



Meeting Minutes - June 2, 2022
10:00 AM to 12:00 PM
WebEx

Members, Liaisons and Guests in Attendance: Dr. Joe Bonner, Ms. Molly Cluster, Dr. Kristin Dupre, Dr. Tuba Fehr, Ms. Ila Flannigan, Ms. Jackie Franco, Dr. Helena Gabor, Ms. Olivia Kent, Ms. Jessica Meade, Dr. Seema Nayak, Ms. Melissa Porter, Dr. Gilman Toombes, Ms. Heather Rogers, Ms. Julie Margel, Ms. Jen Rooms, Ms. Anne Schmitz, Ms. Barbara Acquaviva, Ms. Debbie Washington, Dr. Sila Ataca, Dr. Carl Hashimoto, Ms. Jennifer Lee, Mr. Ivan Locke, Ms. Mallory McCormick, Dr. Tish Murphy, Ms. Nadia Shelby, Dr. Judith Walters, Ms. Tammie Edwards, Ms. Susan Borst

- I. **Welcome:** Chair Kristin Dupre called the meeting to order and welcomed voting members, liaisons, and guests. Dr. Dupre introduced the new voting members to the CCB extending a warm welcome and expressed her enthusiasm to recruit members from across many IC's and is excited about the new energy on the Board. She invited new members to think about which committees they might wish to serve on in the year ahead. Dr. Dupre spoke of the many co-chair opportunities across the different committees: Subsidy, Communications and Outreach, and Membership, encouraging all voting members to consider these leadership roles in the upcoming year. She announced that she will be departing the CCB Board (at the end of June 2023) and invited members to consider future leadership roles with proposed Co-Chair, Jackie Franco. Finally, Dr. Dupre thanked her Co-Chair, Ms. Olivia Kent for her six years of service to the Board and recognized all members leaving the Board for their tremendous service.

Ms. Tammie Edwards thanked the CCB for their many contributions and advisement to ORS Leadership. She welcomed the new members and expressed her enthusiasm for their expertise and diverse perspectives to this esteemed board.

II. **Updates:**

A. **Approval of Minutes:** A motion to approve the April 21, 2022, meeting minutes was made, seconded, and approved by voting members.

B. **Reports:**

- **Waitlist Committee** – Contractors can now be considered for NIH Child Care Center placement if they have a preschool aged child ages 36-59 months and desire placement in Maryland childcare centers. Priority will be given to Federal Employees/Fellows, Other Feds, and then Contractors. No siblings will be given preference for placement. The Global Announcement release was delayed and at the time of this meeting, 14 contractors have joined the NIH Waitlist.
- **Back-Up Care** – There was a delay in the delivery of Virtual Camp & Virtual Tutoring Services. We are eager to launch these services and are hopeful services can be shared through Global distribution.
- **Innovative Programs** – Dr. Joe Bonner recapped the committee meeting on May 10 with Montgomery Moving Forward (MMF) and shared their current initiative working to

improve childcare and work force development. He summarized how the Montgomery County Council charged this entity with making recommendations about private/public position on Universal Pre-K, how early childhood will be funded, and its impact on early childhood education in the future. MMF will be exiting this initiative as a coordinating entity, and the Childhood Opportunity Fund will lead county/state efforts to influence the direction of childcare moving forward. This newly funded initiative was approved by the Montgomery County Council and will be comprised of 12 private and 9 public seats and represents a diverse group of leaders and stakeholders, including childcare operators, MCPS leaders, advocacy groups, and professionals who value childcare development programs. To stay connected, Dr. Bonner suggested joining the MMF email listserv which will provide links to the new entities. NIH has overlapping interests with this group as they are working to promote better pay wages for childcare staff, offer affordable and equity-based childcare for vulnerable populations, and promote excellence in childcare across the county and state.

- **Communications Update** – The committee was unable to meet in June to clarify goals for the year ahead. It was noted that there has been enthusiasm from the group regarding the concept of Parent Ambassadors. These ambassadors could help partner with new parents and/or perspective parents to answer questions, build community, and provide support structures/relationships among parents at the independently-operated centers.

