Over 100 Years of Service

Family Services, Inc.

PART OF THE SHEPPARD PRATT HEALTH SYSTEM

DISCOVERY STATION

Discovery Station Early Head Start Community Assessment

Program Year 2015-2016

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Family Services, Inc.

Discovery Station Early Head Start

COMMUNITY ASSESSMENT: PROGRAM YEAR 2015-2016

Family Services, Inc. Discovery Station Early Head Start program (FSI EHS) has conducted a comprehensive Community Assessment in its service area in an effort to ensure that program decisions are based on identified community needs and resources. The report includes all information required by the Head Start Performance Standards and was compiled from a variety of reliable sources, such as the U.S. Census Bureau, Community Action Agency and Montgomery County Department of Health and Human Services. In addition, community partners, families, and FSI EHS staff participated in the assessment through surveys, interviews and community meetings.

SNAPSHOT OF MONTGOMERY COUNTY DEMOGRAPHICS

- Montgomery County's population of over 1 million residents grew by more than 15% between 2000 and 2012. The largest segment of the population growth was children one year old or less. Growth largely stemmed from immigration; as of 2012, the County's minority population accounted for 52.2% of the total.
- Overall 9.4% of Montgomery County children live below the federal poverty line and there are an estimated 6,469 children in the County who meet federal poverty guidelines and could be eligible for Early Head Start or Head Start.
- The poverty rate for young children (under age 5) who live below 300% of the federal poverty level is 38%.
- Montgomery County District 9 (Gaithersburg and Montgomery Village) in the FSI EHS service area has a large concentration of children under 5 years old as well as the largest minority population.
- The number of immigrants from Central America has increased by 25%; from South America by 13% and from other areas by 20%. Census data also confirms that 39% of the population aged 5 years and over speaks a language other than English at home and 40% report speaking English less than very well.
- The number of Montgomery County children living in single, female head of households has increased by 46% since 2000. Female head of households comprise 56.9% of households with children under 18 years living in poverty.

- 72% of children under age 6 live in households where all parents work.
- Montgomery County has one of the lowest overall rates of adolescent births in the state at 13.5% in 2012. However, the number of teen births (2012=414) is among the highest of the 24 counties in Maryland.
- According to the 2012 Self-Sufficiency Standard, to afford the basic necessities in Montgomery County requires an income of four times the federal poverty level. Parents spend over 20% of their income on child care alone.

SNAPSHOT OF EARLY CHILDHOOD SERVICES

Commitment to early childhood education services

FSI EHS works in partnership with diverse early childhood partners in Montgomery County to support healthy child development and school readiness opportunities from 0-5 years old. The leaders of Montgomery County's early education programs demonstrate a strong commitment to coordinating services and advocating for those young children who are experiencing an achievement gap prior to kindergarten enrollment. However, the need to close the achievement gap with quality, affordable and full day programs for all children at risk remains very high.

Montgomery County Head Start and Pre-K

The Montgomery County Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) is the Head Start grantee charged with serving 648 eligible children throughout the county including 584 four year olds and 64 three year olds. DHHS contracts with Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) to serve the students primarily in full day classrooms in elementary schools throughout the county.

Montgomery County has increased public Pre-K services for 4 year olds through MCPS and state grants to child care providers. The school system has 2,185 part-day slots in public Pre-K and provides a seamless application process for families seeking Head Start or Pre-K classrooms. However, the Pre-K program is under enrolled, and as of December 2015, had 54 vacancies. Feedback from parents and community partners states that families need a full day option for their children in order to maintain employment. In response, MCPS is piloting a full day Pre-K program called Pre-K Plus. This special program is for families whose income is between 185% and 200% of the federal poverty guidelines – higher than the requirements for Head Start or Pre-K services. The 100 slots for the Pre-K Plus program have been filled.

The Academy Child Development Center was funded by the state to offer Pre-K in a community based site with support from the school system. Other Pre-K grants have been awarded to Centro Nia, another Early Head Start grantee in Montgomery and neighboring Prince George's

County. In the future, additional funding for four year old classrooms in community sites may be available through the newly authorized federal Elementary and Secondary School Act.

Despite the availability of resources for families with four-year olds, low income families with three year olds are underserved. Currently slots for three year olds constitute less than 10% of the Head Start slots. The service gap is expected to grow, as Montgomery College announced closure of its child development center serving 20 children ages three and four year olds at the Rockville campus. As a result, the community based Head Start option for three and four year olds will no longer be available for students at the college after June 30, 2016.

FSI EHS has a Transition Agreement with MCPS to support the transition of children into Head Start. According to this agreement, each year the Head Start program conducts onsite Head Start/Pre-K registration for children transitioning out of the EHS program and information is shared, with parental consent, to facilitate the transition. However, due to the limited three year old slots in Head Start, most EHS families are not able to transition directly into Head Start.

Parent Resource Centers

Parent Resource Centers (PRCs) that previously offered drop in parent-child activities on a sliding fee basis in three locations in the county, including two in the EHS service area, were eliminated in the County's FY16 budget. Many of the families previously served moved to the Gaithersburg Judy Center, filling up their waiting list. The Montgomery County Infants and Toddlers program that provides Part C early intervention services had used the centers to provide inclusive opportunities for their enrolled families and are now seeking other program options. FSI EHS families have fewer community based resources for three year olds in need of enrichment and socialization to prepare for kindergarten.

Gaithersburg Judy Center

The Gaithersburg Judy Center (GJC) is a state funded program that is administered by MCPS serving families in the Summit Hall and Washington Grove Elementary school catchment areas, with the goal of promoting school readiness. Judy Centers throughout the state develop collaborative partnerships and support high quality program access for families with children from 0-5 years old through the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) accreditation process. The GJC provides enrichment activities for kindergarten children, parent-child activities for all families, parent education and support for children to attend high quality child care, and accreditation support for child care, Head Start, Pre-K and Kindergarten classes. The GJC partners with accredited child care programs to offer limited slots for families in the catchment area who are unable to receive child care subsidies from the state or county. This year they have expanded their partnership to include the Academy Child Development Center that has state funding for a Pre-K classroom. Students from the Judy Center catchment area are bused by MCPS to attend the Pre-K class. A longstanding partnership with the Good Sheppard Nursery School offers part day programming. Other child care providers offer a full day program.

FSI EHS has an MOU with the Gaithersburg Judy Center that supports program development, services and transition of eligible children enrolled in both programs. Due to the closing of the Parent Resource Centers and continued expanded enrollment of the school population, the Gaithersburg Judy Center filled their Play and Learn (parent-child activities) and other programming by October. In previous years they did not fill the classes until later in the year and EHS families outside the catchment area could be included. This creates a gap in readily available parent-child activities needed to support high risk families who have no formal early childhood program options or are limited to home visiting once a week.

University of Maryland Partnering for Parents project

The University of Maryland (UMD) has been providing enhancements to EHS families since 2013 as part of a federal research study on Toxic Stress. This past year, 45 families have received either a series of 8 home visits from a Certified Parent Coach who uses the ABC Curriculum to support parent attachment and reduced toxic stress or as a control group who are enrolled in the Book of the Month club and get receive books in the mail. The project is charged with identifying sustainability strategies and is currently in conversation with EHS to determine options for training EHS staff to implement the full curriculum or learn about the coaching strategies and use of videotaping to provide parent coaching. At this time, it is unclear whether resources will allow for the continuation of the model when the research study ends in September 2016.

FSI EHS has an MOU with UMD to serve as a research partner, providing appropriate referrals and ensuring coordination of home visiting services. Through the project, FSI EHS also engaged in a research project with a Doctoral Student who is examining home visitor stress and mitigating factors.

Montgomery County Infants and Toddlers

The Montgomery County Infants and Toddlers Part C early intervention program (MCITP) administered by DHHS experienced steady growth in recent years along with the growth in the Montgomery County population. In FY15, the demand for services stabilized with a total of 5,057 children served and 2,953 referrals received. The demand for translation services increased dramatically with 44.5% of new referrals for children who live in households whose home language is other than English compared to 34.7% in FY14 and 33.5% in FY13. MCITP is currently serving families who speak 65 different languages including 23.5% who speak Spanish. The other top three languages spoken are French, Chinese dialects and Amharic.

MCITP continues to provide services to three year olds who are enrolled in the Extended IFSP Option. The program reports the biggest barrier to providing services for three year olds is access to community space where inclusive programming can be offered. The recent elimination of the Parent Resource Centers impacted this service as well as the services for typically developing 0-3 year olds.

MCITP and other early childhood programs are moving to a new office space in Rockville in March 2016. A new Family Involvement Center in that location will provide some community space and inclusive programming for families they serve. This will help fill the gap of the closed PRC at Emory Grove that was accessible for large numbers of families and operated as a drop in program.

