



**Meeting Minutes**  
January 20, 2021

**Attendees:**

Angelique Jessup  
Ashley Flowers  
Cathy Costa  
Crystal Francis  
Daphne Washington  
Drena Valentine  
Elizabeth Decker  
Faith Miller  
Gena O'Keefe  
Gloria Valentine  
Heather Yost  
Hilary Roberts-King  
Imani-Angela Rose

Jasmine Hardy  
Jennifer Lentz  
Jenee Tucker  
Kate Wasserman  
Kathy Carroll  
Kelly Rietschel  
Keontae Kells  
Khalilah Slater-Harrington  
Laura Weeldreyer  
Lieny Jeon  
Linda Callahan  
Margo Candelaria  
Mari Beth Moulton

Melissa Rock  
Nancy Pelton  
Natalie Schock  
Nikira Epps  
Ruby Daniels  
Ruth Farfel  
Stacey Tuck  
Tisha Edwards  
Trina Powell  
Wendy Wolff  
Yolanda Jenkins

**Welcome and Opening Remarks from Co-Chairs, Crystal Francis & Imani Angela Rose**

- Continuing to work w/consultants on Action Items and Next Steps
- Honor the life of Crystal Flowers & Little Flowers—Ashley Flowers & Jasmine Hardy joined the meeting and the ECAC

**Vote on 10/21/2020 meeting minutes**

- Motion to Approve the Minutes; Seconded; No objection to approving the minutes; no abstentions

**Workgroup Reporting**

- All Hands In; *Crystal Francis & Imani Angela Rose*
  - Been meeting w/Drena & Wendy
  - Working on the by-laws
  - Yolanda is helping w/reporting back to State
  - Workgroup leads met w/MOCFS to ensure the ECAC work & MOCFS work are aligned
  - Almost finished Action Workplans
  - Appreciation to Wendy & Drena for all the work they're doing—including beyond their initial scope of work
- Strong Backbone; *Khalilah Slater Harrington & Tisha Edwards*
  - Thankful for support from consultants
  - Finalizing Action Plan
  - Will be able to present strategy in the next week

- *Advocacy; Laura Weeldreyer & Melissa Rock*
  - Folding the advocacy work into the Strong Backbone committee
  - Blueprint Update: It does seem like the veto will be overridden
  - Also seems like schools will be held harmless (financially despite decreased enrollment this school year)
  
- *Open Heart; Angelique Jessup*
  - Thankful to Drena & Wendy
  - Almost finished finalizing workplan and action plan
  - Workgroup started with people who weren't ECAC members before the 1<sup>st</sup> retreat 18 months ago; redesigned their work
  - Will be reaching out to ECAC re.
    - Communication to families is the core—want to survey ECAC members about how best and authentically reach families; know some of the ECAC members know best practices
  - Creating a resource list
  
- *Smart Thinking; Lieny Jeon & Margo Candelaria*
  - Meeting bi-monthly; close to finalizing Work plan
  - Reviewing Martha Holleman's report to Abell Foundation & give her support
  - Looking at what other measures apart from KRA could get at outcomes for young children
    - MSDE IS doing KRA next year
      - Pre-K enrollment down 27%
      - K enrollment down 10% statewide
      - What are the implications of that for ECAC?
        - Usually most kids in K come from pre-k, that will be likely different next year
        - Also, so many young children are in situations this year that aren't appropriate child development-wise
        - Some students have gone to K in other formal settings, and will enter City Schools in 1<sup>st</sup> grade
        - A LOT of questions about how ready for school the kindergarteners will be.

### **MSDE grant update; Yolanda Jenkins**

- Got an extension on Year 1 of Grant Deliverables—Action Plans—new deadline, completed by end of March 2021
- Wendy & Drena will continue working w/ECAC on finalizing by-laws through end of March
- Year 2 began January 1<sup>st</sup>—drafted scope of work for consultants—want people to review Scope of Work and proposals. Want those consultants on board by March



### **Mayor's Office Early Childhood Workgroup Update; Khalilah Slater Harrington, MOECW Co-Chair**

- Early Childhood Workgroup has been active throughout summer and fall—action planning, state of childcare; how to move the work forward;
- Identified goals which will be publicly shared and reported on
- Intent to have those goals aligned w/ECAC goals
- Proud of the group's work
- 307 grants to childcare providers—most to family-based childcare
  - Center Based-- \$30k-\$50k (each)
  - Over \$3.7M
  - 222 Family Childcare Centers-- \$1.2M