C. Center Directors Reporting

- **Executive Child Development Center (ECDC)** – Executive Director Anne Schmitz reported that staff are fully vaccinated with approximately 60% having experienced COVID and 16% have experienced Omicron. Staff health has been challenging. Fortunately, ECDC is planning a return to summer fun! Swimming will occur 2x weekly, trips to Sharps Farm, Glen Echo, D.C. Monuments and Museums, and a Mystics game have been planned. Vendors have been scheduled into the center, including the Blue Sky Puppet Theater, Reptile Wonders, and Magic Fun! Music, Soccer and Gymnastics are also back as part of programming. ECDC has 155 enrolled at their center and anticipate continuing to grow enrollment during May - August open enrollment period.
- **Parents of Preschoolers, Inc. (POPI)** – Assistant Director Jen Rooms echoed some similar experiences. It has been a year of staff challenges and the staff are ready for some much-needed summer vacation time. There has been a recent upswing in COVID cases among adults. POPI is offering Music, Spanish, Karate, and Soccer Bugs, and have hosted some groups into the center for Mad Science and an educator-entertainer to bring laughter to the children and staff.
- **Rockville Day Care Association, Inc.-Northwest Child Care Center** – Site Director Julie Margel reported that the center has seen facilities and maintenance progress and soft-surfacing repairs were completed to the playground. RDCA continues to find fun ways to share the Creative Curriculum and provide extension activities in day-to-day learning with the children in center care.

D. Open Discussion - ORS & NIH Child Care Centers have provided exceptional care for the NIH Community. Looking ahead to the upcoming year, what might be some priorities in the future?

- Basic protections for keeping the COVID spread minimized. No contact tracing, optional masking in the community, and concern for children who have immune-compromised health conditions.

- Challenging to be forced to return to work with childcare needs unmet and difficulty switching back and forth to different care/work environments.
- Provisions for test kits and child testing for return to centers.
- Continue to involve independent centers by surveying parents and their boards on COVID preferences, policies, and form collaborative relationships with NIH to understand needs.
- Changing work lifestyles will likely require different childcare needs (i.e., drop-in care, part-time care, community-based care vs. center care).
- Can NIH do anything to help with the staffing crisis? With the uncertainty of work-life routines, how do we anticipate childcare demands in the future to meet our NIH community needs?
- Are other federal agencies facing the same issues as NIH? Might we partner with them to help one another? How can we best help the NIH community when we are unable to place children in our campus centers?
- New HHS policy states that employees must have childcare while working on-duty hours. Concern over maxi-flex hours and working flexibilities and employees who are productive in work during telework vs. those who are not productive.
- “Care of Children” is so important. Children need continuity of programs and staff to support them to thrive socially, developmentally, with skill-development, and school readiness. Exposure to other adults is important, along with mental health, especially when there is stress in the family dynamic. Exposure to other adults is equally important and return to outdoor activities, creative outlets, field trips, and enriching center programming is welcomed by both children and adults. It creates fun experiences and normalcy.
- Extended family networks need support systems too. How can we provide resources to this group who have helped family members during these challenging times?

E. Annual Report and Future Leadership

Dr. Dupre mentioned if you are interested in Leadership Opportunities, please send Susan a note or speak with Kristin or Jackie before the next meeting. Dr. Dupre encouraged co-chair and committee mentorship during the upcoming “transition year”. Also discussed, the possibility of securing outdoor space for in-person meetings. Decisions about in-person, virtual or hybrid meetings will be made 30-days prior to scheduled CCB meetings and after review of COVID Community levels. An invitation to help complete the Annual Report was shared with board members and communication about deadlines will be shared via email.

III. Announcements and Adjournment

- A. NIH Child Care Board Reports- Committee Sections due to Kristin & Susan by Friday, July 1st.
- B. 2022 – 2023 NIH Child Care Board Meetings are scheduled from 10 am to 12 Noon on:
 - September 15, 2022 November 3, 2022
 - January 12, 2023 March 2, 2023 April 13, 2023 June 1, 2023
- C. Continue to follow and participate in summer calendar events listed on the Employee Intranet.
- D. Meeting adjourned.

Next meeting of the NIH Child Care Board - Thursday, September 15, 2022, from 10 AM to 12 Noon.