FSI EHS has an MOU with DHHS to support service coordination, sharing of information and transition of 3 year old children enrolled in MCITP. A representative from FSI EHS serves on the Local Interagency Coordinating Council that advises MCITP and a representative from MCITP serves on the EHS Health Advisory Committee. As part of the transition, we support children at age 3 years in their transition from the MCITP program into preschool special education programs at Montgomery County Public Schools.

Montgomery County Public schools Preschool special education and services

Montgomery County Public Schools provide children aged 3 years to 5 years who have identified special needs or disabilities and meet the federal criteria to receive services, through an Individualized Education Program (IEP). Depending on the type and severity of needs, they may be enrolled in a part-day Preschool Special Education (PEP) class for several days a week or in a more intensive specialized class for more hours and days per week. In addition, students may receive speech and language therapy, occupational therapy or physical therapy in their child care programs. FSI EHS supports transition of children into MCPS programs when the child turns 3 years old.

Family Discovery Center

FSI operates the Family Discovery Center (FDC), one of 26 Family Support Centers in the state, under contract with the Maryland Family Network. The multi-generational center promotes adult learning and healthy child development for families with children from 0-4 years old. The FDC offers ESOL or GED classes as well as parenting, career development and health workshops. Children attend a child development class and learn school readiness skills. Home visiting services are offered to parents with difficult parenting issues. Due to high demand, the adult education classes often have long waiting lists.

FSI EHS has a formal internal agreement with FDC that supports group socialization activities at FDC and ongoing coordination of services and transition for EHS families who meet the requirements for enrollment in classes.

Healthy Families Montgomery

FSI operates Healthy Families Montgomery (HFM), a nationally accredited home visiting services for first time parents facing multiple stressors, with the goal of preventing child abuse and neglect. Home based services begin before the baby is born and continue for 6 months or up to 5 years. Emphasis is placed on health care, child development, parenting support and

family self-sufficiency. HFM has an MOU with the county Health Department to receive referrals for this voluntary program, but cannot serve every family who may want services. Accordingly, HFM provides FSI EHS with referrals for families who may be a better fit for EHS (such as teen parents, families in need of child care services, and those not available for home visits).

Kids Spot Child Waiting Room

April 2015, FSI opened Kids Spot, a child-friendly waiting area for families who have business with the Montgomery County Circuit Court. To date, over 500 families have been taken advantage of this free service. This program serves a very particular need for child care during parent court dates and the heavy usage demonstrates the overall need for flexible child care options.

Licensed child care programs

The number of child care centers offering infant care in Montgomery County has steadily been growing with 730 infant slots added from 2012-2014. At the same time the number of family child care programs that typically charge less for child care has decreased by approximately 100 infant slots. With 70% of families with children under age 6 having two parents who work, the demand for full day programs is very high. However, the availability and access to those programs in low income communities is extremely limited.

In general, in Montgomery County there is only 1 child care slot for every 2 children in the county under age 5 years. District 9 (Gaithersburg and Montgomery Village) has the largest difference between the number of children and the number of licensed child care slots, with 3 children per every child care slot for children 0-5 years and 6 children per every child care slot for children under age 2 years old.

The cost of child care contributes to the gap in availability in low income communities. The average annual cost for children under two years old in a child care center is $17,420 and in a Family Child Care home it is $13,000. For children aged two to four years old the center cost is $12,584 and Family Child Care cost is $10,400. Families with limited income—and even those at the median income for Montgomery County—struggle to pay these fees to secure quality child care while they work.

An FSI EHS representative serves on the Steering Committee of the Montgomery County Child Care Resource and Referral Center, representing infant and toddler programs in developing child care training and resources that meet the needs of child care programs.

Child Care Subsidy programs

With reauthorization of the federal Child Care Development Block Grant and inclusion of more state requirements for child care subsidy programs, Maryland is updating its plan and seeking

public comment about proposed changes. One anticipated change is a longer eligibility periods to provide more continuity of services.

The state child care subsidy has a waiting list of 699 families from Montgomery County, far exceeding the waiting list of any other jurisdiction. All child care providers who accept the subsidies are now required to enroll in the state quality initiative- EXCELS. The number enrolled in EXCELS has been steadily growing, but initiatives for enrollment have been discontinued and the majority of participating programs are at the beginning Level 1 rating. The state has recently centralized all child care subsidy applications in Baltimore and families who previously had the opportunity to apply for both the state and county subsidies in one local office must now apply using two different processes.

The Montgomery County Working Parents Assistance program has been underutilized with 100 fewer children served in 2014 than the previous year. In 2014, a workgroup was charged with studying the issues and developing recommendations to improve the program and increase utilization. Their report recommended revising the eligibility tables and subsidy payments to better reflect the true cost of care and ensure the resource was adequate for families to access licensed programs. Currently, 90% of child care providers charge more than the subsidy amount, making it difficult for the providers to maintain their business if they must rely on subsidies to cover their costs. The County is in the process of implementing recommended changes, but anticipates that with increased eligibility, more funding will be needed or fewer families will be served.

Due to the lack of child care subsidies and flexible child care programs that fully support families with low income and/or non-traditional work hours, families and licensed child care providers report a greater reliance on informal care arrangements with family, friends or neighbors who do not have licenses from the Office of Child Care. In addition, it is common for middle and upper class families to employ Nannies and Au pairs who may have some training and background checks, but are not regulated by the state. Based on tax records at least 2,595 child care providers operating in Montgomery County were unregulated. The unregulated market may provide a disincentive for regulated providers who incur ongoing business expenses to meet a wide range of child care regulations. They must also meet the higher standards of the Maryland EXCELS program in order to accept child care subsidy payments.

The FSI EHS Program Director is an appointed member of the Montgomery County Commission on Child Care and is currently the Chair of the Programmatic Issues committee. This Commission advises the County Council and County Executive on child care policies and programs and advances policies that support high quality, accessible child care for families in Montgomery County. Improving the county subsidy programs is longstanding priority of the Commission.

KINDERGARTEN READINESS DATA

Maryland has worked on developing systems to better promote and measure school readiness with federal funding from the Race to the Top Early Learning Grant, including redesigning the kindergarten assessment. The new tool was aligned with new standards for early childhood, including increased emphasis on social- emotional skills as essential for kindergarten readiness. In 2014-15 all kindergarteners were assessed using the new assessment tool and significant gaps in school readiness for all populations were identified throughout the state. In Montgomery County the kindergarten assessment data highlights a need for support of all children prior to kindergarten, but especially those with disabilities, English Language Learners (ELL), those from low income households and minority students. In addition, those who lack any formal group experience lag behind children who are enrolled in early education programs.

- Overall only 48% of Montgomery County kindergarten children were fully ready for kindergarten.
- 21% of kindergarten children with identified disabilities were assessed as fully ready compared to 50% of typically developing peers.
- 25% of kindergarten children who were English Language Learners were assessed as fully ready compared to 60% who were English Proficient.
- 30% of kindergarten children from low income households were assessed as fully ready compared with 60% from middle or upper income households.
- 28% of Hispanic children, 44% of African American children, 58% of Asian and 65% of White, non-Hispanic children were assessed as fully ready for kindergarten.
- 34% of children who were in an informal child care setting or at home prior to kindergarten were assessed fully ready, compared to 61% enrolled in child care centers

SNAPSHOT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION AND SOCIAL SERVICES

COMMITMENT TO COMMUNITY SUPPORT

Montgomery County is a community that seeks to coordinate services across public and private organizations to best meet the needs of its citizens. The Montgomery County Department of Health and Human Services has 16 Boards and Commissions who are charged with advising the County Council and County Executive on needs and policy solutions. Additional coalitions and networks have also been formed to maximize resources and avoid duplicating services. Yet, the high cost of living, lack of full funding for needed health and social services, and barriers to accessing services can undermine a family's efforts to achieve self-sufficiency and

prepare children for school. FSI has an integral part in supporting coordinated efforts across its 37 programs that provide health, behavioral health, education and other social services.

SERVICES FOR PARENTING TEENS

The Interagency Coalition on Adolescent Pregnancy (ICAP) meets regularly to provide a forum for agencies serving pregnant and parenting teens to share resources and coordinate services. According to ICAP statistics, Montgomery County had one of the lowest overall rates of adolescent births in the State at 13.5% in 2012. However, with 414 births to teens in 2012, this is among the highest number of births in the state. School nurses that work for DHHS in the schools, provide pregnant teens with access to nurse home visiting and other referrals to support programs, including Early Head Start. The Pupil Personnel Workers provide short term services in the home when students are unable to attend school due to the birth of a baby. The services most needed by teen parents after the baby is born include full time, free or low cost child care to enable the mother to continue her education. This service is available to a limited number of teen parents through FSI EHS's Keys to Success program.

