background check process to make it more efficient and to take the weight of that responsibility from the regional offices. That will free regional staff up to perform their other duties. We received a PIN to create one position at central office to start this process. The position will require law enforcement experience.</p> <p>Angeline said that based on Credentialing experience, it does not matter how quick TJ and other staff process the submissions. The holdout has always been once something gets submitted to accounts payable. Accounts payable is also short-staffed and the work they do is not only for these reimbursements, but for all of MSDE.</p> <p>In addition, the Comptroller's Office is also rejecting a lot of the submissions, which means we are</p>

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	<p>spending a lot of time making corrections to those submissions too.</p> <p>Angeline said it is advantageous for providers to sign up for direct deposit. They will get the reimbursements more quickly.</p> <p>Chris P asked if there was something we could do to help. Both Jenn and TJ said no. It's a staffing issue and no one can help with it. It's just something we have to work through.</p> <p>Betty said that was a lot of money for providers to put out at one time.</p> <p>Brian asked how much MSDE was spending per person on reimbursements.</p> <p>TJ said it varies; she's seen everything from \$30 to \$75 per person. \$75 is the highest amount they've seen but that doesn't happen very often. Some centers have submitted reimbursements for \$10,000 or more because of the number of staff they employ.</p> <p>Jacqueline asked if we informed providers of the extended due date.</p> <p>Jenn and TJ both said yes. Jenn put it on her work Facebook page. It also went out in Tuesday Tidbits and will be in the next Impact (formerly Partners) newsletter.</p> <p>Chris P. asked if providers would get non-compliances if they are not fingerprinted by the deadline.</p> <p>TJ said that until it is actually in the regulations, it is not enforceable. It will be a discussion item, though and those who do not comply by the revised deadline will not get reimbursed.</p>
<p>Governor's Association on Workforce Development</p>	<p>Jenn reported that the Division applied for one year of technical assistance. Steven and Jenn both serve on the Workforce Development workgroup.</p> <p>They are looking into ways to professionalize the field and increase the education and experience of the child care workforce. One of the topics they are considering is what MSDE can do and how we can make things better.</p> <p>Maryland NAEYC has already made some policy changes/suggestions. MSDE is trying to move forward to implement some new ideas before we are told to make changes.</p> <p>Chris P. reported that other states are also participating on the workforce. They are discussing best practices. She also reported that Montgomery College is giving credit for the CDA without the need to take other exams.</p> <p>Sonia added that providers must be currently enrolled with Montgomery College.</p> <p>Madie asked if the CDA counted toward credentialing.</p> <p>Angeline said the CDA is equivalent to level 4 in Credentialing.</p> <p>Jenn said she did not want to get too far into this conversation right now because the Division is working on aligning all of its regulations and programs. The draft regulations for licensing will be available soon. Some of them are currently with the Attorney General's office for review.</p>

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	<p>MSDE realizes the CDA is critical and it will be the entry level for NAEYC</p> <p>Chris P. reminded everyone to talk in generalities. If there are specific program questions, please meet with them after the meeting.</p> <p>Betty asked what grants are available to child care providers. Child care centers are not aware of money being available and aren't taking advantage of it.</p> <p>Jenn said to tell providers about visiting OCC's website to sign up for emails. They can get 'Tuesday Tidbits', and 'Impact' through email. The way to get information is to visit the website and sign up for the emails. She also has a professional Facebook page under Jenn Nizer.</p> <p>Chris P.said the colleges also have coordinators. We should recruit them to help us share information.</p> <p>Sonia said there is confusion about the CDA and course credits. You will not receive 6 credits just for signing up for the CDA course.</p>
Impact Project	<p>OCC is submitting a Letter of Intent to apply for a two-year technical assistance project.</p> <p>MSDE is part of the second cohort. We are asking for assistance in aligning all of our child care programs (accreditation, credentialing, EXCELS, etc.).</p> <p>MSDE will bring in our stakeholders as appropriate during the process.</p>
Infant Toddler Workgroup	<p>This workgroup will focus on helping the child care workforce work with infants and toddlers.</p>
Podcasts: Richard Huffman	<p>These podcasts discuss high quality early childhood education. Jenn participated in a recent podcast on accreditation that is available on our website.</p> <p>John Lamb, the Assistant Program Manager for Child Care Subsidy participated in a podcast on child care subsidy.</p> <p>Betty said she taught Richard everything he knows!</p>
Forms Translated	<p>OC has received a quote and will start translating the licensing forms into Spanish soon. Other languages will follow.</p>
Alignment / Modernization	<p>Jenn said she discussed alignment earlier in the meeting. One of the items we are considering for modernization is CCATS. We are in the infancy stages of looking into this. Several staff have visited other states to view their systems. They have visited PA, OH, VA, and DE. We are waiting to schedule meetings to look more closely at some of the systems in those other states.</p> <p>Licensing will be the first Branch/function brought up, with child care subsidy next.</p> <p>We are moving the current system into the "Cloud".</p>
National Family Child Care Association partnership with Maryland	<p>Maryland was invited to partner with the NFCCA. One of the things they want to work on together is revamping the accreditation process. Right now, the NFCCA is the only body that can accredit family child care providers. Maryland is considering developing its own accreditation for family child care providers.</p>

