

NIH Child Care Board Meeting Minutes
March 11, 2021
WebEx

Members, Liaisons, and Guests in Attendance: Dr. Theresa Cruz, Dr. Kristin Dupre, Ms. Ila Flannigan, Mr. Dan Fogarty, Dr. Chao Jiang, Ms. Olivia Kent, Mr. Dan Lonnerdal, Dr. Seema Nayak, Ms. Nicole Ray, Dr. Suzanne Ryan, Dr. Gilman Toombes, Dr. Blake Warner, Ms. Kate Winseck, Ms. Heather Rogers, Ms. Julie Margel, Ms. Tracy Carrico, Ms. Christina Segura, Ms. Jennifer Rooms, Ms. Anne Schmitz, Ms. Debbie Washington, Dr. Melissa Conti Mazza, Dr. Carl Hashimoto, Dr. Mary Kearney, Mr. Ivan Locke, Dr. Pragya Prakash, Ms. Anna Verschoore, Dr. Judith Walters, Ms. Tammie Edwards, Mr. Russell Mason, Ms. Linda Owen. Guests: Ms. Monica Chavis, Ms. Rose Cuento, Ms. Brittany Gibau, Ms. Kate Stotish, Ms. Jing Tassone, Dr. Quan Yuan

I. Welcome and Introduction of Board Members, Liaisons and Guests: Chair Kristin Dupre called the meeting to order, welcomed everyone, and asked guests to introduce themselves.

II. Updates:

A. Approval of January 28, 2021 Minutes – A motion to approve the January 2021 meeting minutes was made by Dr. Suzanne Ryan, seconded by Dr. Seema Nayak, and approved by all.

B. NIH Child Care Board Charter – The Charter was approved and signed by Dr. Lawrence Tabak, Principal Deputy Director of the NIH.

C. HWC Newsletter – Dr. Kristin Dupre reported on the recent newsletter featuring the NIH Child Care Board: <https://wellnessatnih.ors.od.nih.gov/news/Pages/default.aspx>

D. Effect of MCPS Opening for In-Person Learning on NIH Childcare Centers –

- i. Anne Schmitz, Executive Director, ECDC, reported that they are continuing with 2 groups of school aged children, offering supervision of virtual learning; only three children withdrew to attend school in person.
- ii. Christina Segura, Executive Director, POPI, reported that they are continuing with one group of kindergarteners, offering supervision of virtual learning; half of their cohort (seven children) withdrew to attend school in person.
- iii. NWCCC is not offering a program for school aged children.

III. Membership Committee Report – Co-chair Olivia Kent reported that a global email announcing this year’s membership campaign was released on March 10. The Board is seeking as many as four new voting members. Applications are due April 9, at which time interviews will be conducted.

IV. Innovative Programs Committee Report – Co-chair Kristin Dupre reported on the following items:

A. Childcare Feasibility Study of NCI at Frederick and Shady Grove: In 2013, to comply with federal appropriations law, the NCI at Frederick closed its childcare facility. In 2018, NCI contracted with a third-party firm to conduct a childcare feasibility study for both Frederick and Shady Grove. Based on the results, the firm did not recommend opening a childcare center at either location. The Childcare Board and the Child and Family Programs team worked with NCI staff to conduct on-site outreach events and develop materials targeting the specific needs of each location. The Innovative Programs Committee will follow up on two action items:

- i. Check with NCI contact(s) to determine if the other report recommendations were implemented.

- ii. Consider other constituencies in Frederick that have federal employees and might be interested in partnering to open a childcare center and/or other resources for the area. (Similar conversations are occurring in Baltimore between specific NIH Institutes/Centers and John Hopkins University.)
- B. Extramural Announcements to Support Family-Friendly Work Environments: Recent actions have occurred in the extramural research arena that support efforts to provide family-friendly environments, accommodations and leave policies, including timely access to affordable childcare and accommodations for extended family care. Of note, a Notice of Special Interest (NOSI) was issued regarding the availability of administrative supplements for childcare costs for NIH-funded NRSA Fellows. The Fellows may request \$2,500 per budget period for costs for licensed childcare. The Innovative Programs Committee will follow up on two action items:
 - i. Engage with the Office of Intramural Research (OIR) on the topic of the high cost of childcare for fellows (IRTAs and VFs) and recommend that OIR leadership form an exploratory workgroup of key NIH stakeholders to examine the feasibility of dependent care subsidy opportunities for fellows.
 - ii. Contact those individuals who coordinate the NOSI for NRSA fellows as part of the workgroup tasks.

Board members suggested that FELCOM representatives be included in the workgroup.

- C. WSA Liaison Dr. Mary Kearney again raised the question of whether a signed Letter of Intent can be substituted for an Official Offer Letter as a means of determining eligibility for an employee or trainee to register their child on the NIH Childcare Waitlist. The question will be taken up by the Waitlist Committee at their March 25 meeting.

- V. **Childcare Subsidy Committee Report** – Co-chair Blake Warner reported that the Committee met with the FEEA Childcare Services liaison regarding 2020 program data. The number of participants decreased by 25% from 2019 to 2020. Utilization decreased substantially in 2020 due to childcare providers interrupting and/or closing their programs due to the pandemic. Only 21% of participants received a reimbursement of between \$4,000-\$5,000. The Subsidy Committee will follow up on the following action items:

- A. Develop recommendation to ORS that the AGI threshold be increased, especially considering the high cost of living and childcare in the Washington, DC metropolitan area.
- B. Develop recommendation to ORS that all employees participating in the program in 2021 receive the maximum reimbursement amount of \$5,000.

- VI. **Announcements and Adjournment:**

- A. Lunch and Learn Webinar, “Exploring Financial Management Strategies,” scheduled for Thursday, March 18, 1:30 p.m.
- B. Board Membership applications due April 9.
- C. The 2021-2022 schedule of Board meetings was distributed.
- D. The meeting was adjourned at 11:45 a.m.

The next Board meeting will be held on April 15, 2021 at 10:00 a.m. by WebEx.