Overall 83% of MCPS students graduate from high school. At Gaithersburg High School the 2012 graduation rate was just 77%. The dropout rate for students with limited English proficiency has been steadily rising since 2007, and is currently at 24%. MCPS does not track the graduation rate of teens that become pregnant while in school, but national data indicates that 50% of pregnant teens drop out before graduation.

FSI EHS has MOUs with Gaithersburg High School and Watkins Mill High School to support pregnant and parenting teens that are enrolled in EHS. The Keys to Success Teen Program offers free child care, transportation and tutoring support so parents can stay in school and graduate. The Keys to Success coordinator represents FSI EHS in ICAP and City of Gaithersburg Youth meetings to ensure coordination of services and resource sharing.

HUNGER AND NUTRITION

Hunger and food insecurity is a concern across the community with rising numbers of people needing assistance from food banks, SNAP, and local shelters. In 2014 the County reported 72,519 residents received Supplemental Food Program. Over 30% of Montgomery County students are receiving free and reduced meals, and more children in Montgomery County are food insecure than any other county in the state. Recently a new effort to recover food from restaurants has been underway using technology and volunteers to pick up and deliver meals to those in need, reducing the amount of food waste.

The WIC program has an agreement with FSI EHS to provide regular outreach opportunities at two sites in Gaithersburg and Germantown. It is well utilized by the community with 100% of families who were enrolled in EHS last school year receiving services.

FSI provides a distribution site for the MANNA food bank and also works with the Food Recovery Network to provide nutritious meals for those in need. FSI EHS also participates fully in the Child Care and Adult Food Program to provide enrolled children with nutritious meals.

Health Services

The increased access to health insurance through Medicaid and affordable health care choices has meant more residents are insured. The county has continued to support health care for uninsured individuals and families through several programs. In 2014 *Montgomery Cares* provided primary care to 27,934 adults, Care for Kids cared for 3,024 children and over 1,000 pregnant women were served through *Maternal Partnerships*.

Gaithersburg High School has hosted a School Based Health Center for the past two years. This center was funded by the county and city to address the growing needs of the community for both direct services and public health education. The center coordinates with other health and social service providers who work with teens in the City of Gaithersburg, including Family Services, Inc.

FSI leadership in the health and behavioral health programs are involved on various Commissions and initiatives to advocate and support improved systems for all underserved populations.

Other Social Services

Montgomery County operates a 3-1-1 Information line to provide easy access to any services provided by the County, including social services. FSI also operates the Neighborhood Opportunity Center in Gaithersburg where clients can learn about community services and begin the online application process in a convenient location. The County has bilingual staff and uses a language line to provide translation services as needed. Families with young children are directed to ChildLink, a central referral service for support in accessing needed services, including early childhood mental health services.

In 2014, nearly 1,000 County residents received Temporary Cash Assistance, 294 received emergency assistance to prevent eviction or foreclosure and 32,394 received food stamps. In addition to providing federal and state funded assistance for County residents, Montgomery County provides enhanced programming and services through grants and contracts. Family Services, Inc. is a county contractor and provides a number of innovative and targeted health, behavioral health, and social services for the county and other funders. The agency also advocates for better services and systems through other DHHS Boards and Commissions and community work groups.

Montgomery County Child Welfare provides an ombudsman to FSI EHS to support the program in appropriately referring child welfare cases and training staff in understanding their responsibilities as mandated reporters. FSI's Frameworks for Family program is an intensive

home visiting intervention for families who have been referred by Child Welfare for comprehensive support.

Operated by FSI, the Betty Ann Krahnke Center (BAK) is the County's emergency domestic violence shelter for women and their children. With a 54-bed capacity, BAK provides a safe and confidential short-term residence for families fleeing domestic violence and/or victims of sexual assault. Individual therapists and case managers work to eliminate the cycle of violence by raising awareness of physical, emotional and sexual abuse in relationships; providing resources to empower women to create a new future for themselves and their children that is free of abuse, coercion and fear. Referrals to the shelter are made through the Montgomery County Abused Persons Program.

FSI EHS participates in the Gaithersburg Provider Coalition that meets quarterly to support interagency information exchange and resource coordination among non-profit, faith community and public agencies serving residents in Gaithersburg and surrounding areas.

CAREER DEVELOPMENT AND EMPLOYMENT

The County is in the process of privatizing its Economic Development and Workforce Development functions. Currently many residents work outside of the county, commuting to work in the District of Columbia and elsewhere. A county goal is to attract more large employers to increase local employment. The growing service industry employs many unskilled workers in low paying positions that do not support family self sufficiency. The County Council has considered increasing the minimum wage, as well as a bill to provide for paid family medical leave.

Career development is provided through Montgomery College, both non-credit and for-credit tracks. Some workforce development initiatives from the local Workforce Investment Board include increased training for health care workers and bus drivers. In addition, job training and counseling is available through several nonprofit organizations, such as Career Catchers.

The Montgomery Coalition for Adult Literacy (MCAEL) coordinates the services of multiple providers who offer ESOL and GED classes for individuals who do not have a high school diploma. ESOL classes are a key service to assist residents in accessing employment. FSI's Family Discovery Center offers both types of classes. MCAEL recently completed a needs assessment demonstrating that despite large growth in services, there is a tremendous need for more services. Gaithersburg is a priority area for increased ESOL classes due to the high number of families reporting they do not speak English well and the high demand for the classes.

CareerCatchers, Inc. has supported the FSI EHS Keys to Success program for pregnant and parenting teens, providing presentations and counseling during the summer career preparedness sessions.

Housing

Montgomery County has historically been among the wealthiest counties in the state. Although no longer the wealthiest, the cost of living reflects the high median household income. Housing costs in Montgomery County increased by 62% between 2001 and 2014 and wages only increased by 17%. Not surprisingly, 80% of households with earnings under $35,000 spend more than 30% of their income on housing. Available support for low income housing is extremely limited. The Rental Assistance program reported serving 1,693 households in May 2014 and 28 families were on the waiting list for a shelter placement.

The Housing Opportunity Commission has recently begun accepting applications for subsidized units after having a frozen waiting list. However, those who are determined eligible will be entered in a lottery since the demand is much higher than the available units. In addition, families who are undocumented are not eligible to receive federal assistance through this and other housing programs.

Affordable housing and homelessness is a top priority for a number of advocacy groups in Montgomery County. The county recently created an Interagency Commission on Homelessness to serve as the Governing Board for the *Continuum of Care,* the local homeless program planning network. Meanwhile, most EHS families live in shared housing, often in overcrowded and unsanitary conditions. Schools are also overcrowded as the estimates for enrollment have not taken into account the true number of families residing in their catchment areas. This year there is a Coalition advocating for capital improvement in the Gaithersburg cluster where the student enrollment has increased by 737 students since 2007 and large housing developments are being built.

FSI provides housing and residential care for individuals with persistent mental health issues and manages the only Domestic Violence Shelter for women and children in the county.

Services in Public Schools

Montgomery County continues to grow in diversity and need, especially among young families. DHHS works with the schools and private non-profits, including FSI, to provide more access to health and social services in the schools. The Linkages to Learning (LTL) program works with high risk families in 29 elementary schools to support their access to social services and provide mental health services. In 2014, the LTL program provided comprehensive behavioral health and/or family case management services to 3,700 individuals. School based Health Centers provide outreach and support to high school students and their families and as noted, Gaithersburg High School has a well-utilized center.

FSI's School and Community Division operates a range of programs to meet needs for children and youth in low income communities. In addition to Linkages to Learning services, other in-school and community-based services include after school tutoring, mentoring and substance abuse prevention programming.

The influx of unaccompanied minors coming to the area from Central American counties has put a strain on the community. The county created the *Children Fleeing Violence Task Force* which included FSI staff to develop an effective strategy to address the needs. Consequently a system was developed to ensure that new immigrant children can enroll in school and receive needed supports. Other related concerns for schools and the community are increased sex trafficking and gang activity in the County.

Higher Education

Montgomery College (MC) has outreach and support initiatives to support high school students enrolling in the college and requesting financial aid. They recently opened an outreach center at the Gaithersburg Library to better reach underserved communities. In addition, their joint mentoring program with MCPS called ACES is targeting high schools with low income and minority populations. Their Equal Opportunity Center provides one on one and group support to help potential students access scholarships, as well.

The Universities at Shady Grove provide students with a local transfer option for accessing 4 year degree programs from a number of state universities after graduating from Montgomery College. They also offer typical 4 year degree programs from these universities.

FSI EHS works closely with the college outreach effort through its Keys to Success program to support students in enrolling at Montgomery College after high school graduation.

