



Maryland Family Engagement Coalition Meeting
Monday, Oct. 21, 2019
Meeting Minutes

Attendees: Julie Dobies, Evelyn English, Mary Gunning, Jacqueline Grant, Tresa Hanna, Loretta Hoepfner, Amy Kelly, Cynthia La Marca Lessner, Melanie Martin, Kia McLeod, Marjorie Miles, Chris Peusch, Lisa Rhodes, Barbara Scherr, Dorothy Stoltz,

- The 2019 Maryland Family Engagement Summit Briefing: On behalf of Wendy Dantzler, Kia McLeod presented an overview of the 2019 Maryland Family Engagement Summit demographics, and led a discussion about future planning.
 - There were 236 attendees at the 2019 Maryland Family Engagement Summit, which included the following:

Superintendents

1. Theresa Alban, Superintendent Frederick County Public Schools
2. George Arlotto, Superintendent Anne Arundel County Public Schools
3. Daniel Curry, Superintendent Calvert County Public Schools
4. Helga Einhorn, Assistant Superintendent Talbot County Public Schools
5. Steven Hicks, Assistant State Superintendent, MSDE, DEC
6. Dr. Carol Williamson, Deputy Superintendent, Office of Teaching and Learning, MSDE

Principles/Assistant Principals

1. David DuLac, Principal Kent Island Elementary School
2. Rosa Carmon, Principal Elementary/Middle Alternative Programs
3. Kristine Donohue, Principal Cannon Road
4. M. Deneise Hammond, Principal, Rachel Carson ES
5. Maria Watson, Principal, Laytonsville ES
6. Robert Watson, Assistant Principal, EBWMS
7. DeHavon Scott, Assistant Principal, Forcey Christian School
8. Cheri Vislay, Principal, Forcey Christian School
9. Patricia Muldowney, Assistant Principal Maryland School for the Deaf
10. Denise Folks, Principal, Positive Youth Expressions, Inc

- **57 parent coordinators, 35 teachers, and 73 directors, managers, and supervisors** attended the 2019 Maryland Family Engagement Summit.
- The overall rating of the event was excellent.
- In response to the survey question, **“How will you use the information provided to improve your job performance?”** Survey participants responded that they will “Work

harder to erase biases, use information to inform program decisions, make real changes in my field/workplace, and be more aware of my interactions”.

- **After the Summit, the big messages that survey participants plan to share included,** “Be more aware! A training needs to be developed around this topic. Implicit bias is real. Preschool expulsion is not a child behavior, but an adult decision”.
- **Overall comments from survey participants included,** “Dr. Allen and Dr. Gilliam were amazing! All workshops were meaningful. I would have liked to pre-register. Each workshop was researched based and informative”.
- **Suggestions for future topics included:**
 - Implicit Bias.
 - Raising the Professional Standards.
 - Empathy.
 - Early Learning Standards.
 - SEFEL.
 - The Power of Play.
 - Empowering Change in Families.
- **Additional comments for the 2020 Maryland Family Engagement Summit Planning Committee:**
 - Provide/share the agenda prior to summit.
 - Allow people the opportunity to pre-register for workshops before the summit.
 - Receive all information, handouts, and PowerPoints prior to the summit.
 - Promote this event to more teachers.
- **Leadership Academy Parent Presentations:** Melanie Martin, Maryland Family Network, led a discussion about the parents’ experience during the 2019 Maryland Family Engagement Summit.
 - The parents who attended the 2019 Maryland Family Engagement Summit all agreed that the event was a very educational, eye-opening, informative, and welcoming experience.
 - The parents suggested that the Coalition find more creative ways to encourage families to attend next year’s event, including offering child care, topics geared toward parents, and weekend and/or evening events in local communities.

Coalition Members Brainstorming Session (Three Workgroups), which included two parents per group, were created to brainstorm ways to develop a statewide “Parents and Families as Partners” Advisory Group. Below are the questions that helped to guide the groups’ discussion with responses from each group.