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	<p>Jackie said she thinks this partnership is awesome.</p> <p>Jenn reported that she is not sure how child care providers will be chosen to participate in the project yet.</p>
Maryland Families Engage Website	<p>Cyndi and Chris Swanson presented information about the Maryland Families Engage website. Johns Hopkins University/Center for Technology in Education (JHU/CTE) partnered with MSDE to develop the website.</p> <p>Cyndi said the website (marylandfamiliesengage.org) launched at the Family Engagement Summit. The website started under Race to the Top and continued under a grant from the Kellogg Foundation.</p> <p>The website puts resources for parents and providers into one location and will be under constant development.</p> <p>The provider side of the website has the most information right now, including resources, and provider/family interaction. The plan is to work more with the family side now that the provider side is up.</p> <p>Chris S. took everyone through a brief look at the website. There are four main functional categories of the website: Resources, News, Events, and About Us.</p> <p>People may submit information for resources, news and events (including national events.) After internal vetting, the information will get posted to the website for others to view.</p> <p>The website also has the Family Engagement Framework and Toolkit. This provides not only the “what” of the information, but also the “how”. If anyone has stories they would like to share about how they’ve used the Framework and/or the Toolkit, there is a link there to allow them to submit the story.</p> <p>Chris S. said the website will depend on everyone to help it realize its full potential. It also has a Twitter feed. He encouraged everyone to visit the site to sign up for emails.</p> <p>The website allows for translation. They are also working on native translation of some of the information.</p> <p>Cyndi said if anyone wanted to have information added to the site but didn’t feel they were a writer, they could reach out to Kia (Malkia McLeod). Her email address is malkia.mcleod@maryland.gov. Kia will also notify people about the status of their submissions to the website.</p> <p>We want the website to highlight the work everyone is doing.</p> <p>The Consumer Education website required by the 2014 Reauthorization of the Child Care Development Block Grant will launch on September 30, 2018.</p>
Branch Updates	
Child Care Subsidy	<p>John provided an update on the status of Child Care Subsidy Moving in the Right Direction.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May 1, 2017 – Child Care Subsidy implemented policies for the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Hold harmless policy – Families will not lose benefits if they lose their

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	<p>approved activity if they regain an approved activity within 90 days.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Continuity of Care – the hold harmless policy helps preserve continuity of care for children. ○ Improved access for children experiencing homelessness. Families have 60 days to get documentation together without their child (ren) losing care. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● July 1, 2017 – Maryland implemented a 2% provider rate increase The rate increase brought the reimbursement rates to the average 11th percentile of the 2002 Market Rate Survey per payment region ● February 1, 2018 – Maryland’s Governor Hogan lifted the Child Care Subsidy Wait List, opening all income eligibility levels for the first time since 2011. ● April 28, 2018 – Providers received a child care Tuition Reimbursement for \$500/eligible child on behalf of parents. ● May 2018 - Providers received a child care Tuition Reimbursement for \$1,000/eligible child on behalf of parents ● July 1, 2018 – Maryland implemented an 8% provider rate increase The rate increase brought the reimbursement rate to a minimum payment rate of the 20th percentile of the January 2017 Market Rate Survey ● August 1, 2018 – Child care subsidy income eligibility limits were increased to 65% of the 2017 State Median Income. A family size of 2 can make up to \$49,000 and be eligible for child care subsidy. This means the income eligibility limits doubled (or more). <p>Jenn thanked Rene’ Williams and John for working tirelessly to implement all of the changes.</p> <p>Chris P. said it also took the efforts of Maryland Family Network, Maryland NAEYC and Maryland’s provider associations going to the legislature every year to get the increase in funding for the program.</p> <p>Debbie Moore pointed out that without the efforts of former Senator Barbara Mikulski leading the charge at the federal level for the Re-authorization of the Block Grant, none of this would have happened.</p> <p>Madie said that the money providers received on behalf of the parents created a lot of confusion for the parents. Some parents thought the money should pass to them through</p>