Feedback from Community Partners, EHS Staff and Families

Local Early Childhood Advisory Council Findings

Maryland's Race to the Top grant provided for the development of Local Early Childhood Advisory Councils (ECAC) that were funded to support the goal of 100% of children entering school ready to learn as measured by MSDE readiness assessment and statistics, and to eliminate the readiness gaps for children from low income homes, English language learners and children with disabilities. FSI's Director of Early Childhood and Family Transitions represents the agency on the Montgomery County ECAC.

Last year the ECAC conducted a total of 11 focus groups with child care providers, kindergarten teachers and families with young children to learn about their views on school readiness and what key messages might be used for greater outreach and public engagement. Results include:

- 70% of participants agreed that children need social-emotional skills to be ready for school. The most frequent barrier to school readiness was cited as children "lacking social-emotional skills".
- The second greatest concern was limited English proficiency.

- Teachers expressed concern about an overall lack of language skills, including children who are native English speakers.
- Parents expressed a desire for more communication about what their child needs to be ready for school and immigrant families wanted additional information on the school system.
- Child care providers cited a need for more developmental screening.
- All groups felt more communication with parents and child care providers and teachers would be beneficial.
- Parents look to neighborhood schools for support in accessing services. Child care providers and teachers indicated that parents do not have time to seek out resources, even if they know where to get help.

Community Partner Feedback

EHS leaders asked 27 Community Partners who provide a range of early childhood services in the community to complete an online survey. The top barrier to accessing early childhood services was identified as Family Work schedules (72% surveyed). Approximately 55% of the participants identified three other barriers as significant: limited service hours, lack of stable housing and program funding. Additional barriers identified by approximately 50% of those surveyed included: language, limited outreach, and transportation. Early Head Start staff was asked the same question about barriers to families access to services and overall felt more strongly that all issues included in the survey were significant barriers for EHS families, including immigration status and culture that were not seen by partners as significant.

The EHS Health Advisory Committee (HAC) met to consider the results of the partner survey and provide feedback on health services access and barriers. The committee, including parents, health providers, EHS staff and other organization representatives, discussed the long waiting time for families applying for or recertifying their medical assistance. The system has been automated but has fewer workers on site, creating longer waiting times and less direct communication with families.

MCITP representatives indicated that they have instituted more flexible service hours to enable more families to access services. They also provide translation and some transportation services to address potential barriers. A representative from Mobile Med, a health program for the uninsured, indicated that services for undocumented immigrants are often not fully utilized due to transportation issues and family work schedules.

When asked why they thought EHS staff identified more barriers, HAC members agreed that the reason that EHS staff work with families at or below the federal poverty level and have many challenges and needs. Partners emphasized that in most cases immigration status is not a barrier to services. However, families may avoid seeking help because they do not realize they

are eligible or fear that their application may lead to deportation. Recent ICE immigration raids in the community have increased the level of fear and distrust.

Based on the 2014 partner survey that included questions about the type of early childhood services needed, full day and low cost child care was identified as the primary need. The need reflects the current barrier to accessing part-day programs and "family work schedules" noted as the top barrier by community partners in the 2015 survey.

FEEDBACK FROM EHS STAFF AND FAMILIES

Thirty EHS Staff completed an online survey. Staff generally agreed with the barriers that partners identified, but rated them much higher than partners did. In addition, staff rated culture and immigration as significant barriers.

From October-December 2015, all FSI EHS families met with their Family Support Workers to assess their individual family strengths, concerns and resource needs. The family well-being measures from the assessment indicate 26% of EHS families are struggling to meet their basic needs, while others are "in process". The family and community support measures indicate 49% of EHS families lack a good support system and/or connections to community resources.

Fifty-nine families completed a brief survey with targeted questions about their need for an access to early childhood services for 3 year olds children, child care support and other social services. Of those surveyed:

- 63% of all families surveyed and 71% of the families with limited English who completed the survey in Spanish indicated they needed child care to work or go to school
- Of the 10 who had transitioned their 3 year old out of EHS, half enrolled in Head Start, Pre-K or Preschool Special Education. The other half did not report enrolling in any public or private program.
- When asked about accessing services, 24% indicated waiting lists were a barrier, 22% indicated immigration status was a barrier and 19% indicated not knowing where to call for services was a barrier.
- Of those with limited English who completed the survey in Spanish, 31% indicated they did not know where to call for services, 28% cited immigration as a major barrier and 22% indicated language was a barrier.

In addition, the Policy Council was asked to provide feedback on services access and input on the questions to ask other parents about for the Community Assessment. One member shared a personal story about trying to get medical assistance in Germantown and the long waiting time. Another member shared that since she is undocumented she is able to get basic medical care, but worries that if she ever developed any health problems she would not be able to get

specialized care. The Policy Council was most concerned about the lack of Head Start and Pre-K for 3 year olds and affordable child care programs that would enable families to go to work.

Key Implications for Early Head Start Services

Changing Demographics

Growing numbers of young children in the FSI EHS service area are at risk of being unprepared for kindergarten due to poverty, minority status, limited English proficiency and/or disabilities. Gaithersburg and Montgomery Village (in District 9) have the highest density of young children in poverty in the service area, as well as the lowest availability of licensed child care programs. There are other high need areas in the program's service area that should be prioritized for services (notably in Districts 2, 4 and 6). These four are target areas for FSI EHS services due to the significant number of families with young children with low income and limited English proficiency, as well as lack of child care. Other high need areas in the County may be served by Centro Nia or the Lourie Center Early Head Start programs.

Early Childhood Services

Montgomery County is a community that demonstrates a strong commitment to coordination across organizations and agencies to meet the varied needs of culturally diverse and high risk families and young children. There is a wide range of services and innovative programs offered by public, private and non-profit organizations, including FSI. The increase in public Pre-K education supports better school readiness for those who otherwise would lack the opportunity.

However, the needs of the youngest children, ages 0 to 3, are not fully met. The lack of affordable licensed child care, the continued gap in services for children turning 3 and recent closure of the Parent Resource Centers highlight the need to maximize services for eligible families with the youngest children. Once families are enrolled in an Early Head Start program, they retain their eligibility until their child turns 3 years old. Focusing recruitment on pregnant women and families with newborns would begin services earlier and perhaps have a greater impact on the child's development and parenting skills. Providing additional full day child care slots would help retain families over the three year period as their needs change and would have a greater impact on the child's school readiness and family self sufficiency. Expanding the Keys to Success program to provide continued targeted academic support and child care for teens that graduate from high school and enter college would maximize the dual generation impact of the program.

Social Service Needs

While Montgomery County strives to meet the needs of the community and FSI EHS works with many community partners there is still great need among eligible families for increased social service, health and education programs. Top needs include affordable housing, financial and

food assistance, ESOL classes, translation services and transportation. The long waiting lists and limited service hours impact access to available services.

In addition, due to immigration status, community members are frequently reluctant to ask for help and with recent ICE raids in the community less likely to trust service providers. Health coverage is limited for this population, as well. Families also report that they don't know where to get assistance and there is a need for more outreach and information sharing. FSI EHS has a clear role in supporting families in accessing community resources and in building effective partnerships that bridge the gaps.

