



## Maryland Family Engagement Coalition Meeting Minutes

**Attendees:** Paola Andujar, Roikenshaia Craig, Wendy Baysmore-Dantzler, Julie Dobies, Evelyn English, Deanna Hairsh, Robin Hopkins, Cyndi La Marca Lessner, Melanie Martin, Kia McLeod, Marjorie Miles, Chris Peusch, Lisa Rhodes, Carrie Sanders, Barbara Scherr, Dorothy Stoltz, Chris Swanson

- **Family Engagement Presentation: JHU Deborah Gross gave a presentation on the “PEECE Project: Partnership to develop a measure of parent engagement in early childhood.”**
  - As a practicing nurse, Gross arrived at Hopkins from Chicago in 2008. She started working for the Baltimore City Schools System in order to duplicate Chicago’s Parent Program. It’s now called the CHIPP Project.
  - For the Project, the group looked at the impact on children’s behavioral problems, absentee rates; and for those likely expelled. In addition, they looked for schools with stable leadership.
  - Over the course of three years, the group had enrolled 380 Pre-K parents: 68 percent were African American.
  - Parents who signed up for the Project received a bank debit card. Each time they attended, the parents received \$15. It was the highest participation rate the group had experienced.
  - Although the group offered it to every child, 40 percent had behavioral problems. They had experienced a 37 percent drop in those behaviors.
  - The group put together an advisory board with the goal of working with principals, Pre-K teachers, two academics, and two parents. They also conducted qualitative interviews with stakeholders and asked what they thought family engagement should look like.
  - The goal was to work with schools where parents were not actively engaged; so they intentionally talked to parents who were not traditionally involved in these studies: homeless parents and families, English language learners, and incarcerated parents and families.

**Q:** Dorothy Stoltz asked if the study was conducted with the same 12 schools.

**A:** No. The group made sure they went to schools that had difficulty when it comes to family engagement. They also looked for parents with diverse economic backgrounds. They found parents who made below \$20k and/or over 40 percent under the poverty level.

**Q:** Carrie Saunders said that the questions were pretty personal and wondered if the group had any issues with getting responses from the participants?

**A:** Actually, the participants were pretty comfortable. One of the things the group did was asked open-ended questions. There were no issues gathering personal information.

**Q:** Marjorie Miles asked if Gross shared the study with the city schools.

**A:** The group will.

**C:** Robin Hopkins shared information about Ready At Five's learning parties. However, she explained that they haven't been able to find a suitable way to measure them.

**C:** Cyndi La Marca Lessner explained that when she does her evaluation, it always comes back to family engagement which contributes, but is not solely responsible for any improved outcomes. She added that it's something they always struggle with; and she knows it's needed.

**C:** Marjorie Miles said that the principals cannot be the sole decision makers. She explained that it's the reason she asked if Gross shared the study with Baltimore schools. She added that it's not just about the information collected; but it's about how you share the information. She agreed with the group that Gross' gave an excellent presentation. Miles said she sees the study as a model for the state.

- **Communications Update: MSDE Division of Early Childhood Kia McLeod provided the members with an update on MSDE and family engagement communications.**
  - MSDE has updated its logo. It's same design; however, the slogan has been updated to "EQUITY AND EXCELLENCE". A link to the updated MSDE logo will be provided to the members.
  - There was a tie between *Maryland Families Engage* logo one and logo three (36.84 percent). During the voting process for the new logo, the Branch had received feedback that logo three represented/promoted a "traditional family," which is not the state's position on the makeup of today's modern families. Therefore, Cyndi La Marca Lessner selected logo one as the new logo for the family engagement Coalition and community Hub website, *Maryland Families Engage*.
  - *Maryland Families Engage* is scheduled for a soft launch Saturday, June 30 and the "official" launch will be held Thursday, July 26 during the Summit.
  - Members had focused previously on the design and function of the new website. With the upcoming launch, moving forward, it is time to promote *Maryland Families Engage*.

- Members were asked to “help spread the word” about the new Maryland Families Engage website. Coalition members can all work together to promote school readiness, positive parent-child relationships and the benefits of family engagement.
- A landing page was created on the Division of Early Childhood’s website with materials that can be used to help promote the new Maryland Families Engage website on Facebook/Twitter, added to newsletters/websites, displayed in organizations’ lobbies, and distributed at special events.
- *The Maryland Families Engage* promotional materials are available for download by [clicking here](#).