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	<p>the providers. There have been instances of parents taking a provider to court to try and get the money. Some parents also do not realize that when the money runs out, they have to resume paying their co-pays. Madie asked if MSDE would provide more explanation to the parents to help clear up the confusion.</p> <p>Betty said she brought each parent in individually to go over the information with them.</p> <p>John said MSDE created a second document to help providers “do the math” on the money they received and provided more detail in that document for the provider so they could better explain to the parent. Inquiries about this should go to him (410-767-7831) or john.lamb1@maryland.gov.</p> <p>Chris P. asked how MSDE was marketing the information about the opening of the wait list.</p> <p>John said the information is available on the MSDE website. He also participated in a child care subsidy podcast with Richard Huffman and shared the information through that format. We are also relying on our partners to help spread the news.</p> <p>Jenn said parents currently on subsidy are getting notified through mass mailing. She asked that everyone help spread the news. MSDE is also creating new marketing materials to get the word out.</p> <p>Lindi, and the Maryland EXCELS staff, have been critical in getting the information out as well. So is JHU/CTE.</p> <p>Chris S. asked that MSDE pull some key messaging points, talking points, FAQ’s etc., together to give to the various partners so that everyone is sharing the same information.</p> <p>Flora asked if MSDE was going to be ready for the influx of new applications.</p> <p>Jenn said we would not know the impact for a while. People are being informed now. We may be able to share information within four months but it is possible it may take longer.</p> <p>We are working with the local departments of social services (LDSS) to centralize child care subsidy services for all customers back to MSDE. Right now, TANF customers receive service through the LDSS offices. All customers will receive services through Child Care Subsidy Central.</p> <p>Ellie asked what the amounts are for subsidy reimbursements.</p> <p>Jenn said the child care subsidy tables are available on MSDE’s website for child care subsidy. Amounts vary by family size, payment regions, etc.</p> <p>https://earlychildhood.marylandpublicschools.org/child-care-subsidy-program</p>
Credentialing	<p>Angeline introduced the members of her team: Latanya Taylor (Voucher Reimbursements), Agneatha Wright (CCCPDF), Jacqueline Woodruff (Grants Specialist), and Adele Bealfield (assistant).</p>

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	<p><u>Child Care Career and Professional Development Fund (CCCPDF):</u></p> <p>Angeline said there are 260 new providers participating in the CCCPDF for the academic school year 18-19 year.</p> <p>There are 21 participating colleges/universities.</p> <p>Cecil Community College just joined the list of participating colleges.</p> <p>Angeline thanked Sonya and said Montgomery County Community College enrolled the highest number of new students this year. 61 additional students from Montgomery enrolled in the Fund.</p> <p>Sonya said Montgomery College did a lot of outreach to centers for the CCCPDF, visiting them on-site at lunch time and on evening and weekends. She said child care providers are a unique population and need different recruiting strategies. The Consortium of two- and four –year colleges are working together on this.</p> <p>Jenn asked Sonya to put something together about what Montgomery College is doing to recruit providers so she can present that information at the next OCC Advisory Council meeting.</p> <p>Angeline said she and her team met with all of colleges and had the opportunity to meet with some of the providers participating.</p> <p><u>Family Child Care Provider Grant:</u></p> <p>This grant is under-utilized. They are looking into ways to market it to family child care providers. This grant reimburses family child care providers for up to \$500 of the costs they spend to meet licensing requirements. Existing providers can also use the Grant for costs they spend to maintain their registration. Providers may only apply for this Grant once.</p> <p><u>Child Care Quality Incentive Grant:</u></p> <p>This grant is also under-utilized. Child care centers and family providers in Title 1 school districts are eligible to apply for funding to purchase materials to improve the quality of care they are providing. Providers can receive up to \$3,500 depending on the size of their program.</p> <p>Flora asked if illegal child care providers can utilize any of the programs to help them become licensed and Jenn said no.</p> <p><u>Medically Fragile Grants:</u></p> <p>MSDE awarded five grants to provide technical assistance to providers caring for children who are medically fragile.</p> <p>Abilities Network also has a grant to help providing training on how to care for children with special needs.</p> <p>The Maryland Family Network, received funding to help support the work of the local child care resource and referral centers.</p> <p>Credentialing does not have anything over 60 days pending for processing.</p> <p>Maddie suggested MSDE provide information on the different grants at orientation sessions. She did not hear of some of the programs until well after she was licensed.</p>