### **COVID Vaccine; Imani Angela Rose**

- Childcare providers & teachers can get COVID vaccines now (see the link that ECAC sent out and the MSDE link)
- Two townhalls about the COVID-19 vaccine—will be shared
- Cathy Costa & Stacey Tuck are working on messaging re. pregnant women and breast feeding individuals to share.
  - Sending survey about how everyone will be able to get the word out
  - What kind of materials people want—social media content or information on paper for people to pick up in person
  - Have fact sheets to share (will be shared following the meeting)

### **ECAC Coalition Building Work; Wendy Wolff & Dr. Drena Valentine**

- Looking at bylaws & how to reduce communication obstacles
- Want to make sure ECAC can function smoothly, effectively, and efficiently
  - How do you inform your home organization of decisions?
    - By-Laws say, when ECAC is approached, how do we determine if issue is (a) worthy of ECAC support and (b) how does each organization make that decision for their organization
    - Ask supervisor; gets response within 1 business day
    - Ask supervisor; gets an answer within a week
    - Can speak on behalf of their organization
  - What would be an effective process to get approval from your home organization when a request is made of the ECAC?
    - As ECAC progresses, decisions might not be supported by all organizational members
    - An issue has been the time it takes for ECAC members to respond to decision items
    - Current process: decision document drafted, virtual vote; members given 1 week to vote
    - One current issue is a lack of discussion about the decision that needs to be made—would be valuable to have time to discuss
    - A week isn't necessarily too long
    - 3 days is all that is needed



- Not everyone votes on the decision
  - There isn't usually a discussion via e-mail, but there could be
  - How has the participation rates been?
    - Usually there has to be a lot of nudging—and it's tough to get to a quorum of votes
  - Don't want to send too many e-mails to ECAC members—need to figure out how to communicate that this is something that needs attention & active participation
- What are your thoughts about when your home organization does not support an ECAC decision?
- What are the options?
  - If there is a letter, the home organization doesn't need to sign on
  - Reflect in minutes that majority vote w/quorum and minutes reflect the organizations who aren't in favor
  - Are all the organizations listed on the letterhead? (They aren't)
  - Another option could be for people to abstain (their abstention still counts towards a quorum)
  - If majority is in favor of taking a position, members shouldn't disconnect from the ECAC simply because the vote is not consistent w/their position
- What is the best process for determining whether an issue is worth discussion by ECAC?
- ECAC is advisory not advocacy, but advocacy might be under some things we do
  - Space during meetings for ECAC members (or not to discuss a project and request collaboration of ECAC, presents to collective for input and decision regarding should we take this on and do we have the capacity to take it on?)
  - For time sensitive responses, there should be a process to get the information to ECAC members and then a place to discuss the issue since meetings happen every other month. Watch out for urgent response needed e-mails
  - Is it feasible to expect urgent responses since members have to discuss issue w/their home organizations?
  - An example would be a grant opportunity—shouldn't only be up to a small group of people
  - ECAC agreed upon parameters as to what is an urgent request vs. what is not urgent
  - Should be an initial litmus test for issues that are even brought of the full group—if the response is needed in too short a timeline, then ECAC might not be able to respond—individual members could still respond. What are those screening questions to determine what we are putting in front of the ECAC (i.e. Are we taking on everything related to early childhood?)
- Relevancy



- Does it affect early childhood systems?
- Clear set of goals/plan/strategic mission
- Is it connected to ECAC workgroup workplans?
- Does it need to be city wide or can it be neighborhood specific?  
Could it be statewide?
- Clear in relation to our goals
- Is there enough time to walk through the process of information  
(grants related)
- How do we make space for hearing from families?
- Urgency—how do we define this?
  - Advocacy: if there is a particular bill, what do we want to do? Do we want to have one full voice or should each organization make a decision for themselves. We inform the whole ECAC about the issue
  - Funding always feels urgent—especially when it's use it or lose it
  - Given that there are co-chairs & Chairs of committees, is there a place for them to be able to make decisions without needing input for everything? Don't need to let process hold up ECAC decisions

**Next Meeting Date: March 17<sup>th</sup>, 2021 @ 1pm-3 pm**