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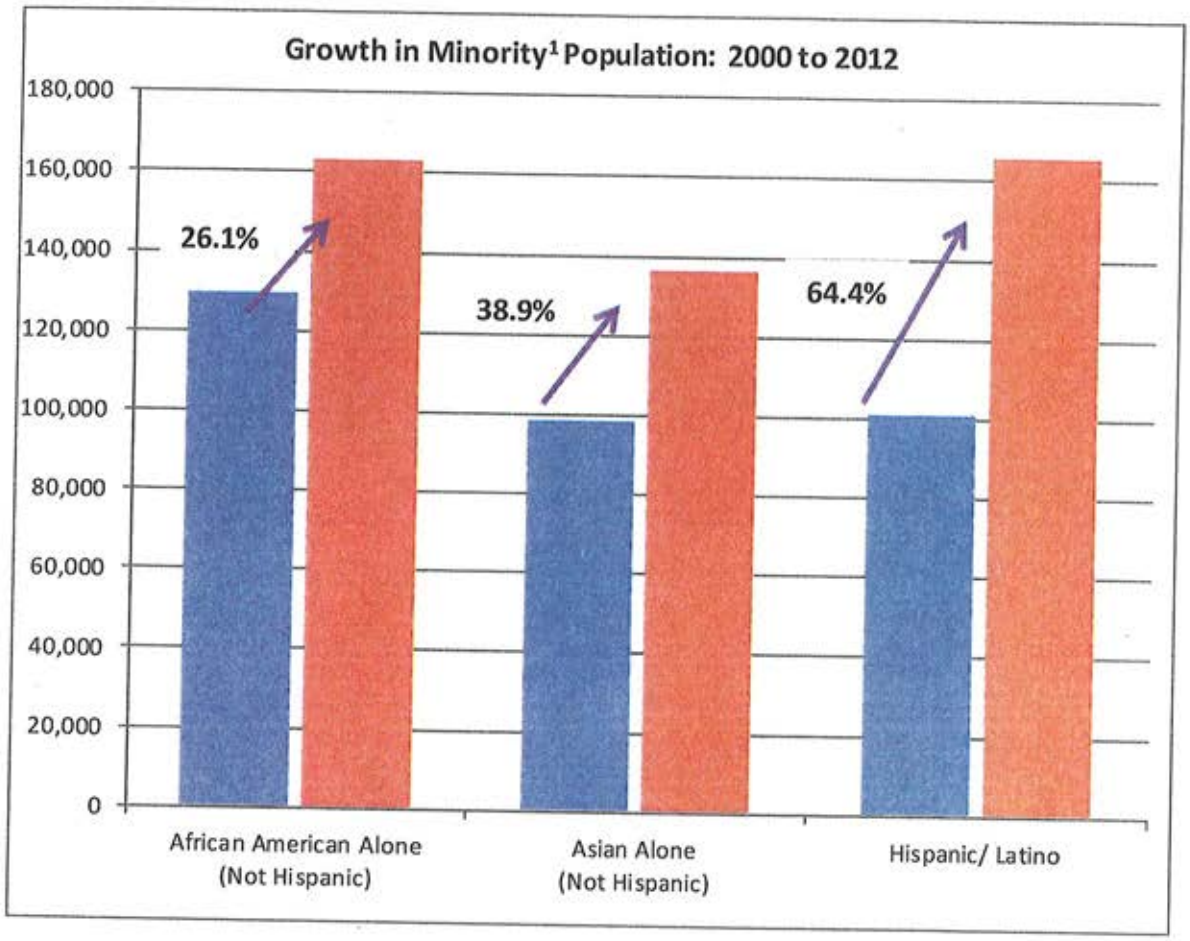
APPENDICES

Appendix A

Population: Minority Population Change
Geographic Area: Montgomery County
Time Period: 2000, 2012

Between 2000 and 2012, Montgomery County's population grew by 131,368 (15% increase). The population growth was a direct result of an increase in the minority population [1], which grew by 169,954 persons (48% change). The non-Hispanic White population decreased by 37,927 persons (-7.3% change). In 2000, the minority population accounted for 40.54% of the county's population. Based on the 2012 estimated population, Montgomery County's minority population accounts for 52.2% of the total population.

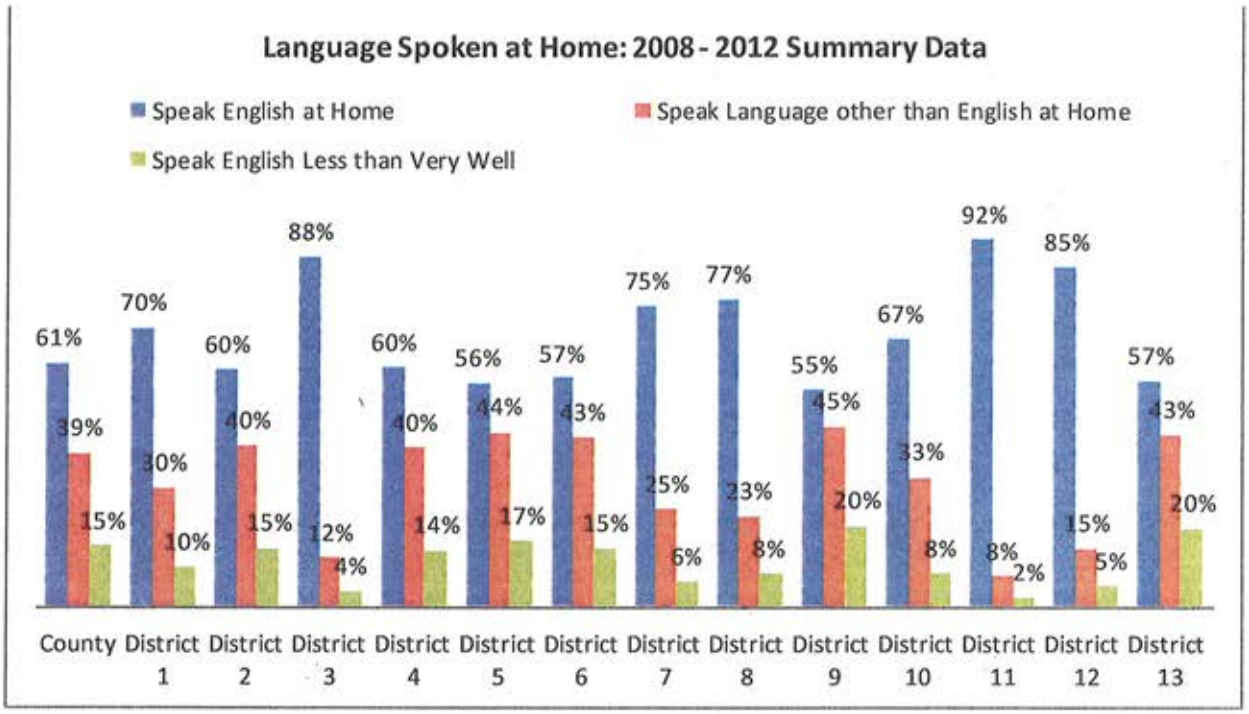


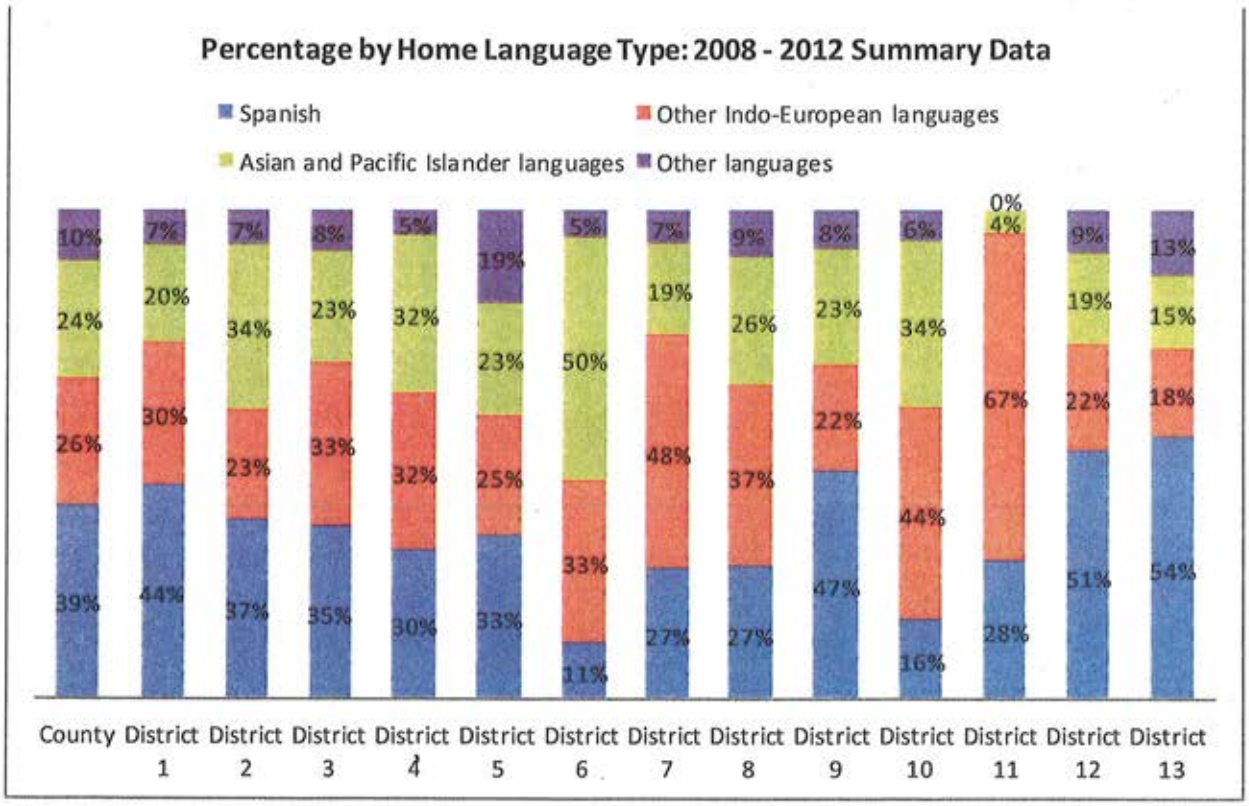
[1] Minority population is everyone other than non-Hispanic white alone.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Population Estimates for 2012 and 2000 Census Summary File 1

Appendix B

Population: Language Spoken at Home by Population Five Years and Older
Geographic Area: County and County Subdivisions
Time Period: 2008-2012 Summary





Source: 2008-2012 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates: Selected Social Characteristics

Population: Child Count by Age
Geographic Area: County and County Subdivision
Time Period: 2010

- The four county subdivisions with the largest prekindergarten population are District 13 (21,009), District 9 (15,882), District 5 (8,220), and District 4 (8,170).
- Three of the four county subdivisions with the highest prekindergarten populations are also those with the largest minority populations (Districts 13, 9, and 5).
- Subdivisions where preschool age children account for the highest proportion of the population are District 2 (10.23%), District 9 (9.32%), District 13 (8.37%), and Districts 7, 1, 6, and 12 with more than 7% each.