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	<p>Chris P. said she believes Conduent staff need additional training.</p> <p>Angeline said problems at Conduent happen because they have a high staff turnover rate. Credentialing is a complex program. It can take from six months to one year for someone to grasp the Program.</p> <p>There are 7,606 center staff participating in Credentialing and 579 family child care providers. Angeline would like to see more family providers participate.</p>
Licensing	<p>Louis said this was his first Advisory Council meeting. He became the Licensing Branch Chief in December 2017.</p> <p>Louis reported that MSDE has applied to NARA for a technical assistance grant.</p> <p>Licensing is developing an inspection guide, with a coding guide that will be consistent across all types of providers and they will train staff on the appropriate use of the codes. They are hoping to have the guide complete by the October 2018 all staff meeting.</p> <p>Licensing is working to improve its communications both internally and externally. Minutes from the regional managers meeting will get distributed to all licensing staff.</p> <p>Face-to-face initial orientations for new providers will resume in September. The on-line version will remain in place for now.</p> <p>Jenn and Steven are working on a public information campaign regarding illegal child care.</p> <p>Licensing staff are going to attend stakeholder meetings, public forums, conferences, etc., to be more available to providers.</p> <p>Roundtable meetings are going to resume.</p> <p>We are looking into improving staff training efforts as well. We would like to partner with community colleges to provide training to the specialists. We are looking into ways to also improve staff morale in the regional offices.</p> <p>There are: 2,653 licensed centers with the capacity to serve 171,812 children. 5,521 family child care homes with the capacity to serve 42,639 children.</p> <p>We are losing family child care providers at an alarming rate. This is one of the things we are discussing in the Governor's Association Workforce Development meetings.</p> <p>To date in 2018, there have been: 20 compliance agreement (children may not be at serious risk) 12 initial applicant denials (background or CPS backgrounds) 5 continuing provider denials (converting to continuing license) 1 intermediate sanction 12 non-access agreements (generally in family child care homes where someone has a criminal or CPS history)</p>

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	<p>14 employment exclusions (Center staff with a criminal history who should no longer be employed) 44 emergency suspensions (Children are at imminent risk) 53 revocations (Allowed to stay open until the hearing – children not at imminent risk)</p> <p>Chris P. asked for a breakdown of enforcements by types of facilities.</p> <p>Louis said he could supply that information.</p> <p>Suspensions occur most often in family child care homes.</p>
Maryland EXCELS	<p>HAPPY 5TH BIRTHDAY TO MARYLAND EXCELS!!! Please visit marylandexcels.org/birthday</p> <p>Maryland EXCELS participation: 53% of all child care facilities (4,483 participants) 73% of child care centers (1,953) 47% of all family child care homes (2,410)</p> <p>Beginning October 1, 2018 through September 30, 2019, Maryland EXCELS is going to pay bonuses to participating programs that publish a first-time quality rating of 1-5, or republish a quality rating of 5.</p> <p>We will be sending out a postcard to all family providers to ask them if they would be interested in obtaining Maryland accreditation.</p> <p>NAFCC and Maryland are partnering together to pilot the new NAFCC accreditation.</p> <p>Maryland EXCELS 2.0 will be out soon. It will launch on October 23.</p> <p>Maryland EXCELS and JHU/CTE put up a billboard (May-October) on the way back from Ocean City about quality child care.</p> <p>Maryland accreditation 320 child care centers and public prekindergarten programs are Maryland accredited.</p>
Other Information /Updates	<p>The Division is creating a Strategic Plan. One of the things we are considering is what our priorities should be. We would like to hear from everyone about what you think our priorities should be.</p> <p>Chris P. – Communication, accountability. Bring stakeholders in before you implement changes.</p> <p>Steven and Jenn have very full calendars. If you want them to attend a meeting or present, you must let them know far in advance of the meeting.</p> <p>Chris S. – Systems/initiative alignments and breaking down silos. Create a holistic system.</p> <p>Ellie – Unify the system for us. Please keep standards high for the Montessori schools. We worked with your Division on legislation in 2018. We want to be invited to participate.</p> <p>Fatima – Alignment. Keep the message going that the work we do is important.</p>

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2018 Meetings	All meetings are between 10:00 am – 12:00 Noon @ MSDE, 8 th Floor Conference Room 6/7 November 29, 2018
2019 Meetings	February 21 May 16 August 22 November 21