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Frederick County Interagency Early Childhood Committee  
*A Subcommittee of the Local Management Board*

**Meeting Minutes**  
May 2, 2024

**Attendees:**

Jim Miller, Steve Buckley, Kathy Allen, Erin Gambrill, Kelly Robbins, Patty Morison, Adam Schlager, Rick Weldon, Ginny Shell, Sarah Martin, Kelli Goetz  
Leshia Chandler, Diana Fulchiron, Pilar Olivo, Leslie Frei, Sarah Scherhaufer, Delaine Welch, Nancy Boyd, Kerry Fair, Charlotte Strine, Rousana Soto, Pat Rosensteel, Sarah Ford, Jessica Lertora, Jillian Bleggi

**1:00pm – 1:10pm Welcome & Introductions**

Steve and Leslie shared a thank you to Pilar for her work with the IECC. Pilar shared her thanks with the IECC and their commitment to collaboration.

Diana made the motion to approve the April meeting minutes. Kathy seconded the motion to adopt the minutes. Minutes were adopted unanimously.

**1:10-1:45 pm – Advocacy 101: Rick Weldon**

\$70M spent on state legislative advocacy through lobbyists. \$60M spent with a small number of firms.

Rick Weldon recommended that everyone compose an email to your state delegates and senator, County council members on what matters most to you in the world. Every email gets entered into a system and when your issues come up, the system will send you an email that your issue is coming up on the state agenda. They will correspond with you on the issues that you have said are important to you. When they vote on issues, their staff prints out an email about the issues that you have said are important to you. If they haven't heard from you, then they might have heard about someone else's concerns that are the opposite of what you think about.

County council system is less sophisticated but your emails are important to share the issues that are important to you. Postcard campaigns aren't valuable unless they come from a person

in the County or district and they need to have personal reasons about why the issue is important to them.

Being a single vote voter and threatening to vote against a candidate limits your ability to influence your legislator because a lot of issues are more complex than a single vote. And legislators may get it wrong one time and right another time.

Use your two to three minutes well – focus on your key message and single issue.

Elected officials have a lot to learn and can't learn everything at the depth that we might like. They are dependent on lobbyists and advocates to get education. Rick recommends that you work harder to learn your opponent's position and why. It's an opportunity to improve your own policy solution or position if you can address their concerns as well.

Tailor your message to your audience – understand their perspective. Rick is happy to help connect you to your legislators [Rweldon@frederickchamber.org](mailto:Rweldon@frederickchamber.org)  
Chamber tracks 65 sectors in our local economy. Our largest sector is nonprofit and they contribute hugely to the success of our County by being the backstop on supporting families.

Diana made the connection to the IECC's strategic plan which is to increase our capacity to do advocacy.

Patty said child care providers can be very intimidated to send an email to legislators. Bulk email matters when it's local but it matters even more when it has a 1 sentence personal message or story at the very beginning or the very end. Staff must respond.

Frederick County Board of Election can give you a list of all your elected officials that are unique to your address.

Pat said – people can feel concerned that they are running afoul of rules so phrase in terms of education, rather than voting for a specific legislation. Rick said that it's very powerful to frame your advocacy as "I am an advocate on behalf of, and the reason that I am an advocate is because of a barrier that the population faces."

#### **IECC Grant:**

Sarah Martin gave an update on the MSDE ECAC grant which MHA is managing.

- FREE business training for home-based child care providers – with 30 signed up in 24 hours. There is a waitlist. Home-based providers will get books plus \$100 stipend.
- IECC has 500 Strong Families bags to save for Children's Festival.

Leslie Frei said she can provide a business consultant to child care providers who would like to write for the preK expansion grant.

Patty at the state level – increased need for training business topics.

#### **Children's Festival**

Children's Festival moved inside because of rain. Teen volunteers from Urbana took a lot of initiative. Message needs to get to Beth McCook. Kelly Robinson led volunteer recruitment – a total of 90 volunteers were recruited.

Very successful day. 1500 people participated, including 500 children. Had to pivot late on Friday evening to move inside. Biggest complaint was the tight quarters. 10 booths said they were not coming if there was no rain but only 2 no shows.

Only 5 child care providers and family child care associations participated. Patty thinks it's indicative of child care staffing. Often centers will provide the moon bounce.

Vendors who use more space –soccer, skate people, gymboree, tumbling weren't there.

Patty is looking for a co-chair for the 35th anniversary.

#### **Child Care Market Study and Public Input on Possible Child Care Initiatives**

The Division of Family Services offered two ways for the community to give input on possible child care initiatives to address certain findings of the Child Care Market Study – an online survey and a small convening in-person on Saturday, April 20.

The priority initiatives under consideration to recommend for a proposal for ARPA funding are:

- incentives or resources for employers to help their employees with child care
- business training for existing home-based child care providers
- recruitment of new home-based child care providers who reflect the diversity of our community
- multilingual resources for families on child care and the child care scholarship
- one-time stipend for certain families

The Local Management Board will be convening a workgroup on child care to move forward on the findings of the child care market study.

FCPS ECE has used the results of the study for preK expansion. MHA Child Care Choices, FCPL, Parks and Recreation uses the Child Care Market Study for grants. Frederick County DSS needs child care for people who work second or third shifts. For one family, it will make the difference for putting a child in foster care.

Steve and Jim adjourned the meeting at 2:00 pm.

**Next Meeting – June 6, 2024 1:00 pm**

*Meeting Minutes Recorder – Tara Plowman*

*Presentations – Erin Gambrill, FCPL Summer Reading Challenge*

Respectfully submitted by,

Pilar Olivo  
ACEs Liaison, Frederick County Division of Family Services