Child Count by Age - 2010						
Area	< 1 year	1 year	2 years	3 years	4 years	5 years
Montgomery County	12,367	12,569	12,990	12,803	13,003	12,766
District 1	270	260	280	272	255	311
District 2	802	804	795	770	766	762
District 3	35	43	52	61	62	69
District 4	1,306	1,375	1,390	1,284	1,399	1,416
District 5	1,352	1,320	1,385	1,415	1,358	1,390
District 6	452	517	594	623	704	812
District 7	925	1,001	1,066	1,102	1,206	1,187
District 8	361	414	478	493	542	538
District 9	2,752	2,785	2,711	2,643	2,607	2,384
District 10	221	240	323	348	416	430
District 11	14	17	17	21	16	22
District 12	206	221	240	253	254	274
District 13	3,671	3,572	3,659	3,518	3,418	3,171

Source: 2010 U.S. Census Summary File 1
For information on the geographic areas covered by each district, please see the map included on the Resource: Montgomery County Subdivisions page and the list of cities and census designated areas contained in each subdivision on the Resource: County Subdivisions Detail Listing page.

Appendix C

Appendix D

montgomery moving forward

a program of nonprofit montgomery

DEMOGRAPHIC SNAPSHOT
Montgomery County, Maryland
Fall 2015

population trends

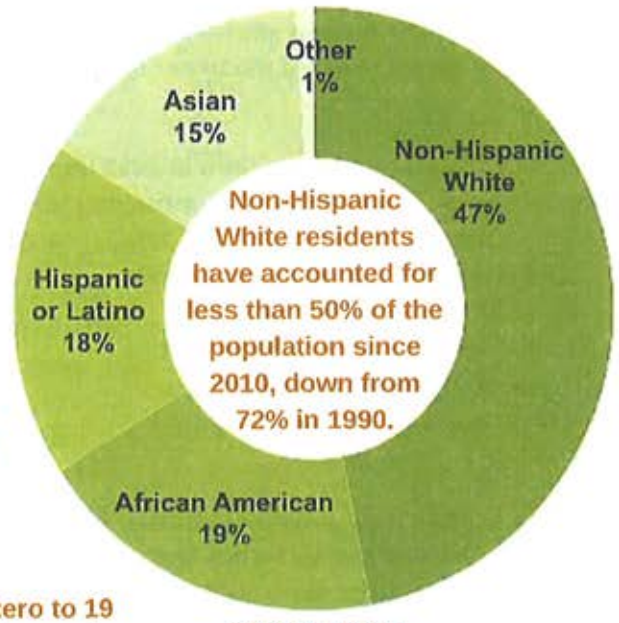
Current population: 1 million+
1990 population: 873,000
2030 projected population: 1.15 million
2040 projected population: 1.2 million

1/3 of residents are foreign born
Net gains from international migration 2013-2014: 10,000 migrants

39% of residents speak a language other than English at home
150,000 residents are Limited English Proficient

1 in 8 residents is age 65+
By 2030, 1 in 5 will be age 65+

1 in 4 residents is age zero to 19
This % projected to remain steady



2013 population by race/ethnicity

cost of living and financial health

Cost of living in the county is the highest in Maryland and among the highest in the nation
According to the Self-Sufficiency Standard, to afford basic necessities households with two children must earn well over $80,000, which is the equivalent of more than 4.5 full-time jobs paying the county's minimum wage ($8.40 per hour).

A family with 2 adults, 1 preschooler and 1 school-age child needs to bring home $83,000 a year to achieve self-sufficiency

Average child care cost: $12,273 for an infant and $13,017 for a preschooler
Child care costs are the highest in the state

Median household income: $98,000
18% of households earn less than $35,000 and 66,000 residents live below the Federal Poverty Level, including 19,200 children under age 18 and 8,000 seniors age 65+

1 in 4 households do not have a financial safety net
28% of households lack sufficient liquid assets to subsist at poverty level for 3 months in the absence of income

More than 1/3 of MCPS students participate in FARMS *(Free and Reduced-Price Meals)*
44% (68,000) of current students have received FARMS now or in the past

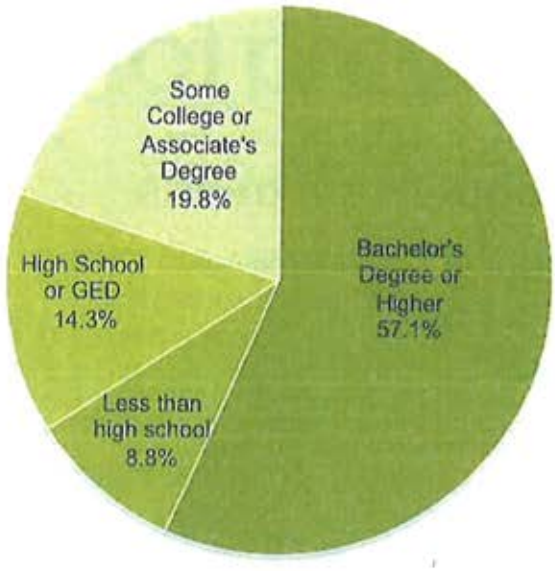
Who lacks health insurance?

- **3.3%** of non-Hispanic whites
- **13.2%** of Asian residents
- **14.9%** of African American residents
- **24.5%** of foreign born residents
- **26.6%** of Hispanic / Latino residents
- **36.9%** of unemployed residents

Cost of housing in the county increased 62% between 2001 and 2014
During the same time, wages increased by only 17%
Median rent for an apartment in 2013: $1,439
80% of households earning under $35,000 spend more than 30% of income on housing
62% of senior renters spend more than 35% of income on housing

education

57.1% of residents age 25+ have a college degree
30.7% of residents have a graduate or professional degree, while 8.8% have not finished high school



Montgomery County Educational Attainment Age 25+

78% of MCPS graduating seniors in 2012 enrolled at a college or university within 16 months of graduation
College enrollment rates vary by race/ethnicity and income:

- 86% of non-Hispanic white graduates
- 85% of Asian graduates
- 75% of African American graduates
- 63% of Hispanic / Latino graduates
- 65% of students receiving FARMS

MCPS has a 4-year cohort graduation rate of 87.4%
Dropout rate for MCPS students hovers around 7% (700-800 students each year)

MCPS enrollment increased by more than 14,000 from 2008 to 2014
Current enrollment is around 156,000, with continued growth expected. During the same time frame:

- Free and Reduced-Price Meals (FARMS) increased from 37,692 to 54,099 students
- English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) grew from 16,250 to 21,463 students

Latinos/Hispanics make up more than one quarter (27%) of students enrolled in MCPS
In kindergarten and first grade, there are now more Hispanic students (30.7%) than white students (30%)

employment and wages

2015 labor force: 553,075
2000 labor force: 477,000
2030 projected labor force: 632,000

Unemployment rate July 2015: 4.1% (22,646 unemployed workers)
Unemployment rate peaked at 6.2% in January 2010 (up from 2.5% in 2007)

Median annual wage: $50,324 ($24.25 per hour)
Median wages vary greatly by industry/job:

HR Manager - $142,431	Machinist - $46,058
Pharmacist - $127,046	Insurance Sales Agent - $40,531
Electrical Engineer - $108,607	Delivery Driver - $36,658
Physical Therapist - $100,275	Nursing Assistant - $29,766
Database Administrator - $99,785	Bank Teller - $29,439
Elementary School Teacher - $67,729	Home Health Aide - $26,891
Graphic Designer - $64,507	Hotel/Motel Desk Clerk - $26,423
Registered Nurse - $57,610	Landscaping Worker - $26,271
Mental Health Counselor - $50,137	Food Prep Worker - $23,539

Appendix E

Exhibit 3. Number by Which Children Under Five Exceed Child Care Slots by District