**Q:** Who will vet external website submissions?

**A:** The Hub team: Kia McLeod and CTE staff.

**Q:** What’s the estimated time to vet information?

**A:** Chris Swanson said it could be 48 hours to turn around. Normally, it’s five to 10 business days.

**Q:** Is there a process for deciding what can and cannot be posted?

**A:** Yes. For example, the Hub team has added a statement for the “events” page. The Hub team is currently working on one for the resource page as well.

**Q:** How do we get around not endorsing a certain organization?

**A:** That’s a good question. The Hub team will work with MSDE to determine if there’s an issue with posting events and/or what qualifies as an endorsement.

**Q:** Do all events posted on the new website need to be free of charge?

**A:** That’s also a good question. This will be one of the questions for MSDE.

**Q:** Who is responsible for analyzing, summarizing, etc... content being displayed on the new website?

**A:** The Hub team will request that information is “camera” ready and/or complete before posting to the website.

**Q:** Will the MD Learning Links be easily accessible on the new website?

**A:** Yes. The website will have links to both external and internal partners.

- **The 2018 Maryland Family Engagement Summit: Ready At Five’s Robin Hopkins provided the members with an update on the 2018 Maryland Family Engagement Summit.**

- The 2018 Maryland Family Engagement Summit will be held Thursday, June 26 from 8:30 a.m. until 3:30 p.m. at the Maritime Conference Center.
- Registration closed in less than a week.
- The planning committee will ensure all Coalition members are registered. However, they are currently requesting event volunteers.

- The planning committee is also currently exploring the idea of including parent ambassadors.
- A planning meeting for Summit committee members will be held directly after this meeting.

- **Kellogg Grant: Cyndi La Marca Lessner, Robin Hopkins and Dorothy Stoltz provided the members with updates about the Kellogg Grant.**

**Q:** Lisa Rhodes asked Robin Hopkins for the current Ready Rosie numbers, and if parents and families were actually using the program.

**A:** Robin Hopkins-It's difficult to determine because it was not designed to do outside of a school. The problem was that it was touching so few families. Also, some of the jurisdictions have done a better job than others of marketing Ready Rosie to families. Ready At Five is experiencing the same struggles. In terms of engagement, parents and families watched 11,850 videos. However, it doesn't tell Ready At Five if they have completed the activity. Ready At Five also received some feedback from teachers that it was a complicated program. Ready At Five has seen some exceptional teachers who are making play lists and texting parents; and are very active in the program.

**Q:** Melaine Martin- How do parents get connected with the Parent Leadership Learning Parties?

**A:** Parents are invited by the program. Ready At Five also works with the ECACs, invite facilitators from the ECACs and the Judy centers.

**Q:** Julie Dobies-Is Ready Rosie available to put on the new website?

**A:** No, because it's a paid service.

- **Dorothy Stoltz provided an updated on the second-year funding.**

- Harford County is currently focusing on low-income families.
- Talbot County is proving lap time story kits for infants and toddlers.
- PG County is offering Ready to Learn, Ready to Read.
- St. Mary County's Detention Center inmates who are parents will read books that will be recorded through a podcast. Families will be able to listen later at home.

**C:** Carrie Sanders said she's happy to hear how the libraries have been creatively using their funds.

- **Cyndi La Marca Lessner provided an update on the partnership with CSSO.**

- There are currently 15 states in consortium.
- The group completed its first meeting with cohort two and nine states last week.
- States are in different stages; and some already have a framework.
- The goal with the consortium is that each state leaves with a 0-21 framework; and the group is continuing to make progress.

**Q:** Dorothy Stoltz asked how Maryland is doing.

**A:** Cyndi La Marca Lessner said that Maryland is doing well. However, each state has different approaches. One of the struggles is a change in leadership. When you look at the typical tenure of superintendents, it's usually about three years. The question is: How do schools resolve that and keep the working moving forward.

**C:** Barbara Scherr added that Maryland is really strong. Other states have not had the birth focus. It really helps and puts Maryland at the top.

- **Future Meetings** - 3rd Monday - every other month from 1 - 3:30 p.m.
  - Monday, Oct. 15, 2018