- Melvina Warren previous participant at St. Vincent de Paul Early Head Start Center in Baltimore City
- Latonya Brown Our House Early Head Start in Baltimore City
- Rebecca Blake Our House Early Head Start in Baltimore City
- Vinoos Rezaee Adelphi/Langley Park Family Support Center in Prince Georges County
- Sultana Sofizada Adelphi/Langley Park Family Support Center in Prince Georges County

- **What are three ways to encourage parents and families to participate in a statewide “Parents and Families as Partners” Advisory Group?**

1. Through local community partners and resources. Provide information such as time and location a month in advance and distribute reminders. Advertise information in local newsletters and on Facebook. Invite parents through relationships. Reimburse parents for child care and travel.
2. Develop partnerships with professionals. Marketing and advertising directly to parents. Build relationships. Develop personal connections with parents. Use high-school meetings as a model.
3. Offer virtual meetings on Facebook live. Offer meals and transportation to parents. Provide topics in advance.

- **Brainstorm three effective and cost-efficient outreach strategies to recruit parents and families.**

1. Text messages and email. Create an app.
2. Recruit more parents and families during the Summit. Reserve 30% of the Summit seats to parents and families.
3. Advertise on the Maryland Families Engage website. Advertise on social media. Ask providers to invite their parents as a two for one deal.

- **“In Family Engagement, quantity does always not trump quality.” Should there be local parent advisory groups or one state group with representatives from each jurisdiction? Please provide details based on your group’s response:**

- Yes. One state group with representatives.

- **In order to better coordinate the state’s current efforts, should the newly formed “Parents and Families as Partners” Advisory Group be incorporated into an existing group such as the Local Early Childhood Advisory Councils (LECACS)?**
 - Yes.

- **Before officially forming the group, what steps or processes should the Coalition put in place to prepare for the “Parents and Families as Partners” Advisory Group and to ensure parents and families feel empowered, informed, and encouraged to participate?**
 1. Create opportunities for feedback and suggestions.
 2. Host webinars or some sort of training to prepare parents.
 3. Contact local agencies for parents’ referrals.

- **Name two incentives that would encourage parents and families to participate in the “Parents and Families as Partners” Advisory Group?**
 1. Free child care. Transportation and meals. Books.
 2. Free training and other educational opportunities. School supplies.

- **Supporting Families with Premature Babies:** Dr. Betsy Diamant-Cohen joined Brenda Hussey-Gardner, Barb Henschel, and Rebecca Dowling to present an overview of the Mother Goose on the Loose (MGOL) program.
 - According to the CDC, about one in 10 babies are born prematurely each year in the United States.
 - The socio-economic environment is a contributor to preterm delivery.
 - The goal of the Mother Goose on the Loose (MGOL) program is to help all children be the best they can be by teaching parents the importance of talking, singing, reading, and playing with their children.
 - In addition, the program develops models for parents about early literacy behaviors with their children.
 - In order to add to that foundation, the program focuses on providing premature babies with music and reading in NICUs.
 - Research shows that parent interactions can help to build early literacy skills.
 - Speaking directly to infants promotes attention to language and fosters social interaction.
 - Through the program, NICU babies benefit from sensing their parents’ presence, feeling emotionally connected, hearing their parents’ voices speaking to them, and having medically appropriate physical contact with their parents.

- **The Maryland Family Engagement Coalition Updates:** Kia McLeod, MSDE, provided updates to the members.
 - Kia McLeod has been trying to secure a free photographer. If anyone in the group has access to a photographer, please contact Kia.

- The 2020 meeting dates are now listed on the website, and will be added to the groups' calendars.
- Future Meetings - 3rd Monday - every other month from 1- 3:30 p.m.
 - December 16
 - 2020 Meeting Dates: February 24, April 20, June 15, August 17, October 19, December 21