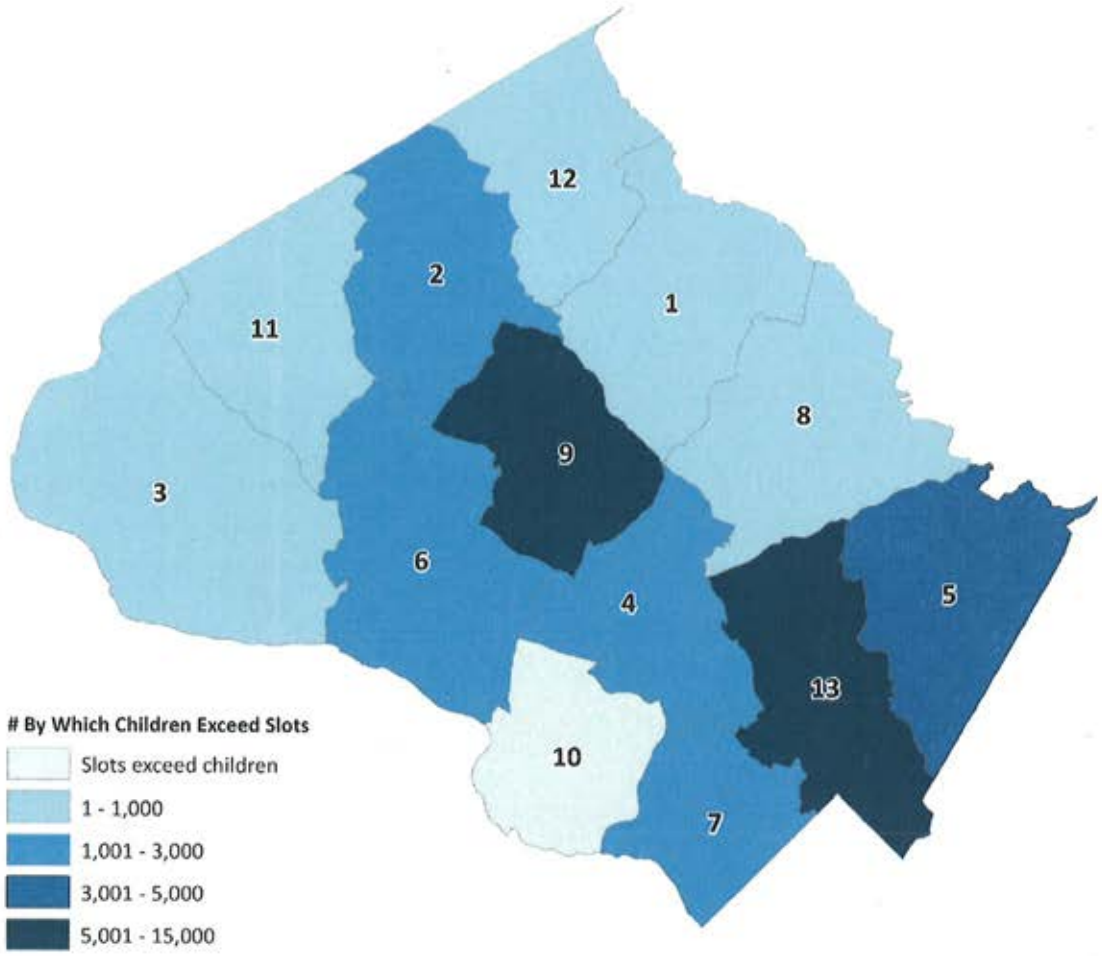


Exhibit 3 shows that in half of districts in the County, there are over 1,000 more children under age five than slots. District 9 (Gaithersburg and Montgomery Village) has the largest difference between the number of children and the number of slots, with 8,500 more children than slots. District 10 (Potomac) is the only district with more slots than children. Here, slots may be filled by children who live in other districts.

Appendix F

Montgomery County

Ready for Kindergarten (R4K)

To better prepare students for the more-demanding 21st century and align with the State's PreK-12 College and Career Ready Standards, Maryland developed Ready for Kindergarten (R4K): Maryland's Early Childhood Comprehensive Assessment System.

R4K builds on and advances the Maryland Model for School Readiness (MMSR), which was the statewide kindergarten assessment tool in use since 2001. R4K provides a single coordinated system for recognizing the needs and measuring the learning progress (knowledge, skills, and abilities) of young children from 36 to 72 months (3 to 6 years of age) across multiple areas that align with the State's standards.

R4K has two components:

1. An Early Learning Assessment (ELA) measures the progress of learning in young children (36 months to school age) across nine levels in seven domains.
2. A Kindergarten Readiness Assessment (KRA) is administered to all incoming public school kindergarteners and measures the school readiness of each child in four learning domains.

The R4K is a necessary tool for measuring what we now expect young children to know and do upon kindergarten entry in order to be on the path of academic success.

Source: Kindergarten Readiness Assessment 2014-2015, Maryland State Department of Education. The jurisdictional data presented on the reverse side are based on the number of students assessed.

Measuring Kindergarten Readiness

At the start of each school year, kindergarten teachers use the KRA to measure each child's readiness. Kindergarten readiness – demonstrating the foundational knowledge, skills and behaviors that enable a child to participate and succeed in school – sets the stage for future learning.

Kindergarten readiness is identified as:

- **Demonstrating Readiness** – a child demonstrates the foundational skills and behaviors that prepare him/her for curriculum based on the kindergarten standards.
- **Approaching Readiness** – a child exhibits some of the foundational skills and behaviors that prepare him/her for curriculum based on the kindergarten standards.
- **Emerging Readiness** – a child displays minimal foundational skills and behaviors that prepare him/her for curriculum based on the kindergarten standards.

Raising the Bar

Maryland's new PreK-12 College and Career Ready Standards raised the bar for all school age students. This year's kindergarten readiness results, which are lower than historic MMSR readiness levels, do not mean that children are less prepared than students in previous years. Rather, the KRA data align with Maryland's more rigorous standards and measure very different skills and behaviors than the MMSR. The 2014-2015 KRA data offer an accurate baseline for measuring kindergarten readiness in such a way that prepares students for 21st century learning.

readiness matters!

Domains of Learning

Domains are the overarching areas of child development and early learning that are essential for school and long-term success. R4K looks at children's learning progression in seven key areas:

- Language & Literacy
- Mathematics
- Physical Well-being & Motor Development
- Science
- Social Foundations
- Social Studies
- The Fine Arts

All domains are important and need to be supported and nurtured in a variety of ways. The KRA measures children's readiness in four domains – Language & Literacy, Mathematics, Physical Well-being & Motor Development, and Social Foundations. These domains have the greatest impact on overall kindergarten readiness.

Visit www.ReadyAtFive.org for additional Readiness Matters 2015 resources: a statewide issue brief, a customized jurisdictional PowerPoint, a parent flyer, and a business leader brief. Answers to FAQ about R4K and the new Kindergarten Readiness Assessment are also available.

- 48% of Montgomery County's children entered kindergarten classrooms demonstrating the skills and behaviors needed to fully participate in the kindergarten curriculum.
- A significant number of the County's children (5,695 students in 2014-2015) need support to do kindergarten work.
- Montgomery County's kindergarteners demonstrate readiness in four key domains: Language & Literacy (44%), Mathematics (53%), Physical Well-being & Motor Development (51%), and Social Foundations (49%).
- 37% of the County's children attending public PreK programs the year prior to starting school demonstrate kindergarten readiness.

48% demonstrating readiness

34% approaching readiness

18% emerging readiness

Population Data U.S. Census Bureau, 2013

Children < 5 (age 0-4)	66,084

Public School Demographics
Maryland Department of Education, School Year 2014-2015

Kindergarten Students	11,912
Kindergarten Ethnicity	
• American Indian (34% demonstrate readiness)	0.3%
• Asian (58%)	13.0%
• African American (44%)	20.6%
• Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander (*)	0.0%
• White (65%)	28.7%
• Hispanic (28%)	31.9%
• Two or More Races (63%)	5.5%
Kindergarteners by Subgroup	
• Children with Disabilities	9.0%
• English Language Learners	35.4%
• Free/Reduced Priced Meal Status	40.1%
PreK Students (age 4 & 5)	3,368
• Full-Day Program	13.7%
• Half-Day Program	86.3%

Data presented may not total 100% due to rounding.
* Fewer than 5 students.

Achievement Gap Data

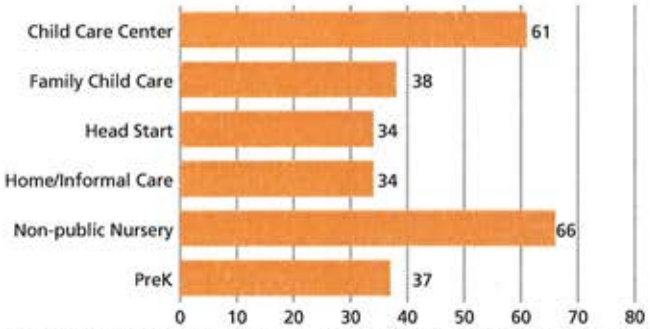
Children from select subgroups consistently enter school without the foundational skills and behaviors needed to succeed in kindergarten and may require more instructional support or targeted interventions. As a result, achievement gaps exist between children from these subgroups and kindergarteners as a whole.

Differences by	Demonstrating Readiness in 2014-2015
Disability Status	21% Children w/ Disability 50% Children w/o Disability
English Proficiency	25% English Language Learners 60% English Proficient
Income	30% Children from Low-Income Households 60% Children from Mid-/High Income Households

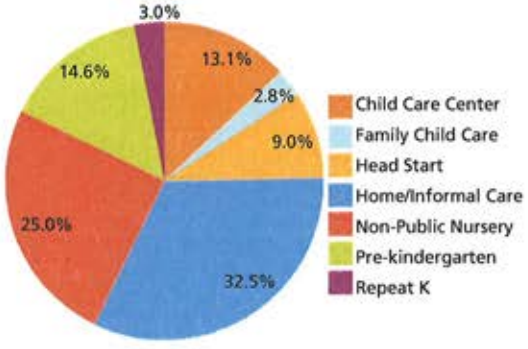
29pt 35pt 30pt Achievement Gap

Prior Care Data

Demonstrating Readiness in 2014-2015 by Prior Care



Prior Care Enrollment**



**Prior Care Enrollment denotes the early care & education setting of children the year prior to kindergarten (i.e. school year 2013-2014). Some prior care settings have enrollment criteria. For example, Head Start and public PreK almost exclusively serve children from low-income households and children with disabilities—two subgroups that have consistently had significantly lower school readiness than Maryland kindergarteners as a whole, and that are considered at risk.

ready at five℠

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www.readyatfive.org

Appendix G

Appendix : Montgomery County Subdivisions Detail Listing

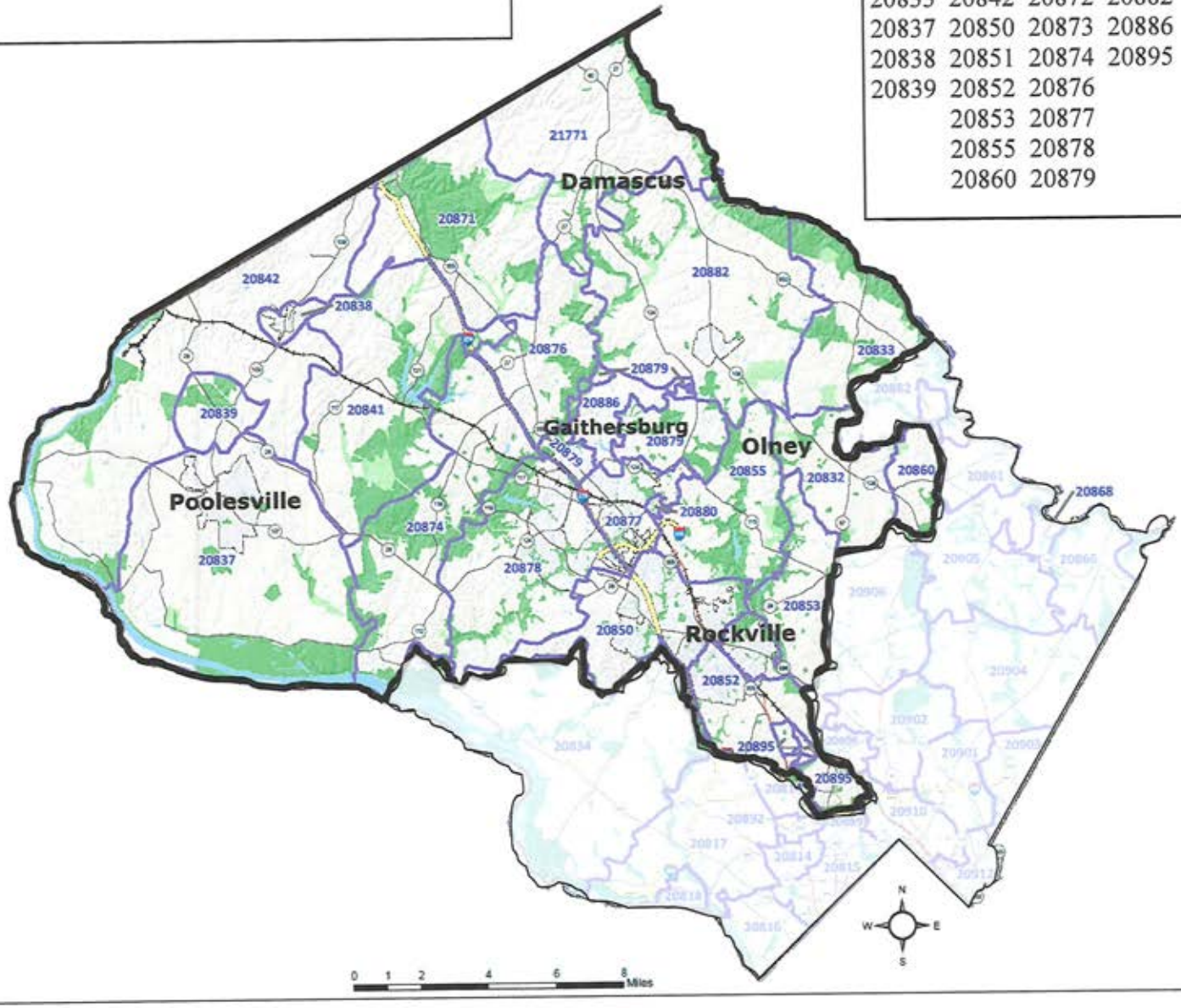
District 1	District 6	District 9
Laytonsville town	Darnestown CDP	Gaithersburg city (part)
Montgomery Village CDP (part)	Gaithersburg city (part)	Germantown CDP (part)
District Remainder of 1	Germantown CDP (part)	Montgomery Village CDP (part)
District 2	North Potomac CDP (part)	Redland CDP (part)
Clarksburg CDP (part)	Travilah CDP (part)	Rockville city (part)
Germantown CDP (part)	District Remainder of 6	Washington Grove town
District Remainder of 2	**District 7**	District Remainder of 9
District 3	Bethesda CDP	**District 10**
Poolesville town	Brookmont CDP	Potomac CDP (part)
District Remainder of 3	Cabin John CDP	Travilah CDP (part)
District 4	Chevy Chase town	**District 11**
Aspen Hill CDP (part)	Chevy Chase CDP	Barnesville town
Derwood CDP	Chevy Chase Section Five village	District Remainder of 11
Garrett Park town	Chevy Chase Section Three village	**District 12**
North Bethesda CDP (part)	Chevy Chase Village town	Clarksburg CDP (part)
North Kensington CDP (part)	Friendship Heights Village CDP	Damascus CDP
North Potomac CDP (part)	Glen Echo town	District Remainder of 12
Potomac CDP (part)	Martin's Additions village	**District 13**
Redland CDP (part)	North Bethesda CDP (part)	Aspen Hill CDP (part)
Rockville city (part)	North Chevy Chase village	Chevy Chase View town
Travilah CDP (part)	Somerset town	Forest Glen CDP
District Remainder of 4	District Remainder of 7	Four Corners CDP
District 5	**District 8**	Glenmont CDP
Ashton-Sandy Spring CDP (part)	Ashton-Sandy Spring CDP (part)	Kemp Mill CDP (part)
Burtonsville CDP	Aspen Hill CDP (part)	Kensington town
Calverton CDP (part)	Brookeville town	Layhill CDP (part)
Cloverly CDP	Olney CDP	Leisure World CDP
Colesville CDP	Redland CDP (part)	North Kensington CDP (part)
Fairland CDP	District Remainder of 8	Silver Spring CDP (part)
Hillandale CDP (part)		South Kensington CDP
Kemp Mill CDP (part)		Takoma Park city
Layhill CDP (part)		Wheaton CDP
Silver Spring CDP (part)		White Oak CDP (part)
Spencerville CDP		
White Oak CDP (part)		

County Subdivisions are the primary divisions of counties and equivalent entities. They include census county divisions, census subareas, minor civil divisions, and unorganized territories and can be classified as either legal or statistical. Each county subdivision is assigned a five-character numeric Federal Information Processing Series (FIPS) code based on alphabetical sequence within state and an eight-digit National Standard feature identifier. http://www.census.gov/geo/reference/gtc/gtc_cousub.html

EHS Service Area by Zip Codes
Montgomery County, Maryland

Zip Codes:

20832	20841	20871	20880
20833	20842	20872	20882
20837	20850	20873	20886
20838	20851	20874	20895
20839	20852	20876	
	20853	20877	
	20855	20878	
	20860	20879	



Appendix H